

CAPE CORMORANT *PHALACROCORAX CAPENSIS* AND JACKASS PENGUIN  
*SPHENISCUS DEMERSUS* BREEDING COLONIES ON THE NAMIBIAN MAINLAND  
COAST AROUND SYLVIA HILL

The breeding localities of the southern African endemic Cape Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capensis* were catalogued in Cooper *et al.* (1982). Additional breeding localities have been published in Cooper & Smith (1982), Brooke & Loutit (1984), Brooke (1986) and Cooper & Brooke (1986). Sylvia Hill (25 09S, 14 51E), overlooking the South West African/Namibian coast of Diamond Area No. 2 between Hollamsbird Island to the north and Mercury Island to the south, has been described as a Jackass Penguin *Spheniscus demersus* breeding site, briefly by Shelton *et al.* (1984) and at greater length by Finkeldey (1984) and Loutit & Boyer (1985).

Five or six Cape Cormorant colonies have been found on the coast within 25 km of Sylvia Hill by RL and DB. These are described below from north to south, the order used by Cooper *et al.* (1982). There are now 61 or 62 known breeding localities for the Cape Cormorant. Further exploration of the cliff-girt sections of coast south of Sylvia Hill will probably reveal more Cape Cormorant and Jackass Penguin (Loutit & Boyer 1985) breeding localities. The geographical coordinates given in this contribution have been taken from 1:50 000 maps whereas those given in Loutit & Boyer (1985) were estimated from a coarser-scaled map.

The most northerly Cape Cormorant colony is c. 2 km north of Sylvia Hill on a south-facing cliff in a small bay. On 28 February 1984 five occupied nests were observed on ledges under overhangs c. 25 m a.s.l.

There are two sea caves 1,5 km southwest of Sylvia Hill. On 28 February 1984 the smaller northern cave contained five occupied nests with young in various stages of development. The nests were on ledges 4-5 m above the sandy floor. On the same day the larger southern cave contained eight occupied nests in similar positions.

Some 4 km south of Sylvia Hill near the crest of a cliff over 60 abandoned nests, presumed to be those of the Cape Cormorant by nest architecture, size and spacing, were found on 28 February 1984. Access to these nests from the top of the hill was not difficult and they were presumably accessible to mammalian predators such as the Blackbacked Jackal *Canis mesomelas* (Loutit & Boyer 1985). This view is supported by the absence of dead birds usually found in cormorant colonies since the carcasses would have been scavenged by Blackbacked Jackals.

Among the cliffs at Easter Point (25 17S, 14 48E) is a cave in which 24 occupied nests were found on 1 March 1984. Among the Oyster Cliffs (25 20S, 14 49E) is a cave in which 11 occupied nests were found the same day. In both caves young of various ages were observed in nests and it is assumed that those adults

which sat tightly were brooding eggs.

Jackass Penguin breeding within a mainland cave at "Easter Cliffs" (is Easter Point or Oyster Cliffs meant?) is reported by Green (1962: 142) on the authority of David Wilson, a prospector who pegged a mining claim for guano there. This reference was overlooked by Shelton *et al.* (1984) in their review of Jackass Penguin breeding sites and by Loutit & Boyer (1985) who found two possible Jackass Penguin breeding sites at Easter Point. It appears from Green (1962 p. 142 as read with pp. 73-81) that the claim was pegged between 1908 and 1940, probably in the 1920s before Diamond Area No. 2 was proclaimed, since we do not think that the German Administration which existed up to 1916 would have permitted a British citizen to peg a guano claim on the mainland. Jackass Penguin breeding on this section of the Namib coast is not necessarily a recent development, as might be deduced from Finkeldey (1984) and Loutit & Boyer (1985). The breeding localities have been overlooked because of physical inaccessibility (Loutit & Boyer 1985) coupled with being in a prohibited entry diamond zone.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RL and DB are obliged to Dr M.K. Seely of the Desert Ecological Research Unit, Gobabeb, for transport to and from the Diamond Coast.

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Received 14 April 1986, accepted 6 June 1986.

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