

Short Communications

POST-BREEDING DISPERSAL OF NORTHERN GIANT PETRELS *MACRONECTES HALLI* FROM MARION TO BOUVET ISLANDS

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Bouvet Island or Bouvetøya (54°25'S, 3°21'E) is the most isolated island in the world. Nyrøysa is a rocky platform on the west coast of Bouvetøya, formed by a landslide sometime between 1955 and 1958 (Prestvik & Winsnes 1981). Approximately five Northern Giant Petrels were observed at Nyrøysa during the 2000/01 austral summer. Two of these were colour-banded, seen feeding on dead Antarctic Fur Seal *Arctocephalus gazella* pups. The first, a male (SAFRING No. 9-73306 and orange alphanumeric plastic band 09A), seen on 16 February, was banded as a chick on Marion Island on 29 January 1991. It bred there in 2000/01 and was last seen incubating on 29 August 2000. This breeding attempt had failed by 12 September 2000, and the bird was not recorded at Marion again that season (D.C. Nel pers. comm.). This bird had been previously recorded at Bouvet Island on 2 February 1999 (Isaksen *et al.* 2000). It had bred at Marion Island in 1998/99 and was last seen at its the breeding site that season with a large chick on 12 January 1999 (Isaksen *et al.* 2000).

The second banded Northern Giant Petrel was recorded at Nyrøysa on 21 February 2001. This bird, a male (SAFRING No. 9-59291, previously 9-52523 and black alphanumeric plastic band 323) was banded as a breeding male on 3 November 1984 on Marion Island, and last reported breeding on 16 September 1991 (D.C. Nel pers. comm.). Its breeding site on the west coast of Marion Island means that the round-island breeding census (Cooper *et al.* 2001) can easily miss one of the breeding partners. It is therefore possible that this bird bred in 2000/01 (D.C. Nel pers. comm.).

These records suggest a regular post-breeding dispersal of male Northern Giant Petrels from Marion Island to Bouvet Island. Earlier recoveries and recaptures of Northern Giant Petrels banded at Marion Island indicate dispersal of fledglings to waters close to the New Zealand mainland and Tasmania, Australia, as well as an

adult male movement to South Africa (Gartshore *et al.* 1988). Including a banded Southern Giant Petrel *M. giganteus* seen at Nyrøysa in February 1999 when the band number was not recorded (Isaksen *et al.* 2000), these are the only records from Bouvet of birds of any species banded elsewhere.

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