

Current Research and Conservation Initiatives for the African Penguin

Artificial Nests



- ✦ The Faces of Need project aims to provide nest burrows to penguins, enabling them to nest underground.
- ✦ This reduces heat stress in adults and chicks, and reduces predation of eggs and chicks by Kelp gulls.



Fishery Closures



- ✦ In 2008 a 20km radius was created around Dassen Island, where no fishing is allowed (government regulation).
- ✦ The aim of the project is to conduct intense monitoring to determine if fishing closures affects penguin breeding success.



Penguin Bolstering



- ✦ This project aims to rear orphaned and abandoned penguin chicks, and to use them to bolster existing wild colonies.
- ✦ It also aims to determine factors that affect chick selection of a particular colony at which to breed.



Penguin Rehabilitation



- ✦ Injured and oiled birds are captured at the wild colonies and transported for veterinary treatment and rehabilitation for release back into the wild.
- ✦ Current rehabilitation centres are SANGCOB near Cape Town and Penguins Eastern Cape near Port Elizabeth.



Penguin Monitoring and Research



- ✦ At all colonies, African penguin numbers are monitored at least annually by nest census.
- ✦ Current research projects include the impact of fishery closures on penguins (foraging behaviour, breeding success, chick growth and condition), penguin recognition systems and disease.



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