

MEDIA RELEASE - 19 APRIL 2004

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ST. CROIX PENGUINS AFFECTED BY OIL SLICK

Between seven and twenty African Penguins have been affected by an oil slick in Algoa Bay.

The oil-covered penguins were sighted by a member of the public on St. Croix Island, one of the islands that fall under the jurisdiction of the Addo Elephant National Park. The initial report stated that twenty oil-covered penguins had been sighted, but an inspection by rangers only confirmed seven lightly-oiled birds.

St. Croix Island, which lies approximately two kilometers from the coastline near the new Coega harbour development, is an important breeding ground for the African Penguin.

Rangers launched a rescue mission by boat yesterday but could not reach the island due to inclement weather. Another attempt will be made as soon as possible and the penguins will be taken to BayWorld in Port Elizabeth for cleaning and rehabilitation.

The source of the oil slick is unknown but is most likely to be the result of a ship cleaning its bilges, dumping used oil into the sea.

Ends...

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