

SHORT NOTE

First record of Salvin's albatross (*Thalassarche salvini*) in Uruguayan waters

SEBASTIÁN JIMÉNEZ

Laboratorio de Recursos Pelágicos, Dirección Nacional de Recursos Acuáticos, Constituyente 1497, C.P.11.200, Montevideo, Uruguay, and Proyecto Albatros y Petreles – Uruguay. Centro de Investigación y Conservación Marina (CICMAR), Uruguay

The breeding range of Salvin's albatross (*Thalassarche salvini*) is virtually restricted to New Zealand, with an estimated population of about 32,000 pairs, 96% of which are concentrated on the Bounty Is and the remaining at The Snares Is (ACAP 2009). Additionally, a few breeding records have been reported from Chatham (New Zealand) and Crozet (Indian Ocean) Is (Jouventin 1990; Croxall & Gales 1998; ACAP 2009). Non-breeding birds move across the Pacific Ocean to Chile and Peru, where Salvin's albatross is abundant (Tickell 2000; Arata *et al.* 2003; Spear *et al.* 2003; Cabezas *et al.* 2009). In contrast, there are only scattered records of Salvin's albatrosses in the Atlantic Ocean. It is a rare vagrant in southern African waters (Hockey *et al.* 2005 in Visser *et al.* 2009), whereas in the central south Atlantic, a single bird was recorded at Gough I (Visser *et al.* 2009). In the southwest Atlantic, another bird was banded at South Georgia (Prince & Croxall 1983) and recorded a few years later breeding on Penguin I, Crozet (Prince & Croxall 1996). Some birds reach the Atlantic coast of South America through Cape Horn-Drake Passage (Cabezas *et al.*

2009); in fact, an individual was recorded on the Patagonian shelf, Argentina (Seco Pon *et al.* 2007). Prince & Croxall (1983, 1996) also reported that Salvin's albatross occasionally reaches Argentina and White *et al.* (2002) reported 1 adult sighted near Islas Malvinas/Falkland Is. Here, the occurrence of Salvin's albatross is documented for the first time in Uruguayan waters, providing further evidence that the distribution of this species extends to the southwest Atlantic Ocean.

On 24 May 2013 at 12:55 h, a Salvin's albatross was observed from the stern of the research vessel RV *Aldebarán* on the Uruguayan slope (36° 44' 42" S – 53° 45' 46" W). The albatross had a grey bill with a paler yellow culmen and a dark spot on the tip of the mandible, its head was grey, except for the white forehead and crown (Fig. 1). These features indicated that it was an adult Salvin's albatross (Onley & Scofield 2007). The dark bases of primaries on the underwing (Fig. 1) were also useful to distinguish this albatross from about 10 shy-type albatrosses (mostly adults or older immatures), which were sighted at the same moment. Molecular identification of these latter albatrosses has confirmed that white-capped albatross (*T. steadi*) occurs in this area (Jiménez *et al.* 2009, unpubl. data).

Received 27 Jul 2013; accepted 23 Aug 2013

Correspondence: jimenezpsebastian@gmail.com

The Salvin's albatross was symmetrically moulting primaries (P10 and apparently also P9; see Fig. 1). Other seabirds observed around the vessel were southern royal albatross (*Diomedea epomophora*), black-browed albatross (*T. melanophris*), southern giant petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*), white-chinned petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*), cape petrel (*Daption capense*), Atlantic petrel (*Pterodroma incerta*), Wilson's storm petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) and Magellanic penguin (*Spheniscus magellanicus*).

The sighting reported here constitutes the first record of Salvin's albatross for Uruguayan waters. Although there have been numerous seabird counts from longline vessels over the Uruguayan slope in recent years (Jiménez *et al.* 2011, 2012, *unpubl. data*), this species was never recorded previously. This highlights the rareness of Salvin's albatrosses in the region and may suggest that its occurrence over Uruguayan waters is rather sporadic.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank to Martin Abreu, Graham Robertson and Paul Scofield for their comments on the picture and Federico Mas for his comments on the text. I also want to express my gratitude to the crew of R/V *Aldebarán* and colleagues of the Laboratorio de Recursos Pelágicos of the Dirección Nacional de Recursos Acuáticos (DINARA).

LITERATURE CITED

- ACAP, 2009. ACAP species assessments: Salvin's albatross *Thalassarche steadi*. <http://www.acap.aq>. Accessed 20 February 2013.
- Arata, J. 2003. New record of Salvin's albatross (*Thalassarche salvini*) at the Diego Ramirez Islands, Chile. *Notornis* 50: 169–171.
- Cabezas, L.A.; Moreno, C.A.; Arata, J. 2009. New records of Salvin's albatross (*Thalassarche salvini*) from fishing boats off southern Chile. *Polar Biology* 32: 947–951.
- Croxall, J.P.; Gales, R. 1998. An assessment of the conservation status of albatrosses. pp. 46–65 In: Robertson, G.; Gales, R. (ed.) *Albatross biology and conservation*. Chipping Norton: Surrey Beatty & Sons.
- Jiménez, S.; Domingo, A.; Márquez, A.; Abreu, M.; D'Anatro, A.; Pereira, A. 2009. Interactions of long-line fishing with seabirds in the southwestern Atlantic Ocean, with a focus on white-capped albatrosses (*Thalassarche steadi*). *Emu* 109: 321–326.
- Jiménez, S.; Domingo, A.; Abreu, M.; Brazeiro, A. 2011. Structure of the seabird assemblage associated with pelagic longline vessels in the southwestern Atlantic: implications on bycatch. *Endangered Species Research* 15: 241–254.
- Jiménez, S.; Domingo, A.; Abreu, M.; Brazeiro, A. 2012. Bycatch susceptibility in pelagic longline fisheries: are albatrosses affected by the diving behaviour of medium-sized petrels? *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems* 22: 436–445.
- Jouventin, P. 1990. Shy albatrosses *Diomedea cauta salvini* breeding on Penguin Island, Crozet Archipelago, Indian Ocean. *Ibis* 132: 126–127.
- Onley, D.; Scofield, P. 2007. *Albatrosses, petrels and shearwaters of the world*. London: Christopher Helm.
- Prince, P.A.; Croxall, J.P. 1983. Birds of South Georgia: new records and re-evaluations of status. *British Antarctic Survey Bulletin* 59: 15–27.
- Prince, P.A.; Croxall, J.P. 1996. The birds of South Georgia. *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 116: 81–104.
- Seco Pon, J.P.; Weinecke, B.; Robertson, G. 2007. First record of Salvin's albatross (*Thalassarche salvini*) on the Patagonian Shelf. *Notornis* 54: 49–51.
- Spear, L.B.; Ainley, D.G.; Webb, S.W. 2003. Distribution, abundance and behaviour of Buller's, Chatham Island and Salvin's albatrosses of Chile and Peru. *Ibis* 145: 253–269.
- Tickell, W.L.N. 2000. *Albatrosses*. London and New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Visser, P.; Louw, H.; Cuthbert, R.; Ryan, P. 2009. Salvin's albatross *Thalassarche salvini* on Gough Island, South Atlantic. *Bulletin of the African Bird Club* 16: 215–216.
- White, R.W.; Gillon, K.W.; Black, A.D.; Reid, J.B. 2002. *The distribution of seabirds and marine mammals in Falkland Island waters*. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.



Fig. 1. Salvin's Albatross observed in Uruguayan waters (36° 44' 42" S – 53° 45' 46" W) on 24 May 2013.

Keywords Salvin's albatross; non-breeding; southwest Atlantic; new record