

## SHORT NOTES

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### SIGHTING OF BULLER'S SHEARWATERS IN FIJIAN AND TONGAN WATERS

During May 1972, when I was on passage from Suva to Niue Island aboard m.v. *Waimea*, Buller's Shearwaters (*Puffinus bulleri*) were sighted on two successive days.

a. 22 May 1972, position 18°30'S 178°13'W, vessel some 15 miles to the east of the Lau Group, Fiji. One large shearwater, flying in long glides with occasional wing beats close to the sea surface, was seen near the ship. Upperparts appeared grey-brown with a distinctive dark 'flattened M' across the wings and back. Tail, crown and nape and bill also appeared dark. Underparts including underwing were all white.

b. 23 May 1972, position 18°39'S 173°16'W, 40 miles east of 'Uta Vava'u, Tonga. Three Buller's Shearwaters were seen at close quarters and positively identified. These birds were flying north close to the sea surface. In addition two more large shearwaters, dark upperparts and white below were seen flying north but were too far away for positive identification as Bullers.

So far as I can determine from the available literature (cf. Jenkins 1967, 1973) there have been no previous sight records in the Fijian and Tongan areas. The major migration route through the tropics has not yet been discovered (King 1967).

### REFERENCES

- JENKINS, J. A. F. 1967. Unusual records of birds at sea. *Notornis* XIV (3): 153.  
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KING, W. B. 1967. Seabirds of the Tropical Pacific Ocean, Preliminary Smithsonian Identification Manual. Pp. xxxii + 1-126, pls 1-11. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.

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