

# Review

## PENGUINS OF THE WORLD

Reilly, P. 1994. Melbourne: Oxford University Press. 164 pp. 57 figures of colour and black & white photographs and drawings, eight colour plates. ISBN 0-19-553547-2 (paper). Price UK£ 12.95, AUD\$ 19.95, USD\$ 16.95.

Pauline Reilly began working with Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* at Phillip Island, Australia in 1967, and continued in this pioneering study for 13 years. In the late 1970s, she visited Macquarie Island twice, once to review penguin research there, and again the following summer to study Gentoo Penguins *Pygoscelis papua*. She has published 11 papers on Little Penguins, and one on Gentoo Penguins, in addition to many papers and two books on other Australian birds. With one children's book on penguins, a general introductory book on Little Penguins (*Fairy Penguins and earthy people*, Lothian 1983), and as co-editor of the forthcoming *Penguin biology – advances in management* (Dann, P., Norman, F.I. & Reilly, P.N., Surrey Beatty), Pauline has successfully and eloquently introduced Australian seabirds to readers, ages five and up, for two decades. Her newest book, *Penguins of the World*, now introduces the non-specialist reader to the most recent developments in penguin biology and conservation for all species of penguins in the world.

The book is comprised of eight chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the diversity of penguins, and covers material common to all species under such topics as plumage, fossil penguins, taxonomy, population sizes, morphology, navigation, locomotion, foods and prey consumption, behaviour and breeding. Out of necessity, many topics covered in this chapter are dealt with in one or two paragraphs, but more space is given to aspects of behaviour and breeding. The information on the newest technologies such as satellite telemetry, automatic weighbridges and stomach temperature sensors is lucidly described.

Chapters 2 to 7 are devoted to each of the six genera of penguins, and each chapter begins with a brief introduction to the genus. Material for each species is then presented under the following headings: i) description, ii) distribution, dispersal and population, iii) at sea and on land, iv) behaviour, v) breeding and vi) threats and conservation. Information under description includes masses, body lengths and colouration, and accounts of each species' breeding distributions, diving behaviour, postures and breeding regimes

are provided under their respective headings. Typically one species per genus is described in greater detail than the others as representative of all species in that genus. The colour identification plates are those used in the *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic birds*, published in 1990 by Oxford University Press, with the exception of the plate illustrating the *Spheniscus* penguins.

Chapter 8 deals with current and future conservation issues. While species-specific threats are given in the species' accounts, this chapter stresses the wide variety of anthropogenic factors involved in the decreases of most penguin species, including direct interference, introduction of exotic predators and pollution. Competition with commercial fisheries, mentioned only in passing in species' accounts, is conspicuously absent from this final review, despite several recent studies in Africa and the Subantarctic.

Throughout the book, technical jargon has been kept to a minimum – any technical word or phrase not immediately explained in the text is included in the brief glossary of 67 words and phrases. The inclusion of some words and terms in the Glossary is puzzling: 'pre-egg' and 'synchronous' are probably unnecessary. The bibliography is up to date, including many citations from *Penguin biology: advances in management* (1995), but perhaps surprisingly, none of John Warham's work on *Eudyptes* penguins is cited.

My main criticism of the book is the maps. The intended audience of non-specialists will not be helped at all by the maps in the book: 17 tiny maps are squeezed onto two pages, with no islands, continents or oceans named. A single, large map, providing all place names and oceanographic features used in the text would have been far more useful for readers attempting to locate the islands or coastlines indicated by arrows on these species' maps. While the maps do provide an overview of where the breeding localities of a species are found, the lack of detail is frustrating.

Despite the small maps, the book is an excellent introductory text for its intended audience. The breadth of information, including as-yet unpublished data, the clarity of the writing and the overall presentation make for an enjoyable book.

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