

COMMENTARY

Macaroni Penguins: Comment on Mistaken King George Island Breeding Record and Southerly Range Extension

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On the basis of a personal communication from Polish researchers at Arctowski Station, Point Thomas, Admiralty Bay, King George Island (62°10'S, 58°30'W), Bernstein and Tirrell (1981) stated that for the first time a few Macaroni Penguins (*Eudyptes chrysolophus*) bred on King George Island during the 1979–1980 austral summer. Bernstein and Tirrell further suggested that Macaroni Penguin populations might be increasing in the area of the Antarctic Peninsula. Volkman and Trivelpiece have communicated several inaccuracies in Bernstein and Tirrell's paper, and we wish jointly to correct these errors.

Volkman and Trivelpiece did research on pygoscelid penguins at Pt. Thomas during the austral summers of 1976–1977, 1977–1978, and 1980–1981 and saw no evidence of breeding Macaroni Penguins. Furthermore, B. Jablonski (pers. comm.), a Polish ornithologist who studied penguins at Pt. Thomas during the austral summers of 1978–1979, 1979–1980, and 1980–1981, did not observe any breeding Macaroni Penguins. On several occasions, however, Volkman and Trivelpiece have seen molting Macaroni Penguins late in the season. For whatever reason, the personal communication to Bernstein and Tirrell of breeding Macaroni Penguins at Pt. Thomas appears to be inaccurate.

Even if this record of breeding Macaroni Penguins

were verifiable, Bernstein and Tirrell's contention that it represents a southward extension of their range was erroneous. Breeding Macaroni Penguins have been reported on Nelson Island (Andersson 1905, Watson et al. 1971), Gibbs Island (Watson et al. 1971), Deception Island (62°57'S; not 58°S as in Bernstein and Tirrell 1981) (Gain 1914, Watson et al. 1971), and Livingston Island (J. Croxall, pers. comm.), all of which are south of King George Island. In addition, Watson collected a Macaroni Penguin 10 km north of Palmer Station on Dream Island (G. Watson, pers. comm.).

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