

## Development of translocation techniques for *Pterodroma* petrels

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Since 1995, a programme to develop translocation techniques for *Pterodroma* petrels has been carried out on 2 species, grey-faced petrels (*P. macroptera gouldi*) and Pycroft's petrels (*P. pycrofti*). The grey-faced petrel project initially involved the transfer of eggs and chicks to a captive rearing facility in 1995 and 1996. Diet problems were encountered in these first 2 seasons, in particular a deficiency of calcium. One chick was successfully reared from a fresh egg to departure in the wild in 1996. Diet samples were collected from adults and chicks at a wild colony in 1997. The analysis of the diet by nutritional experts at Massey University recommended feeding hand-reared petrel chicks a commercial cat food and vegetable oil. This new diet was tested in 1999 on wild grey-faced petrel chicks at Mount Maunganui. Some chicks were successfully reared but the project revealed that the recommended diet was deficient in water. In 2000, 12 grey-faced petrel chicks were again taken to a captive facility and fed 3 different diets (cat food, sardines, and fresh squid and fish). The chicks raised on canned sardines, salt water, and cod liver oil had the best growth rates and were successfully transferred back to the wild for fledging. Trials on Pycroft's petrels using the sardine diet were field tested in March 2001. Thirty chicks were successfully transferred without any losses from Red Mercury to Cuvier Islands.

## Antarctic wildlife slide presentation

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I have spent a total of about 4.5 years working in Antarctica, mainly with the British Antarctic Survey. Mostly I have been working as a chef on the scientific stations, but have always been keen to get involved with any work going on concerning birds or seals. More recently I have been working as a lecturer on Antarctic cruise ships, work which I hope to continue in the future. This presentation is not a record of any specific study, just a photographic celebration of the region's spectacular and fascinating wildlife, mixed with a few (hopefully) entertaining anecdotes from my time "south".

## Moult workshop

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The workshop aims to de-mystify moult studies, thereby encouraging a greater participation in the Society's Molt Recording scheme. The value of studying moult will be highlighted. Participants will be introduced to the basic principles of recording data on OSNZ Molt Cards during a practical session using specimens.

## Posters

### Attracting endangered species to 'safe' habitats: responses of fairy terns (*Sterna nereis davisae*) to decoys

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The New Zealand fairy tern (*Sterna nereis davisae*) is considered an endangered subspecies. The aims of this study were to quantify fairy tern responses to decoys and sound recordings and determine the viability of decoys as a technique for re-establishment of this species in protected habitat. Sixteen decoy trials were conducted in an area suitable for nesting from 9 September to 2 October 1999 at Papakanui Spit, New Zealand (36°26'S, 174°13'E). The decoy models were effective in attracting fairy terns to a specific area. There was a significant effect due to decoys with >80% of landing episodes occurring in the decoy plots. A planned contrast between decoys with and without recordings showed no significant difference. The behaviour of the fairy terns towards the decoys included erect postures, one aggressive response, and a possible courtship feeding. Despite low numbers, the response to the decoys was highly significant. We suggest that decoy techniques could be used as a simple and effective management tool for a wide range of group-living species. Such techniques will become particularly important as the availability of suitable habitat declines due to anthropogenic effects. Finally, regardless of whether the attraction of fairy terns towards these decoys encourages residence and nesting in this area, the effectiveness of attracting terns to a specific location results in a safe and efficient means of trapping adults away from the nest and/or outside the breeding season.