First Specimens of Sooty Shearwater, Newell’s Shearwater, and White-faced Storm-Petrel from American Samoa


Sooty Shearwater Puffinus griseus (USNM 597680)

A male (testes 2 x 1 mm) collided with a structure near the runway of Pago Pago International Airport, Tutuila, Tutuila, on 20 May 1992. When collected by PWT, its left wing was broken and it died on 22 May 1992. A second specimen, a female (ovary 12 x 6 mm) in emaciated condition, was obtained from Lion Park, Tutuila, Tutuila, on 17 May 1994. Both birds were probably recently fledged juveniles at they had moderate fat deposits, fresh plumage, and were not undergoing molt.

Sooty Shearwaters are not unexpected but have not been reported previously from American Samoa. Jenkins (1980) reported large numbers in Tongan waters during May and thought this species might pass east of Samoa during its northern migration. Sooty shearwaters have been recorded from waters of Fiji (Warling 1982), Kiribati, the Cook Islands, Society Islands and Marquesas (Pratt et al. 1987). Sooty shearwaters depart from nesting colonies at the Snares Islands, New Zealand, in late March–early May (Wacham et al. 1982). The migratory pathways are still unclear but most seem to fly north probably through the Central Pacific up towards the Aleutians rather than around towards Japan (J. Warham, pers. comm.).
Newell's Shearwater Puffinus aurigaster newellii (USNM 597688)

A female (swim 9 x 5 mm, largest ocelli 1 mm) was found alive but injured in a banana plantation near Paviani, Tutuila, on 26 January 1993 by Richard and Vino Norris. Measurements were: wing 249 mm, culmen 32.4 mm, tarsus 47.3 mm, tail 87 mm.

King and Gould (1967) and Pratt et al. (1987) report that the non-breeding season dispersal of Newell's Shearwaters is largely unknown. Adults arrive at nesting colonies on Kauai, Hawaiian Islands, in April and depart in October-November (Sincock and Swedberg 1969). Josanin (1956) reported a specimen taken in May 1887 at Saipan, Marianas Islands and King and Gould (1967) recorded one 64 km south of the equator near Baker Island. Drahoz (1977) measured and photographed a bird believed to be this species in June 1974 on Guam. Our specimen is only the second recorded occurrence of this species in the Southern Hemisphere. It suggests that Newell's Shearwater ranges during the non-breeding season as much as 6000 km south of the Hawaiian Islands. However, the bird was in an emaciated condition and lacked any fat. It weighed only 291 g, well below the range of 353-439 g (n = 11) given by King and Gould (1967) and may indicate that something was wrong with this bird.

White-faced Storm-Petrel Pterodroma marina (USNM 597656)

A wing was salvaged by GSG from the shoreline of Pala Lagoon, Tafuna, Tutuila, on 7 September 1992. Its strong procellariform odour, size, and colouration suggested to GSG that it was a storm-petrel. RBC identified the remains using wing formula and colour patterns of comparative material at the U.S. National Museum.

In the Pacific Ocean, this species breeds on small islands around Australia and New Zealand and is thought to migrate across the subtropical and tropical South Pacific to the west coast of South America (Pratt et al. 1987, Marchant and Higgins 1990).

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LITERATURE CITED


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**REVIEW**


Current Ornithology is a series devoted exclusively to reviews in ornithology. About six topics are chosen for each volume from outlines submitted by helpful authors, with the collection providing an idiosyncratic perspective on current research trends.

The reviews are fascinating, but the reading may not be easy. Vol 10 includes chapters on low phylogenetic history might influence mating and parental care systems, trophic structure in raptor communities, the use of matrix algebra for studying demography, nocturnal behaviour in waterbirds, latitudinal gradients in species diversity, and patterns of development. The volume of information is overwhelming (there are 57 pages of references alone), but the book represents an excellent source of material on the topics being considered. Here are some snippets to whet the appetite:

It may well be that the predominance of exclusive male parental care (an unusual parental care system in birds) in modern rats indicates that this was the system used by the original rats.