

observed further. Its alar bar was distinct and irregular, and the white or buffy tip to its tail was not seen. It was probably an immature bird, as it was either in eclipse or juvenile plumage. Evidently it was spending the winter in New Zealand.

M. J. IMBER

(All previous records of the Hudsonian Godwit in the South Island have come from L. Ellesmere. According to the Checklist the last of these was in 1921.—Ed.)

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# TROPICAL TERNS ASHORE ON THE AUCKLAND WEST COAST

On 22/5/60 the remains of a White Tern (*Gygis alba*) were found on Bethell's Beach (Te Henga) on the Auckland west coast by two schoolboys, N. J. Ledgerd and B. Jones, who accurately identified the remains and brought them to me. The specimen is very battered, but enough is left to enable a certain identification to be made. The skull, with its distinctively upcurving lower mandible, is intact; the feathers are strikingly white and four surviving primaries show the dusky shafts which are mentioned in all authoritative descriptions of this small white tropical tern. Feet and tail are missing; so that the only significant measurement which this specimen provides is of the exposed culmen, 39 mm.

The bird had obviously been ashore for some time and must have strayed south into the Tasman, possibly from Norfolk Island in late summer or autumn, the season when other tropical sea-birds such as Bosun-birds, Frigate-birds, Brown Boobies are most frequently reported off the New Zealand coast.

The half-dozen previous records of the Sooty Tern (*S. fuscata*) in New Zealand all seem to show that it may be expected off the coast of the North Island in late summer especially after a northerly blow. It was therefore with some surprise that I was asked to examine two specimens which had been driven ashore in the third week of August, 1960.

During a stay at Bethells from August 16-20, 1960, Mr. N. M. Gleeson patrolled the beach daily, usually finding a few prions (*P. turtur*, *salvini*, *belcheri*). On August 19 he picked up, soon after it came ashore, the first Sooty Tern (*S. fuscata*) to be recorded in New Zealand since 1951. Then on 23/8/60 M. J. Hogg, N. J. Ledgerd and P. D. G. Skegg visited Muriwai to find that the beach was strewn for some miles with wrecked sea-birds, most of which must have been cast ashore in the previous week. The wrecked birds were mostly tubinares of southerly origin and included, among many others, Gray-headed and Buller's Mollymawks, prions of five species and single specimens of Blue (*H. caerulea*), Gray (*Pr. cinerea*) and Westland (*Pr. westlandica*) Petrels. Curiously out of place among these frequenters of colder seas was a second Sooty Tern.

Both specimens, which appear to be adults in full breeding dress with very long tail streamers, were measured.

	Date	Wing	Tarsus	Bill	Tail	Depth of fork
(a) Bethells	19/8/60	298	21.5	42	206	114 m.m.
(b) Muriwai	23/8/60	297	21	47	201	108 m.m.

The measurements of these two birds for wings and tail do not agree very closely with those given by Oliver (1955, p. 342).

R. B. SIBSON