Challenges for Antarctic Penguins as They Adapt to Changing Temperatures Revealed in “State Of Antarctic Penguins 2019” Report

Oceanites announces the release of its annual State Of Antarctic Penguins 2019 report and a new initiative to create a worldwide penguin population database. The announcement followed an appearance before the staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works discussing what Antarctic penguins can teach us about adapting to climate change.

WASHINGTON (PRWEB) July 10, 2019 -- Oceanites, a Washington DC based non-profit scientific, environmental, and educational organization today announced the release of its annual State Of Antarctic Penguins 2019 report (SOAP 2019) and a new initiative to create a worldwide penguin population database. The announcement followed an appearance by Ron Naveen, Oceanites’ founder, before the staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, where he discussed what Antarctic penguins can teach us about adapting to climate change.

The new SOAP report comprehensively summarizes the population size and trends of Antarctica’s five penguin species — Adélie, chinstrap, emperor, gentoo, and macaroni. It spotlights future challenges for Antarctic penguins as they adapt to changing temperatures in the region and helps guide policy in several critical areas for the 54 signatory countries of the Antarctic Treaty System.

The Antarctic penguins total at least 6.18 million breeding pairs nesting at 662 or more sites across the entire Antarctic continent. Using scientific data and satellite photo analyses, the annual SOAP reports assist a wide variety of Antarctic interests: governments, scientists, NGOs, and the private sector, including fishing and tourism operators, as well as concerned citizens throughout the world.

Oceanites continues to closely track the notable changes in the Antarctic Peninsula which has undergone a well-documented period of warming over the last six decades of +3° C. / 5° F. and in winter of +5° C. / 9° F. Over the past 60+ years in the vastly warmed region, gentoo populations have increased significantly; Adélie penguin populations in parts of this region have declined significantly; and chinstrap penguin populations have also declined — significantly at some locations.

The 2018/2019 field season was a notably unusual year on the Antarctic Peninsula, with deeper than usual snow on sites in the Gerlache Strait. Furthermore, mid-season visits (late January) found many colonies of gentoo penguins still sitting on eggs that should have hatched. At some sites it was clear that gentoos had either re-lain eggs, or had abandoned their nests.

Ron Naveen noted: “No question, penguins can teach us how to adapt to a warming climate. Will we be like Antarctic Peninsula gentoos and adapt, or will we falter as have Peninsula populations of Adélies and chinstraps? What drives these changes is critical. Is it food supply, nesting and breeding conditions, or diseases? Antarctica and its penguins are a window into our future.”

Oceanites is also laying the groundwork for one of its most ambitious projects to date, an unprecedented, comprehensive database tracking the populations and population changes for all 18 of the world’s penguin species. The driving force propelling this new initiative is Oceanites’ board member, Grant Ferrier, founder of Environmental Business International. The plan is to leverage the success of Oceanites’ SOAP reports and its comprehensive MAPPPD database for all five Antarctic penguin species. This new Global Penguin Database
builds on Oceanites’ international reputation counting and analyzing penguin population data, making these data and analyses freely available to everyone, and fostering independent research.

About Oceanites
Oceanites, Inc. is a non-profit scientific, environmental, and educational organization founded in 1987. Oceanites has been driving science-based conservation under the Antarctic Treaty for more than two decades — and represents the world’s only non-profit, publicly supported Antarctic research program. This quarter-century on the ‘front lines’ of climate change allows Oceanites to promote worldwide awareness regarding adaptation to climate change impacts. For additional information, visit Oceanites.org.
Contact Information
David Lippy
Oceanites, Inc.
http://oceanites.org
+1 (614) 554-9235

Ron Naveen
Oceanites, Inc.
http://oceanites.org
(202) 302-4211

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.