

**FIRST RECORD OF THE GENTOO PENGUIN *PYGOSCELIS PAPUA* FOR AFRICA**

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Vagrant penguins of three species from the sub-Antarctic and cool temperate islands of the Southern Ocean have been reported from the coastline of South Africa. Most of the records are of moulting birds, the Rockhopper Penguin *Eudyptes chrysocome* being the most commonly reported, with far fewer records known for Macaroni *E. chrysolophus* and King *Aptenodytes patagonicus* Penguins (Ross & Cockcroft 1985, Cooper 1988, 1992). Four species

of penguins breed in the southern Indian Ocean, the three listed above, and the Gentoo Penguin *Pygoscelis papua* (Marchant & Higgins 1990). Perhaps because of its relative rarity in this region (Woehler in press), there have been no previous records of Gentoo Penguins from Africa (Enticott 1986), although a single record exists for Gough Island (40 21S, 09 53E) in the central South Atlantic (Voisin 1979).

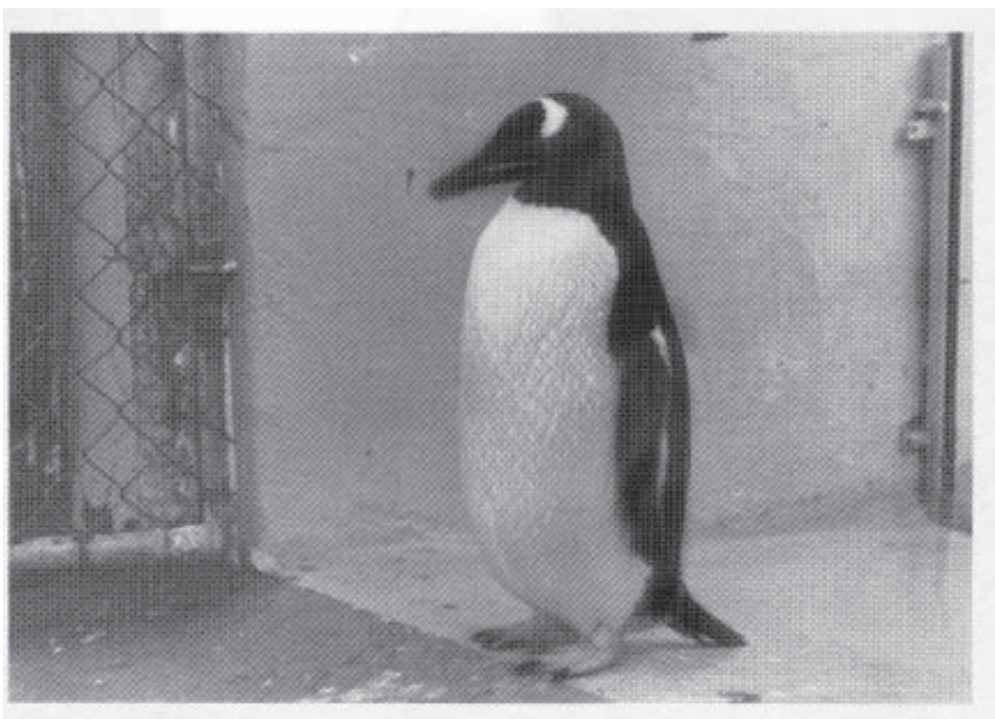


Figure 1

First record of the Gentoo Penguin *Pygoscelis papua* for Africa.

On 28 June 1992, a Gentoo Penguin was seen swimming among the surf close to shore 4 km north of Bloubergstrand (33 48S, 18 28E), southwestern Cape, South Africa (B Lagerquist *in litt.* to the Southern African Ornithological Society Rarities Committee). The penguin came ashore, when it was captured and taken to the South African National Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) Rescue Station near Cape Town, where I examined and photographed it on 1 July (Fig. 1). The bird was in adult plumage and was not moulting. It was slightly thin (it weighed 5 kg on arrival at the station), but was otherwise in good condition with no obvious signs of bill, feather, flipper or foot abrasion, which could suggest it had been in captivity prior to it being found. On 13 August 1992 the bird was sent to the Birdland ornithological gardens in Gloucester, U.K. (*The Argus*, 14 August 1992).

The culmen measured 62 mm, bill depth at the gonys 19 mm, flipper length (straightened) was 246 mm, and foot plus longest toe and claw was 142 mm. Based on these measurements, the bird is attributable to the larger nominate subspecies, which has a sub-Antarctic distribution (Marchant & Higgins 1990). A small blood sample was taken for genetic study.

The Bloubergstrand record is apparently the most northerly for the species (Enticott 1986, Marchant & Higgins 1990).

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