

OBITUARY IRYNEJ SKIRA 1950-2005



Dr Irynej Skira was born in Tasmania in 1950. His scientific career spanned over 33 years working with the Tasmanian Government.

He was a pre-eminent Tasmanian researcher and, since 1978, had been carrying out population monitoring of the Short-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus tenuirostris*, a study which was begun on Fisher Island, Bass Strait, nearly 60 years ago by Dominic Serventy. This remains one of the world's longest systematic seabird studies. An internationally recognized scientist, Irynej was considered to be one of the architects of seabird research. He also worked on whales, gulls, pest control on sub-Antarctic Islands and a range of other wildlife issues including muttonbirding in Tasmania. He was strongly

committed to the conservation of the Short-tailed Shearwater and to the protection of Tasmania's native wildlife.

He fell ill in January while on the tiny Snares Island, 222 km south of New Zealand, where he was helping three other researchers from the University of Otago who were studying the Sooty Shearwater *P. griseus*. Dramatically airlifted by rescue helicopter to Dunedin, he was then transferred to Hobart where he spent his last days. He died on the 18th February 2005.

John Stewart