

Help Us Count the Penguins

Adélie penguins live most of their lives on ice floes (sheets of frozen sea ice) floating around the Antarctic Ocean. They rest on the ice floes between foraging trips into the ocean where they feed on small fish and krill. In early November the males find their way to a place on shore where it is ice free and there are small rocks to build a nest. When the females come ashore a few days later, they mate and raise their chicks. Cape Royds on Ross Island is one of those places.

Part of our research is monitoring the number of penguins that breed at Cape Royds every year. Knowing the numbers helps us understand what is happening to penguin populations as changes in their habit occur. Just outside the colony is a camera that takes a picture everyday of the penguins. This allows us to see the changes in numbers as the season progresses and compare year to year.

We need help counting the penguins as the daily photos are not saved. If you would like to help us with this project read on !

You will need:

1. Access to the internet everyday Nov – Feb.
2. The Penguin Count Data Sheet, or a way to record your counts
3. Graph paper (optional)

Instructions

1. Every day from Nov 1 – Feb 15 log onto the penguin cam website (www.penguinscience.com) then use the pull down button 'penguin cam'
2. From the image page download images #6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Roll over the image with your cursor to see the numbers.
3. Use any method you choose to count the penguins in the image and record the picture number, date, number of chicks and adults. Adults are clearly black and white, chicks are fuzzy balls of grey-brown.
4. Use the data sheet provided or create your own electronic data sheet to send to us.
5. Send your data to us: penguin_letters@yahoo.com
6. Here is an example of two counted images to help you get started.



Fig.1 11/15/15



Fig. 2 1/24/15

Date	Picture #	Adults	Chicks		Date	Picture #	Adults	Chicks
11/15/15	7	72	0		1/24/15	7	32	34

Citizen Science Penguin Count

FAQ.

- What happens if I miss a day? Although it is best to have daily counts, you can not go back and find the picture, they are not archived. But don't worry, we are looking for the longer trends, a missed day is not critical.
- How do I send in the data? Please send the completed data sheets to the email below. If you would like to make a graph (bar or line) of the data as well that will be very helpful.
- How can I tell a rock from a penguin? This is the hard part. Penguins have more of a defined shape and you will get used to picking them out. In addition rocks will not move from one day to another so you will learn where they are in each picture.
- How will I make the graph? Use a computer program and your data sheet, or draw one yourself. Take a picture, scan or send us the electronic copy.

Thank you for helping us count the penguins.

Questions?

Email me: jean.pennycook@gmail.com

