

BARC CASES PERTAINING TO NSW DECIDED IN 2020

1085	Hudsonian Godwit	Blakehurst, Sydney	September 25, 2019	Accepted
1086	Semipalmated Plover	Shoalhaven Heads	October 2, 2019	Accepted
1090	South Island Oystercatcher	Coila Lake	October 14, 2019	Accepted
1099	Kentish Plover	Towra Point	December 14, 2019	Accepted
1102	Cook's Petrel	Britannia Sea Mounts	October 5, 2019	Accepted
1104	Magenta Petrel	NSW offshore	2009 – 2012	Accepted
1105	Short-eared Owl	Port Botany	December 8, 2019	Not Accepted
1107	Pycroft's Petrel	off Newcastle	October 12, 2002	Not Accepted
1108	Pycroft's Petrel	Broughton Island	October 25, 2019	Accepted
1124	Band-rumped Storm Petrel	160NM ESE of Coff's H.	February 27, 2020	Accepted
1132	South Island Oystercatcher	Hastings Point	April 6, 2020	Not Accepted

CASE SUMMARIES

Case 1085: This case concerned the sighting of a Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica* on a beach at Blakehurst on September 25, 2019. The bird was seen and photographed by many observers until at least October 14, 2019. The dark underwing coverts, faintly upturned bill, smooth grey underparts and subtle differences to the supercilium were all diagnostic of a Hudsonian Godwit in adult basic plumage. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 10th confirmed Australian record and the 4th for NSW. Chris Rehberg

Case 1086: This case concerned the sighting of a Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* at Shoalhaven Heads on October 2, 2019. The bird was seen and photographed by many observers until October 6, 2019. The submission described all the salient features which separate this species from the very similar Common Ringed Plover and the committee voted unanimously for acceptance noting that the bird was either an adult male in breeding plumage or at least close to full breeding plumage. It becomes the 6th confirmed Australian record and the 3rd for NSW. Brian Speechly

Case 1090: This case concerned the sighting of a South Island Oystercatcher *Haematopus finschi* at Coila Lake, Tuross Head on September 14 and 15, 2019. The photographs and description left no doubt as to the identification with the bird having a longer bill, shorter legs, distinctive wing pattern, leg colour and size in comparison to Australian Pied Oystercatcher. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 11th confirmed Australian record and the 7th for NSW. Demetrios Bertzelos

Case 1099: This case concerned the sighting of a Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* at Bonna Point Reserve and Towra Point Aquatic Reserve from December 14, 2019 until January 16, 2020. The bird, which was in non breeding plumage, was seen and photographed by many observers during this period. The submission contained a detailed description and a series of photographs which clearly eliminated other possible confusion species including Red-capped Plover, Javan Plover,

White-faced Plover and Malaysian Plover. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and suggested that the bird was likely to be a juvenile or first winter immature of the nominate race *alexandrines* or *C. a. nihonensis*. It becomes the 4th confirmed Australian record and the 2nd for NSW. Jesse Gibson

Case 1102: This case concerned the sighting of up to 20 Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii* on a pelagic trip to the Britannia Sea Mount of Qld and NSW on October 5 and 6, 2019. The submission included an excellent series of photographs which clearly depicted Cook's Petrels and a detailed description which clearly eliminated the very similar Pycroft's Petrel and all other 'cookalaria' petrels. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and commented that this was undoubtedly a migration event. This becomes the 10th confirmed Australian record but, with evidence that this species is becoming a more frequent visitor to the east coast of Australia, it has been removed from the BARC Review List. Paul Walbridge

Case 1104: This unusual case concerned a number of Magenta Petrel *Pterodroma magenta* (also known as the Chatham Island Taiko) recorded in the Tasman Sea within the Australian Economic Exclusion Zone off the coast of NSW, QLD, Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island in the period from May 4, 2009 to September 19, 2012. The birds were captured on their breeding grounds on the Chatham Islands and fitted with geolocator tags for extended periods by the New Zealand Department of Conservation. The tracking data showed that three of these birds entered NSW and QLD waters at various times during the period stated above and the committee voted unanimously in favour of the acceptance of these tracking records. They become the first, second and third records for Australia and for NSW. David James

Case 1105: This case concerned the discovery of a dead Short-eared Owl *Asio Flammeus* on a driveway next to the container terminal at Port Botany. The description and photographs provided clearly showed the bird to be a Short-eared Owl but only four of the eight committee members agreed that this record should be accepted as a new bird for Australia. Those that dissented pointed out that there was a chance that the bird could have been on a ship before leaving its originating port or, even, could have flown out of a container when opened in Port Botany meaning that there was no way of establishing whether it arrived of its own accord. The verdict was non acceptance although the identity was unanimously confirmed as a Short-eared Owl.

Case 1107: This case concerned the sighting of a claimed Pycroft's Petrel *Pterodroma pycrofti* off Newcastle on October 12, 2002. The bird was in view for about a minute and some low quality photographs were taken but, with the lack of good field description or detailed images, it was a very difficult case for the committee to assess. The voting went to two rounds and outside expert opinion was sought from Hadoram Shirihai and Kirk Zufelt but consensus was not reached. The bird could well have been a Pycroft's Petrel but the supporting description and photographs were just not sufficient to be sure and the report was not accepted.

Case 1108: This case concerned the discovery of a Pycroft's Petrel *Pterodroma pycrofti* in an artificial nest box on Broughton Island on October 25 and 26, 2019. The box contained two birds, one being a Gould's Petrel and the other a Pycroft's Petrel. The photographs taken clearly ruled out Stejneger's Petrel as a possibility and the wing measurements taken ruled out both De Filippi's Petrel and Cook's Petrel. The committee voted unanimously to accept this record and it becomes the first confirmed record for Australia and for NSW. Alan Stuart and Tom Clarke

Case 1124: This case concerned the sighting of three Band-rumped Storm Petrel *Hydrobates castro* around the Derwent Hunter Tablemount approximately midway between Coff's Harbour and Lord Howe Island on February 27, 2020. The submission provided an excellent summary as to how the birds were identified and included a number of supportive photographs. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 2nd confirmed record for Australia and for

NSW, the previous record being at the Britannia Seamounts on April 9, 2016 (BARC Case 971).
Steve Howell

Case 1132: This case concerned the claimed sighting of a South Island Oystercatcher *Haematopus finschi* at the mouth of Cudgera Creek, Hastings Point on April 6, 2020. A series of photographs were provided along with a brief description which relied on the extent of white on the shoulder and underwing to eliminate Australian Pied Oystercatcher. Committee members analysed the photographs carefully and determined that the bird was actually an Australian Pied Oystercatcher based on the extent of white breast tabs in front of the wing, leg length, length and thickness of the bill, extent of white on the rump and the amount of white in the secondary coverts of the underwing. The report was therefore not accepted.

Roger McGovern

Secretary NSW Ornithological Records Appraisal Committee

January 12, 2021