

6. Seal colony



Black-backed gull
adult



Black-backed gull
juvenile



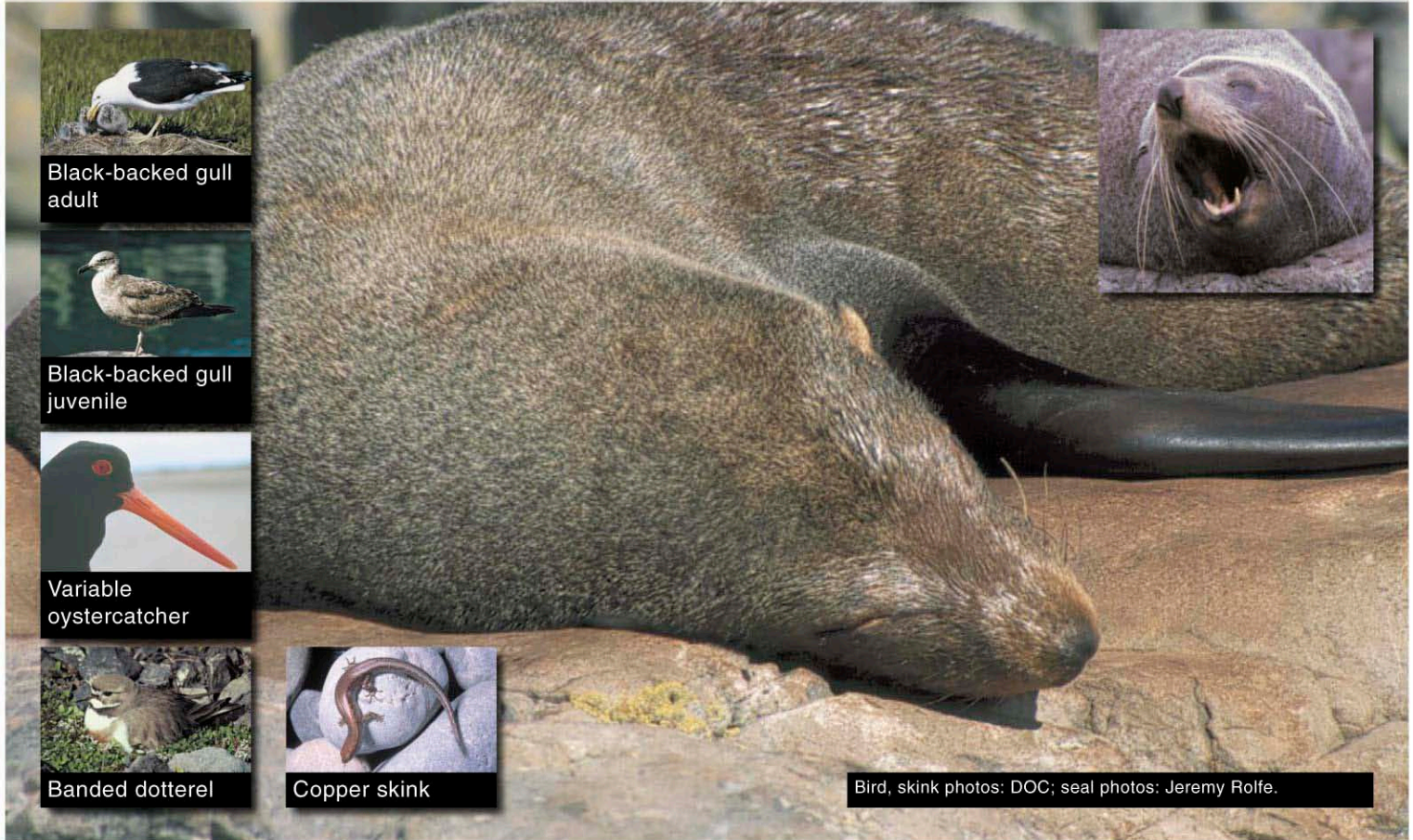
Variable
oystercatcher



Banded dotterel



Copper skink



Bird, skink photos: DOC; seal photos: Jeremy Rolfe.

6. Seal colony

Male seals spend the winter at this colony. The mainly young seals 'haul out' here and build up their condition before going south to breed during spring.

During the breeding season they will not eat for 3 months. They will live off the fat they have stored over winter.

- Look for the special features that will help the seals to survive in this harsh coastal environment.
- How can seals protect themselves from predators, including humans?
 - Watch out for seals in the water. Compare the way they are able to move through the water with the way they move on land.
- Look out for other fauna sharing the coast with the seals—banded dotterel, Caspian tern, variable oystercatcher, black-backed gull, copper skink.
- Why is this biodiversity (range of living things) important?
- See if you can identify who feeds on whom. Draw a food chain to show how at least five different living things relate to each other.
- Have one person in your group count to five while the rest of the group closes their eyes. Open them on the count of five and say the first five living things you see. See if each member of the group can say five different things. Talk about how they relate to each other.

Approximately 500 fur seals live at Turakirae during winter.

