

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

MATE AND TERRITORY RETENTION IN YELLOW-EYED PENGUINS

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Abstract. Using nest and banding data collected from 1991 to 2002, we investigated mate and territory retention rates of Yellow-eyed Penguins (*Megadyptes antipodes*), and the effects of reproductive success. Annual mate retention rate was 63%, and territory retention for males and females were 52% and 46% respectively. The majority of pair dissolutions were due to death of a partner, with only 6% of bonds ending in separation. Previous reproductive success was a good predictor of mate or territory retention as pairs that failed to fledge a single chick were significantly more likely to separate or move their territories than those that were successful at fledging chicks. Reproductive success of birds that changed their mates or moved territories was not higher than those that retained their mates or territories. However, birds that moved territories were less likely to have reduced fledging success relative to their previous breeding attempt. Birds that did not retain their mates, particularly males, were significantly more likely to skip breeding for at least one year. This suggests that the costs of mate or territory changes are not accrued at the end of the breeding attempt (as reflected by the number of fledged chicks), but are associated with the costs of pair formation and establishment of territories at the beginning of the breeding season.

Key words: mate retention, *Megadyptes antipodes*, reproductive success, seabird, territory fidelity.