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SIGHTING OF A YELLOW-NOSED MOLLYMAWK
OFF STEWART ISLAND

The recent record of a Yellow-nosed Mollymawk (*Diomedea chlororhynchus*) at the Chatham Islands (Robertson 1975, *Notornis* 22: 342-344) has finally prompted me to record a sighting of this species made near South Cape, Stewart Island. This bird was seen about two kilometres west of South Cape (47° 18'S, 167° 31'E), at about midday on 14 February 1974 by J. M. Clark, R. Schofield and myself. It was watched both in flight and on the water for several minutes and at times was less than 50 metres from us.

The head, neck and breast were entirely white, except for dark brown or black markings around the eye. The bill was entirely black, and the feet fleshy grey. The dorsal side of the wings, the mantle and the tail were black. The under wing was predominantly white, with very narrow black margins. These margins were too narrow for the bird to be a Black-browed Mollymawk (*Diomedea melanophris*). The bird was noticeably smaller than a Shy Mollymawk (*Diomedea cauta cauta*) which it settled beside at one stage.

The black bill is characteristic of immature Mollymawks and the combination of the almost white underwing, entirely black bill and white head indicates it was a Yellow-nosed Mollymawk (Serventy *et al.* 1971, *Handbook of Australian Sea-birds*, Sydney: Reed: 76).

This observation was made while aboard the fishing vessel *Kowhai* (Skipper Murray Schofield). Dr J. Warham helped confirm my identification of the bird, and he and Dr W. Threlfall criticized the manuscript.

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