



ALBERT TIMES

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"Don't be warped - trawl for fish, not birds"

From the desk of Admiral Albert Ross, MBE (Mighty Big Eater)

Now that the Minister has revoked the Seabird Offal Control measures, industry is working with MFish to develop a Vessel Management Plan (VMP) for trawlers over 28m who as yet don't have VMPs. This work was proposed by the industry in its submission to the Minister last year as an alternative to mandatory offal control measures. The Deepwater Group Ltd is working with the operators of nine trawlers over 28m which have yet to be covered by a VMP (mainly fresh fish vessels). The VMP is being developed to specifically suit the fresh fish trawling operations. It is prudent that all trawlers have VMPs to reduce the risk of seabird captures but by-and-large these fresh fish vessels pose much less risk to seabirds than those with onboard factories. The VMP will allow the skipper, when required, to make the appropriate changes to mitigation and offal control measures and to make real-time decisions out on the water to reduce the risks of seabird captures. All trawlers over 28m will have a VMP in place by 1 October 2008.

I flew past Cameron Long onboard Amaltal Enterprise; great to see fishermen making the most of their surroundings - Cameron won the Southern Seabird Solutions photo competition recently. He's taken some great pics of the cousins!

Thanks to Johanna from DoC for the story on the love lives of albatross. Us Royals are "straight" so don't be thinking anything funny!

Chow Albert

Cameron Long, Fisherman and Seabird Photographer

I caught up with Cameron Long at Talley's Nelson. Cameron's been out fishing for years and is now the 2nd mate onboard *Amaltal Enterprise*.

He won the Southern Seabird Solutions (SSS) photo competition this year; who would have known this longtime deck hand was a winning photographer! He purchased his canon 400-D camera and 300mm lens 2 years ago and thought it would be a good hobby. The advantage of spending a lot of time at sea is that he gets plenty of opportunities to capture images most people will never get to see.

He took the winning photo of the Salvin's albatross around 30nm off the South Island East Coast in February on a calm day when the vessel was steaming back to port. The Salvins albatross was cruising around the vessel. From the bridge, wing high above the

water, he was able to get a reflection off the surface. He had only 5 takes, snapping off 10 frames each time, before finally getting the shot of the bird dipping its wing into the sea as it glided approximately a metre above the water's surface.

He saw the ad for the SSS competition in the Seafood NZ mag and decided to have a go. He entered in the open category and the fisherman and family category and, much to his surprise, won them both!!

His open category-winning picture is now shown on the SSS, WWF and National Geographic web sites. His hometown newspaper also ran the photo. With the SSS prize money Cameron's a few grand richer with his first place winnings so its all been a worthwhile hobby thus far! We will be showing a few more of his great shots over the next few months.



Photo credit: Cameron Long - Winner of Section 2 - Fisherman and Family Category - Southern Seabird Solutions Photo Competition

The love lives of albatrosses: Coming out of the closet, and, if you put a ring on a bird does it still cheat?

There is a saying that 'animals can be almost human', and this is certainly true when it comes to the love lives of albatross. Biologists used to think that once seabirds formed mated pairs they were faithful for life. That sounds rather like married humans, but as we are all aware, the truth can be much more complicated.....

Take the Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross, for example. These birds have been studied for a quarter of a century on Gough Island in the Atlantic, and many of the birds are



WHICH COUSIN OF MINE IS THIS?



These cousins are rather 'sensitive' and don't like to be disturbed while they are courting.

If you know the name of this bird then email your answer, name, postal address and date of publication to albertross@fishinfo.co.nz

BE IN TO WIN: Albert Ross' cap and the "Field Guide to New Zealand Seabirds"



The cousin of last month: Buller's Albatross

identifiable by the bands or rings that researchers have fitted on their legs. While albatrosses may look alike to us, they think of each other differently - who is hot and who is not can also change in the albatross world. There are some yellow-nosed albatross which do stay faithful to their mates over time. However, there are others who have flings or divorce. Amongst waved albatrosses on the Galapagos Islands, infidelity also happens. Males react to unfaithful females by mating a lot more with them after they stray. However, it seems the males are only in it for the fun part, and once the egg hatches, male attentiveness falls back to pre-affair levels.

Then there are the gay couples. In populations of Laysan albatross (or is it the lesbian Albatross?) studied in Hawaii, more than 30% of pairs are female-female. These pairs sometimes adopt eggs and chicks that they find in the colony. Genetic testing has shown that often the eggs and chicks that these gay couples adopt are somehow related to one of them,

but the members of the pairs are unrelated to each other. While gay couples do not raise young as often as male - female pairs, there is more chance of a bird's genes being propagated as part of a gay couple than if birds don't breed or form a pair at all.

The conclusion? Albatross love lives can be very complicated. And just like for humans, even if you put a ring on a bird, it may still cheat.....

Johanna Pierre, DoC

DID YOU KNOW?

On 7 March 1907 the *Dundonald*, a four-masted barque carrying a cargo of wheat, ran ashore on Disappointment Island in the Auckland islands. Twelve men lost their lives due to the wreck and the 15 survivors spent nine months on Disappointment Island and the Auckland Island before being rescued. According to one survivor the men ate up to five white capped albatross per day during their ordeal.

To learn more go to www.albertross.co.nz and pick up this month's issue



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