



Director Callan Cohen: callan@birdingafrica.com

mobile: +27 83 256 0491

Pelagic enquiries: info@capetownpelagics.com

office: +27 21 531 9148

fax: +27 21 531 8289

4 Crassula Way, 7405 Pinelands, Cape Town, South Africa

Cape Town Pelagics Trip Report

1 November 2008

A Cape Town Pelagics trip left Simonstown on 1 November 2008 on a wind free morning for the Cape Valley region SW of Cape Point guided by Cape Town Pelagics guide, Bruce Dyer. The going was slow, as we had to continually slow down and deviate to avoid hitting numerous **Southern Right Whales!** Good views were had of several. It was delightful to see a pod of about 50 **Common Dolphins**, which included at least one **Bottle-nosed Dolphin**, which provided grand views and was enjoyed by the whole party.

The cruise out to the trawl grounds was fairly quiet. Both morphs of **Parasitic Jaeger** were seen en route out. **Cape Gannets** were the most confident, often coming past exceptionally close. **White-chinned Petrel** soon also put in an appearance, as did a solitary **Shy Albatross**. We had a very bumpy ride as a patchy strong current hampered progress until we found warmer waters and the sea state settled.

At 30 nautical miles southwest of Cape Point we found several long-liners busy with fishing operations and had many birds attending. It was a pity to note that one of the vessels was discharging offal directly above the hauling line that risked several birds becoming foul hooked as they fought for scraps. There seems to be a lot of wastage in this fishery as several dozen fish were seen floating about near each vessel, much to the delight of the attending recreational fisher-folk, who reduced the waste by picking up those floating by – some even choosing to dive after fish!

Birdlife was plentiful and it was wonderful to see both species of **Yellow-nosed Albatross** for comparison and the odd immature **Black-browed Albatross** amongst the more numerous **Shys**. A solitary **Northern Giant Petrel** was picked up amongst hordes of **White-chinned Petrel** and **Great Shearwater**. **Pintado Petrel**, whose contrasting colours always leave one spellbound, were scarce, while fair numbers of the dainty **Wilson's Storm Petrel** and colourful **Sabine's Gull** were regular. The large aggregations of White-chins were carefully searched for the scarce **Spectacled Petrel**, but to no avail.

Partridge Point was visited en route back to Simonstown, Good views were had of the breeding colony of **Bank Cormorant** and the haul out of Cape Fur seal. A good trip all told with the weather and sea all playing along.

Bird List

Shy Albatross	100
Black-browed Albatross	5
Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross	3
Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross	5
Northern Giant Petrel	1
White-chinned Petrel	200
Pintado Petrel	10
Wilson's Storm Petrel	30
Sooty Shearwater	10
Great Shearwater	100

Cape Gannet	20
Brown Skua	2
Parasitic Jaeger	3
Kelp Gull	50
Sabine's Gull	20
Cape Cormorant	500
Bank Cormorant	30
White-breasted Cormorant	50
African Penguin	18
Swift Tern	100
Common Tern	20
Arctic Tern	1

Mammal List

Cape Fur Seal	100
Southern Right Whale	12
Common Dolphin	50
Bottle-nosed Dolphin	1

A message from Cape Town Pelagics: A huge thank you to our experienced skippers who are able to safely lead us to the best birding areas and skillfully manoeuvre the boat into just the best position while all on board are busy concentrating on the birds! Coordinating a pelagic trip over a year in advance with guests from all across South Africa and different countries around the world requires an organised office team. We thank them for their special eye for detail - and for the sometimes last-minute rearrangements and frustration if the weather delays the trip to another day! Our biggest thank-you is to our Cape Town Pelagics guides who take time out of their work, often involving seabirds and conservation, and time away from their families, to provide our guests with a world-class birding experience. Cape Town Pelagics donates all its profits to seabirds, and so all the participants who join the trip make a contribution towards bird research and conservation – a big thank you from all of us.

Trip Report by Cape Town Pelagics guide Bruce Dyer.