

Detection of anti-brucella antibodies in Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) from cape Shirref, Antarctica Detección de anticuerpos anti-brucella en focas de Weddell (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) de cabo Shirref, Antártica

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After the finding of anti-Brucella antibodies in samples of Antarctic fur seal (*Arctocephalus gazella*), the serological study on Antarctic Pinniped was continued in order to determine the presence of anti-Brucella antibodies in other species. Blood and extra vascular fluid samples were taken from 12 Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) at the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) No 32 and CCAMLR\* Ecosystem Monitoring Program (CEMP) site No 2 "Cape Shirreff and San Telmo Islets" (62° 47' S; 60° 27' W), located on the Norwest coast Livingston Island (South Shetland Islands), Antarctica. The samples were tested by the conventional Rose Bengal test (RB) and two competitive enzymatic immunoassay: Compelisa® and c-ELISA. In five of the samples studied, anti-Brucella antibodies were detected and the enzyme linked immunosorbent assays were the most sensible tests. These results strongly suggest the presence of infections by bacteria of the genus *Brucella* in *L. weddellii* and point out