

# Namibia Bird News



No 17, June 2016

# Swakopmund Seabird Rehabilitation and Penguin Rescue Report 2015

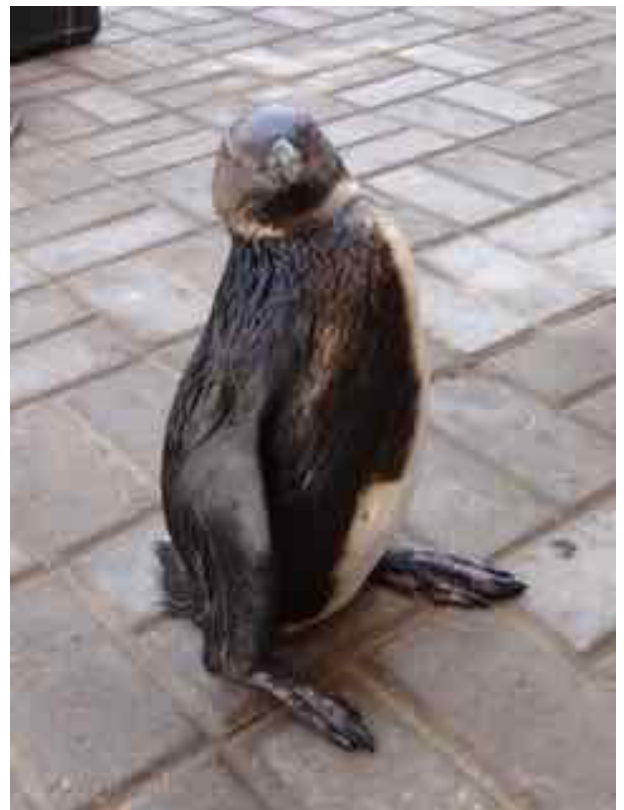
Sandra Dantu



2015 proved to be another busy year on the Seabird Rehabilitation front with 24 admissions – 21 African Penguins, 1 Barn Owl, 1 Greater Flamingo and 1 Common Tern.

In June the central coastline delivered 5 oiled penguins. Despite Eric Haase of the Polytechnic of Namibia searching satellite images, the source of the oil was not found with any certainty.

All were cleaned and released successfully.





An interesting phenomenon was noted for the first time. A number of penguins came in with what initially looked like minor wounds of the feet. Small shallow ulcers that eventually coalesced appeared after a few days, followed by dry gangrene and subsequent loss of the digits.



The strangest of all was a bird with the mandible completely missing.

We lost 5 of the penguins, as well as the flamingo. The owl was sent to Liz Komen at NARREC.



And finally, one of many happy endings – penguin S25047 (The Main Man), who swam all the way home to Halifax Island, Lüderitz, from Swakopmund, looking all healthy and portly.



I would like to thank the following for their support:

All the staff at the Swakop Vet Clinic for veterinary support

Etosha Fishing Corporation for fish

Paul and Cathy of Leon's Tackle Shop for fish

Namibia Bird Club for financial support

Andre Pienaar for financial support

Staff of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources especially Anja Kreiner for arranging relocation by sea and Jean-Paul Roux, Tony Delpont and Anita Wolff for relocation by road to Lüderitz

Eric Haase for sourcing the satellite images of the oil spill

Jessica Kemper for continuing care in Lüderitz, and The Main Man's photo

Mark Boorman for moral support and understanding

## Rackie

*(The following contribution has been translated from an email received by Sonja of Wild Bird Rescue)*

Dear Sonja

I am sending you two photos of Rackie. She is happy and doing well and provides us with a lot of enjoyment. Although she catches her own beetles and grasshoppers, she is still very devoted. She observes where I am and then enters the kitchen via the door or window. The dogs, in the mean time, consider this veery normal.

She then begs for extra morsels or lays siege to her can of worms (filled with grubs) and creates until I open it. Often she also just looks for company. Tells me long stories accompanied by bows and humping her back. Yesterday evening I took the dogs for a walk and she again accompanied us the whole way. She flies a bit ahead, sits in a tree and waits until we catch up and so it continues. On the way back it doesn't take long for her to catch up to us and accompany us home. It must be quite a sight for strangers—here comes a person with six dogs and a bird...

Last Monday I had a laugh whilst brushing the dogs.

Rackie soon joined us (six dogs and me). She sat next to the old wolf and chatted to us. All the dogs joined the conversation. Then Rackie jumped on the dog's pointed nose, that's what its there for after all, and climbed onto its head between the ears. Rackie obviously was of the opinion that the dog is old and of bad hearing so she has to whisper directly into its ears! And so I continued brushing all the dogs in turn. With the six months old Airedale male there was a similar lack of respect. I brushed Raudi and Rackie

