Banding and monitoring programs of magellanic penguins on the Brazilian coast in 2008

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Regarding banding procedures, in contrast to other seabirds, it is not feasible to use leg bands on penguins due to their joints. In this case, caution in band design is needed considering evidences that flipper bands may adversely affect some species, especially aluminum bands. Flipper banding is cheap, allows monitoring of a greater number of animals, enables identification to be made from a distance and has been largely used on penguins since the 1950s. In Brazil, data regarding the number of magellanic penguins (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) banded each year, or its recovery, have not yet been extensively discussed. A governmental institution, the National Center for Bird Conservation Research – CEMAVE, controls banding activities in Brazil. Each year thousands of magellanic penguins migrate along the Atlantic coast of South America and some are found ashore along the Brazilian coast. Most animals are juveniles with high degrees of parasitism and low body weight. Some may be oiled. During the migrating season in 2008, a greater number of magellanic penguins were seen on a wide extension of the Brazilian coast. Hundreds of birds recorded were not only debilitated but also oiled, especially in Santa Catarina State. Rehabilitators have cleaned and cared for these weak and oiled birds, although hundreds were found already dead. In 2008, seven Brazilian institutions have banded magellanic penguins, totalizing 708 animals rehabilitated and released. Of these, 518 penguins were released with official stainless steel bands provided by CEMAVE. Other institutions released 91 birds with alternative rings (IA# n = 72 and GREMAR# n = 19). This study shows that a cooperative effort has been undertaken by Brazilian organizations in order to establish standards for penguin rehabilitation, release and monitoring. IFAW &IBRRC's initiatives' were crucial to help integrate rehabilitation centers, besides CEMAVE's support to researchers and banding projects.