

### BARC CASES PERTAINING TO NSW DECIDED IN 2023

1207	Uniform Swiftlet	Munmorah SRA	November 8, 2021	Accepted
1248	Glossy Swiftlet	Batemans Bay	June 13, 2022	Not Accepted
1254	Common Tern (nominate)	Hastings Point	February 4, 2022	Accepted
1259	New Caledonian Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	April 13, 2014	Accepted
1263	New Caledonian Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	February 14, 2021	Accepted
1264	New Caledonian Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	May 8, 2021	Accepted
1265	New Caledonian Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	May 9, 2021	Accepted
1267	New Caledonian Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	March 6, 2022	Accepted
1270	Kentish Plover	Farquhar Inlet	December 31, 2022	Accepted
1272	Kentish Plover	Farquhar Inlet	December 5, 2022	Accepted
1282	Hudsonian Godwit	South West Rocks	May 10 – 12, 2023	Accepted
1285	Aleutian Tern	Farquhar Inlet	2022 – 23 season	Accepted
1288	Band-rumped Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	April 1 – 3, 2023	Accepted
1289	Kentish Plover	Farquhar Inlet	January 7, 2021	Accepted

### CASE SUMMARIES

**Case 1207:** This case concerns the remarkable sighting of a Uniform Swiftlet *Aerodramus vanikorensis* seen and well photographed at Wybung Head, Munmorah State Recreation Area on November 8, 2021. The description and excellent photographs ruled out the possibility of Edible-nest Swiftlet, Australian Swiftlet and Himalayan Swiftlet. The committee voted in favour of acceptance with one dissenting member feeling that the submission did not satisfactorily rule out Mountain Swiftlet or Mossy-nest Swiftlet and, although there have been two specimen records of Uniform Swiftlet from the tip of Cape York, this case becomes the first record to be accepted by BARC. Allan Benson and Luke Ullrich

**Case 1248:** This case concerns the claimed sighting of a Glossy Swiftlet *Collocalia esculenta* at the Batemans Bay Water Gardens on June 13, 2022. The bird was seen very briefly to within 30 metres and one photograph was obtained. The committee found this submission particularly difficult to assess and six members voted against acceptance for a variety of reasons:

- The bird shows paler 'saddle bags' encroaching onto a narrow dark central rump, a feature which does not appear on published photographs of the species.
- There is no image of the bird's tail fork or underparts.

- Glossy Swiftlets normally show pale bellies but this feature was not seen or noted.
- The probability of subspecies *stresemanni* or *spilura*, both of which are non-migratory, occurring in NSW is remote in the extreme.

After a lengthy review of this submission, it was determined that the bird is unidentifiable at this point in time.

**Case 1254:** This case concerns the sighting of a nominate race Common Tern *Sterna hirundo hirundo* at Hastings Point on February 4, 2022. The bird was seen in association with Common Terns *S. h. longipennis* (the usual subspecies in Australia) and Little Terns *Sternula albifrons*. The photographs and supporting description revealed a 'commic' tern in full alternate plumage with a prominent red bill and legs combined with a complete black cap. The bill shape, leg length and the grey cast to the underparts ruled out the possibility of Roseate Tern and Arctic Tern. Members were comfortable that the bird was not of the usual subspecies *S. h. longipennis* but some members felt it difficult to separate between *S. h. hirundo* and *S. h. tibetana*, a race which has reached South Africa. This is the first time that BARC has reviewed a Common Tern of the nominate subspecies and it was accepted as either *S. h. hirundo* or *S. h. tibetana*. Heath Milne, Marama Hopkins and Dion Hobcroft

**Case 1259**

**Case 1263**

**Case 1264**

**Case 1265**

**Case 1267:** These five cases, combined in a single submission which also involved five cases from Queensland waters, involve multiple sightings of New Caledonian Storm Petrel *Fregetta lineate* from the Britannia Seamount between April 13, 2014 and March 6, 2022. The submissions were prompted by the recent recognition of New Caledonian Storm Petrel as a valid species (Bretagnolle et al 2022). In each case the photographs were instrumental in confirming the identity and ruling out the very similar New Zealand Storm Petrel *F. maoriana*. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance of all five cases and there are now six records confirmed for BARC in NSW and a total of 14 confirmed records for Australia. Paul Walbridge, Dr David Stewart and Brian Russell

**Case 1270:** This case concerns the sighting of a Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* at Farquhar Inlet, Old Bar from December 31, 2022 to January 3, 2023. The bird was seen well and photographs were provided to support the submission. The bird's size, relatively dark legs and the pale collar were the key characteristics noted to eliminate Red-capped Plover, Double-banded Plover and Siberian (Lesser) Sand Plover. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 7<sup>th</sup> record to be accepted by BARC. Most taxonomies now split Kentish Plover with race *C. a. dealbatus* becoming White-faced Plover *C. dealbatus*. Tim Henderson

**Case 1272:** This case concerns the sighting of a Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* at Farquhar Inlet, Old Bar on December 5, 2022. This bird was considered to be a different individual to the one seen in the same period and locality by Tim Henderson (BARC Case 1270) although in the initial round of voting, two committee members expressed reservations that a different individual could be

present at the same time. However, in the second round of voting, the two dissenting members changed their votes to accept the record having agreed that this bird was certainly a different individual to that presented in BARC Case 1270. It becomes the 8<sup>th</sup> record of Kentish Plover to be accepted by BARC and, interestingly, there are further reports from the same location which have yet to be submitted to the committee. Chris Rehberg and Peter Stevens

**Case 1282:** This case concerns the sighting of a Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica* at Boyters Lane, South West Rocks between May 10 and May 12, 2023. The bird was seen well and the submission was supported by a series of photographs which confirmed the identity. The diagnostic dark underwing coverts, supercilium which bulges above the lores and slightly upturned bill were all clearly visible. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 19<sup>th</sup> record to be accepted by BARC with six of these having been recorded in NSW. Simon Gorta, Max Breckenridge and Nathan Ruser

**Case 1285:** This submission concerns the occurrence of Aleutian Tern *Onychoprion aleuticus* at the Manning River estuary covering all records for the entire 2022/2023 season with the birds being recorded in the period from November 20, 2022 through January 29, 2023. The photographs are conclusive and leave no doubt as to the identity and the committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance. It is not entirely clear exactly how many birds were present with images revealing from one to nine individuals at any one time. This becomes the sixth record of Aleutian Tern to be accepted by BARC. As yet there have been no confirmed records of the species from elsewhere in Australia although there is an unconfirmed report from the Cape York Peninsula and radio tracking data has indicated their presence near Christmas Island. Greg McLachlan

**Case 1288:** This case concerns the sighting of up to eleven Band-rumped Storm Petrel *Hydrobates castro* on the Britannia Seamount on April 1, 2 and 3, 2023. Five birds were seen on April 1, one bird was seen on April 2 and five birds were seen on April 3. Conditions were ideal and all on board saw the birds well. Excellent diagnostic photographs were obtained to aid in confirming the identification and the description provided details of the features used to rule out the very similar Wilson's and Leach's Storm Petrels. Size, wing shape, lack of foot projection, shallow forked tail, extent and shape of the white rump and a covert bar not reaching the carpal joint were all noted. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 7<sup>th</sup> accepted record for Australia. Paul Walbridge

**Case 1289:** This case concerns the sighting of a Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* at Farquhar Inlet, Old Bar on January 7, 2021. This bird was observed on open tidal mudflats near the mouth of the south channel of the Manning River. A remarkable set of photographic images were included with the submission showing the bird to be in alternate (breeding) plumage. The observers noted warm grey upperparts, a complete white hind collar, bold black facial stripe, white frons and supercilium extending beyond the back of the eye and narrow bold black breast tabs. The bird was considered to be an adult male and most likely of the nominate race *C. a. nihonensis*. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 10<sup>th</sup> confirmed record for Australia. Liam Murphy

Roger McGovern

Secretary NSW Ornithological Records Appraisal Committee

January 11, 2024