

## Vagrant and extra-limital bird records accepted by the Birds New Zealand Records Appraisal Committee 2021–2022

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**Abstract:** We report Records Appraisal Committee (RAC) decisions regarding Unusual Bird Reports received between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2022. Among the 160 submissions accepted by the RAC were the first New Zealand records of black tern (*Chlidonias niger*), black-naped tern (*Sterna sumatrana*), and Matsudaira's storm petrel (*Hydrobates matsudairae*). We also report the second accepted sightings of northern pintail (*Anas acuta*) and bridled tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*), the third accepted sightings of long-toed stint (*Calidris subminuta*) and grey-backed tern (*Onychoprion lunatus*), and the third to fifth accepted records of Adelie penguin (*Pygoscelis adeliae*). Other notable records included the first record of long-tailed cuckoo (*Eudynamys taitensis*) from Campbell Island and of sooty tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) from the Chatham Islands.

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### INTRODUCTION

Birds New Zealand (Birds NZ) requires sightings of vagrant or extra-limital bird species, or species otherwise considered to be extinct, to be verified by the Records Appraisal Committee (RAC) before

the records can be presented as accepted New Zealand records in the periodicals *Notornis*, *New Zealand Birds*, and *Ornithological Society of New Zealand Occasional Publications*, or in other books and websites published by Birds NZ.

We report RAC decisions made on Unusual Bird Reports (UBRs) received between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2022, following on from the last report of the RAC (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

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Results of RAC decisions are posted on the Unusual Bird Report website (<http://rare.birds.org.nz/>) every 2 months. The website provides a means for observers to determine whether a UBR has already been submitted for any vagrant bird seen or reported, and (within 2–4 months) to see the RAC decision on the UBR. This biennial report provides more detail about sightings than what is presented on the website, including providing context for the significance of each sighting.

Each UBR received is given a number whereby the first four digits represent the year the record was received and the last three digits the chronological sequence of receipt within that year. These reference numbers are given for each record below and match those on the Unusual Bird Report website. Nomenclature and taxonomic sequence follow Checklist Committee (2022). Where images of birds reported here have been published on New Zealand Birds Online (NZBO, [www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz](http://www.nzbirdsonline.org.nz), viewed 15 March 2023) this is mentioned in the text. ‘Kermadec pelagic’ refers to submissions by Fraser Gurney with supporting images and information from Tim Barnard, Harry Boorman, Scott Brooks, Igor Debski, Richard Fenner, Phil Hammond, Dave Howes, John Kyngdon, Hennie Peters, Ian Saville, Brent Stephenson, and Steve Wood.

The RAC convenor maintains a database of verified sightings of vagrant birds in New Zealand. Information from this database is presented below (sourced as “CMM, *unpubl. data*”) if it conflicts with or augments information from published sources.

## DECISIONS ON SUBMITTED SIGHTINGS

### Accepted records of vagrant and rare migrant species to New Zealand

#### Plumed whistling duck (*Dendrocygna eytoni*)

Five at Kopuawhara River mouth, Oraka beach, Mahia Peninsula, on 19 Apr 2022 (Janet & Bruce Campbell; UBR 2022/049). There are 16 previous accepted records of singles or flocks of up to 14 birds (Miskelly *et al.* 2017).

#### Chestnut-breasted shelduck (*Tadorna tadornoides*)

Two at Tip Lagoon, Invercargill, on 30 Oct 2020 (Sean Jacques; UBR 2021/004); one at Wairau Lagoons, Blenheim, on 30 Oct 2021 (Jacob Holland; UBR 2021/062). There are about 40 previous accepted records in New Zealand (Heather 1987; Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

#### Australian wood duck (*Chenonetta jubata*)

A total of 23 at Hoddy Estuary Park and Playhouse Café pond, Tasman, on 27 Jan 2022 (Alan Tennyson; UBR 2022/043). This submission reveals that a population derived from birds that arrived and

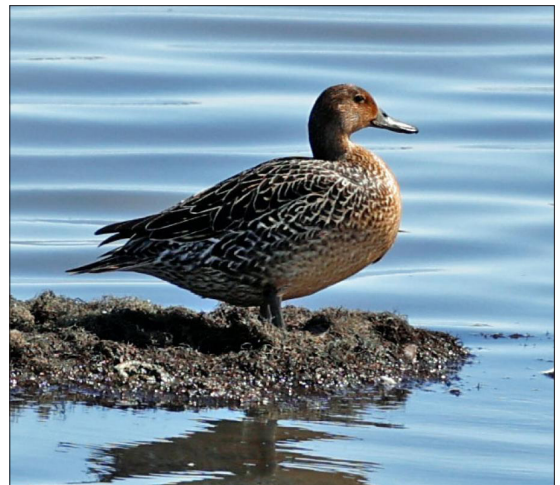
started breeding in the area in 2014 remains present (Cook *et al.* 2016; Miskelly *et al.* 2017).

#### Chestnut teal (*Anas castanea*)

One at Grovetown Lagoon, Marlborough, on 24 March 2022 (Bill Cash, Dan Burgin, Mike Bell, and Pat Crowe; UBR 2022/041); one at Travis Wetland, Canterbury, on 6 Jun 2022 (Noah Fenwick; UBR 2022/059); one at Sinclair Wetlands, Otago, on 17 Sep 2022 (Oscar Thomas and Ela Hunt; UBR 2022/087). There are 19 previous accepted records from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

#### Northern pintail (*Anas acuta*)

A female at Tip Lagoon, Invercargill, on 16 Oct 2021 (Sean Jacques; UBR 2021/060) was the second record from New Zealand (Petyt 1999). See Fig. 1, and images on NZBO.



**Figure 1.** Female northern pintail (*Anas acuta*) at Tip Lagoon, Invercargill, October 2021. Second New Zealand record (Photograph: Duncan Watson).

#### Northern shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*)

One at Bromley Oxidation Ponds, Christchurch, on 1 May 2021 (Warwick Allen and Harry Boorman; UBR 2021/032); one at Pegasus Wetland, Canterbury, on 8 May 2021 and 7 June 2022 (Bev Alexander, Gregor Tims, and Fraser Gurney; UBRs 2021/034 & 2022/058).

There was an unprecedented influx of northern shovelers in 2017–18, with at least five different birds present in June 2018 (Miskelly *et al.* 2019). They continued to be reported frequently during 2019 & 2020 (Miskelly *et al.* 2021), and it is likely that the bird or birds reported in 2021 & 2022 were the last survivors of this influx.

**Oriental cuckoo (*Cuculus optatus*)**

One near Lake Mapourika, Franz Josef, on 17 Nov 2021 (Lynda Giles; UBR 2021/064; images on NZBO) was the 37<sup>th</sup> accepted record from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**White-throated needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*)**

Three at Paringa River, West Coast, on 21 Nov 2021 (Oscar Thomas, Georgie Archibald, and Ela Hunt; UBR 2021/067). White-throated needletails are frequent vagrants to New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Greater sand plover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)**

One at Farewell Spit on 6 Nov 2021 and 8 Oct 2022 (Bradley Shields, Mark Ayre, Robin & Sandy Toy, David Melville, and Nina Visker; UBRs 2022/070 & 2022/089). Considered an annual visitor to New Zealand before 2010, these are only the fifth and sixth records accepted since then (Checklist Committee 2010; Miskelly *et al.* 2017, 2021).

**Little whimbrel (*Numenius minutus*)**

One at Riverton on 4 Feb 2021 (David Melville and Willie Cook; UBR 2021/010); one at Awarua Bay on 12 Dec 2021 (Dave Howes, John Kyngdon, and Scott Brooks; UBR 2022/003). Considered an uncommon visitor to New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022); there have been six accepted records since 2010 (CMM, *unpubl. data*).

**Black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa melanuroides*)**

One at New River estuary, Invercargill, on 31 Oct 2020 (Sean Jacques; UBR 2021/051); one at Motueka sandspit on 8–9 Oct 2021 (David Melville, Mark Ayre, Robin & Sandy Toy, Craig Martin, Bernd Huss, and Christine Grove; UBR 2021/058); one at Bell Island, Waimea Inlet, on 13 Nov 2021 and 26 Dec 2022 (David and Julia Melville; UBRs 2021/063 & 2022/122), one at Ahuriri estuary, Hawke's Bay, on 19 Nov 2022 (Lynne Anderson and David Thomas; UBR 2022/098). Black-tailed godwits are uncommon but probably annual visitors to New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Hudsonian godwit (*Limosa haemastica*)**

One at Bluff highway, Southland, on 13 June 2021 (Sean Jacques; UBR 2021/049); one at Aramoana saltmarsh, Otago, on 12 Jun 2022 (Oscar Thomas and Ela Hunt; UBR 2022/061). Hudsonian godwits are uncommon but probably annual visitors to New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Great knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*)**

One at Big Sand Island, Kaipara Harbour, on 22 Dec 2021 (Dave Howes, David Thomas, and John Kyngdon; UBR 2022/004). There are about 22 previous accepted records from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*)**

One at Miranda stilt ponds on 21 Feb 2022 (Fraser Gurney, Dave Howes, and Scott Brooks; UBR 2022/019) was the 15<sup>th</sup> accepted record from New Zealand, and the first since 2007 (Scofield 2008).

**Long-toed stint (*Calidris subminuta*)**

One at Lake Ellesmere on 24 Dec 2022 (Fraser Gurney, Samuel Amaris, and Adam Colley; UBR 2022/121; images on NZBO) was the third accepted record from New Zealand (Petch *et al.* 2002; Checklist Committee 2022). All three records were from Lake Ellesmere (*ibid.*)

**Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)**

One at Awarua Bay, Southland, on 22 Dec 2020 (Sean Jacques, John Kyngdon, and Phil Rhodes; UBR 2021/006); one at Mangawhai Heads on 10 Jan 2021 (Oscar Thomas and Ela Hunt; UBR 2021/008); one at Lake Ellesmere on 17 Mar 2021 (Warwick Allen and Harry Boorman; UBR 2021/026); one at Papakanui Spit, Kaipara Harbour, on 27 Mar 2021 (Tony Crocker and Helen & Greg Smith; UBR 2021/029); one at Ashley River estuary, Canterbury, on 17 Nov 2021 (Bev Alexander and Jill Hanna; UBR 2021/070). One or two sanderlings reach New Zealand most years (Miskelly *et al.* 2019, 2021).

**Western sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*)**

One at North Omaha sandspit, Whangateau Harbour, on 15 Feb 2022 (Sue Cook, Gwenda Pulham, and Marie-Louise Ward; UBR 2022/050); likely the same bird was at Clifton Beach, Whitford estuary, 68 km to the south, on 19 Feb 2022 (David Thomas, Bruce Keeley, Chris Cooke, Paul Godolphin, and Logan Milicich; UBR 2022/069; images on NZBO). These were the seventh and eighth accepted records from New Zealand, and the first since 1984 (Fennell 1986).

**Red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*)**

One at Waituna Lagoon, Southland, on 4 Feb 2022 (Pete McClelland; UBR 2022/039); one at Grovetown Lagoons, Blenheim, on 25 Nov 2022 (Dan Burgin, Bill Cash, Mike Bell, Samantha Ray, and Pat Crowe; UBR 2022/117). There are 15 previous accepted records from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Terek sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*)**

One at Awarua Bay, Southland, on 22 Dec 2020 (Sean Jacques, John Kyngdon, and Phil Rhodes; UBR 2021/003; images on NZBO); one at Big Sand Island, Kaipara Harbour, on 7 Aug 2021 (Warwick Allen and Harry Boorman; UBR 2021/048) and 7 Mar 2022 (Tony Crocker and 11 others; UBR 2022/038). These are the first accepted records since 2014 (Miskelly *et al.* 2015).

**Wandering tattler (*Tringa incana*)**

One at Spirits Bay, Far North, on 17 Mar 1990 (Alan Tennyson; UBR 2021/002) was incorrectly reported as a grey-tailed tattler (*T. brevipes*) in Taylor & Parrish (1991); one at Ocean Beach, Whangarei, on 22 Jan 2022 (Cathy Mitchell; UBR 2022/008). Wandering tattlers are uncommon but probably annual visitors to the New Zealand mainland (Checklist Committee 2022). Two at Waitangi West, Chatham Island, on 25 Jan & 2 Feb 2022 (Oscar Thomas and Ela Hunt; UBR 2022/017; images on NZBO) were the ninth accepted record from the Chatham Islands (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Common greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)**

One at Riverton on 3 May, 27 Jun & 3 Jul 2020 (Sean Jacques, Paul Jacques, Lloyd Blakie, Oscar Thomas, and Fraser Gurney; UBR 2021/005). Formerly a regular vagrant to New Zealand, greenshanks have been reported at a rate of less than one per annum since 2000 (Miskelly *et al.* 2015, 2021).

**South Polar skua (*Catharacta maccormicki*)**

Single birds east of Poor Knights Islands on 1 Nov 2020, 25 Oct 2021, 1 Nov 2022 & 10 Dec 2022 (Scott Brooks and 23 others; UBRs 2022/025, 2022/022, 2022/106 & 2022/107). One 66 km north of Raoul Island, Kermadec Islands, on 1 Apr 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/081; images on NZBO). South Polar skuas are scarce but likely annual migrants to New Zealand, with about 20 previous records (Miskelly *et al.* 2019, 2021).

**Long-tailed skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)**

One 30 km off Otago Peninsula on 29 Mar 2021 (Oscar Thomas; UBR 2021/027); one at Star of Bengal Bank north-east of New Zealand on 3 Apr 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/080; images on NZBO); singles east of Poor Knights Islands on 30 Oct 2021, 6 & 17 Nov 2022 & 10 Dec 2022 (Scott Brooks and 23 others; UBRs 2022/029, 2022/108, 2022/109 & 2022/110); one in Foveaux Strait on 11 Dec 2022 (Oscar Thomas, Ela Hunt, Sean Jacques, and Kit Hustler; UBR 2022/114). Long-tailed skuas are scarce annual migrants to New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).



**Figure 2.** Bridled tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) at Maunganui Bluff, Ninety Mile Beach, 13 February 2022. Second New Zealand record (Photograph: Scott Brooks).

**Grey-backed tern (*Onychoprion lunatus*)**

One at Papakanui Spit, Kaipara Harbour, on 18 Dec 2022 (Jacob Ball; UBR 2022/119) was the third accepted record from New Zealand (Scofield 2006).

**Bridled tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*)**

One at Maunganui Bluff, Ninety Mile Beach, on 13 Feb 2022 (Dave Howes and Scott Brooks; UBR 2022/014) was the second accepted record from New Zealand, and the first live record (Tunnickliffe & Langlands 1990). See Fig. 2, and images on NZBO.

**Little tern (*Sternula albifrons*)**

One at Argyle Beach, Bluff, on 10 & 12 Nov 2020, with three there 19 Oct to 26 Dec 2021 (Sean Jacques; UBRs 2021/050 & 2022/040); one at New River Estuary, Southland, on 26 Mar 2022 (Sean Jacques, Phil Rhodes, and Pete McClelland; UBR 2022/045). Little terns are annual migrants to northern New Zealand; however, they are scarce (and reportable) south of Cook Strait, with a few previous records as far south as Invercargill and Stewart Island (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Gull-billed tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)**

An adult and fledgling at the New River estuary, Invercargill, on 24 & 28 Feb 2021 (Sean Jacques, Joseph Bliss, Pete McClelland, Bob Rigter, and Joseph Roberts; UBR 2021/022) was the second recorded breeding of this species in New Zealand, and the first successful breeding (Miskelly *et al.* 2021; Jacques *et al.* 2023).

**Whiskered tern (*Chlidonias hybridus*)**

One at Mangere sewage ponds 5–7 Oct 2017 (Oscar Thomas, Phil Hammond, and Scott Brooks; UBR 2022/065); one at Upukerora River, Te Anau, on



21 Jan 2021 (Anja Kohler; UBR 2021/012); one at Pharazyn Reserve, Kapiti Coast, on 13 Oct 2021 (Jan Keast; UBR 2021/057); one at Waituna Lagoon, Southland, on 31 Jan 2022 (Bradley Shields; UBR 2022/011, images on NZBO); one at New River estuary, Southland 24 Jun–10 Jul 2022 (Sean Jacques, Rose Collen, Megan Bogisch, Joseph Roberts, and others; UBR 2022/075, images on NZBO).

Whiskered terns were reported at an unusually high rate during 2021–22. There had been 12 previous accepted records since the first report in 1977 (Heather & Jones 1979; Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

### Black tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

One at Waikanae estuary, Kapiti coast, on 21 Jan 2022 (Oscar Thomas, Ela Hunt, Sunita Singh, Helen Duncan, and Elizabeth Taylor; UBR 2022/006) was a new record for New Zealand (Thomas & Hunt 2023). The bird subsequently moved to Plimmerton, 25 km to the south (Alan Tennyson; UBR 2022/006A, 31 Jan & 7 Feb 2022). See Fig. 3, and images on NZBO. Based on the bird's white flanks, the small extent of the dark 'shoulder' patch, and its very dark head markings, this bird is considered to have been of the nominate (Eurasian/African) subspecies.



**Figure 3.** Black tern (*Chlidonias niger*) at Waikanae estuary, Kapiti coast, January 2022. First New Zealand record (Photograph: Oscar Thomas).

### Black-naped tern (*Sterna sumatrana*)

One at Muriwai gannet colony, Auckland west coast, on 13 Feb 2022 (Hayden Pye; UBR 2022/012, Fig. 4 and images on NZBO) was a new record for New Zealand. The bird died overnight, and is now a study skin and spread wing in Auckland Museum (LB15957), with the internal skeleton and soft tissues held at Te Papa (OR.031151). Based on the short bill-length of 33.7 mm, the bird was determined to be of the nominate subspecies, which occurs in the south-west Pacific, including around New Caledonia and the Coral Sea (Higgins & Davies 1996).



**Figure 4.** Black-naped tern (*Sterna sumatrana*) at Muriwai gannet colony, Auckland west coast, 13 February 2022. First New Zealand record (Photograph: Hayden Pye).

### Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*)

One at Waikanae River mouth on 28 Apr 2022 (Michael Szabo, Elizabeth Taylor, and Eddie Bright; UBR 2022/068); one 30 km off Moeraki on 13 Nov 2022 (Oskar Ehrhardt; UBR 2022/095). Arctic terns are presumed to be annual visitors to New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022).

### Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

One at Argyle Beach, Bluff, on 11 Nov 2021 (Sean Jacques; UBR 2022/042); one at Manawatu River mouth on 8 Jan & 3 Apr 2022 (Alan and Sam Tennyson; UBR 2022/048); one at Waikanae River mouth on 24 Jan, 9 Apr & 11 Dec 2022 (Alan Tennyson, Dave Howes, Bradley Shields, Phil Hammond, Paul Gibson, Jim Norris, Richard Fenner, and others; UBRs 2022/047 & 2022/115); one at Plimmerton, Wellington, on 8 Feb 2022 (Michael Szabo, Bob Rigter, Ken George, and Hamish Laing; UBR 2022/072); one at Island Bay, Wellington, on 26 Mar 2022 (Michael Szabo; UBR 2022/067); one at Milnthorpe Beach, Golden Bay, 6–12 Apr 2022 (Bradley Shields; UBR 2022/051).

There are about 65 accepted records of common terns from New Zealand, with nearly half of these being from the Manawatu estuary/Foxton Beach or from Waikanae, 49 km to the south (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

### Crested tern (*Thalasseus bergii*)

One dead on Maui Platform A, 35 km west of Cape Egmont on 11 Jul 2011 (Alan Tennyson on behalf of unknown observer; UBR 2022/053) becomes the 13<sup>th</sup> accepted record from New Zealand. The bird had been banded as a chick at Phillip Island, Victoria,

Australia on 22 Dec 2009. It was found dead (and disposed of overboard) 18 months later, after travelling 2,438 km. Its identification was based on the band number and details in the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (Michelle Bradshaw *pers. comm.* to AJDT).

#### **White-tailed tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*)**

One found alive at Onerahi, Whangarei, on 8 Feb 2022 (Scott Brooks and Robert Webb, Whangarei Native Bird Recovery Centre; UBR 2022/023). There have been 17 previous accepted records of this species in New Zealand, most recently in 2012 (Miskelly *et al.* 2013).

#### **King penguin (*Aptenodytes patagonicus*)**

One at Fortrose Spit, Catlins coast, on 15 Nov 2022 (Oscar Thomas; UBR 2022/096) was the seventh record of a king penguin from the South Island (Checklist Committee 2022).

#### **Adelie penguin (*Pygoscelis adeliae*)**

An adult at Birdlings Flat, Canterbury, on 11 Nov 2021 (Anita Spencer, Harry Singh, Allanah Purdie, Thomas Stracke, Kristina Schutt, and Pauline Howard; UBR 2021/065) and another at Scotts Landing, Manawatu, on 12 Nov 2021 (Michael Szabo on behalf of Malcolm Dellow and Peter & Kelsi Walker; UBR 2022/001); one dead on Masons Bay, Stewart Island, on 31 Dec 2021 (Colin Miskelly; UBR 2022/044). These were the third, fourth, and fifth records of the species from New Zealand, and included the second and third live records (Miskelly, Purdie *et al.* 2022).

#### **Royal penguin (*Eudyptes schlegeli*)**

One at Sarah Cove, Halfmoon Bay, Stewart Island, 24 Feb to 5 Mar 2022 (Brittany Mathias, Benjamin McClelland, Fraser Gurney, Matt Jones, and Will Abbott; UBRs 2022/064 & 2022/078) was the first record of this species from Stewart Island. There have been at least 11 records from the South Island and two from the southern North Island (Miskelly *et al.* 2019, 2021).

#### **Indian Ocean yellow-nosed albatross (*Thalassarche carteri*)**

One alive on Ninety Mile Beach, Far North, on 19 Sep 2021 subsequently died while in care (Richard Bresgi, Robert Webb and staff at Whangarei Native Bird Recovery Centre, and Scott Brooks; UBR 2022/035, Te Papa specimen OR.031103). This species was an annual visitor to northern New Zealand until the 1980s; since then, it has been reported only once or twice a decade (Miskelly *et al.* 2019; CMM, *unpubl. data*).

#### **Matsudaira's storm petrel (*Hydrobates matsudairae*)**

One found dead at Maukatia Bay, Muriwai, Auckland, on 27 May 2022 (Oscar Thomas on behalf of Susan Anderson; UBR 2022/055, Auckland Museum specimen LB16104) was the first record of this species from New Zealand. See Fig. 5, and images on NZBO.



**Figure 5.** Dead Matsudaira's storm petrel (*Hydrobates matsudairae*) found at Maukatia Bay, Muriwai, Auckland, 27 May 2022. First New Zealand record (Photograph: Susan Anderson).

#### **Antarctic petrel (*Thalassoica antarctica*)**

One at Birdlings Flat, Canterbury, on 31 May 2021 (Niall Muga, Fraser Gurney, Phil Crutchley, Georgie Archibald, and others; UBR 2022/116) was a rare live record from New Zealand. The only known previous report of live birds near the mainland was a second-hand report of multiple birds in Foveaux Strait in the 1978 winter (Barlow 1979).

#### **Providence petrel (*Pterodroma solandri*)**

One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 10 Jul 2022 (Scott Brooks and seven others; UBR 2022/092) was the sixth accepted record of the species from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2015).

#### **Juan Fernandez petrel (*Pterodroma externa*)**

One at Rangatira Island, Chatham Islands, on 24 Jan 2021 (Alan Tennyson, Graeme Taylor, Brent Stephenson, Alex Wilson, Erin Patterson, Helen Jonas, Rachel Hufton, and Andrea Rix; UBR 2021/016) was the eighth accepted record from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2006, 2015). There were multiple records of Juan Fernandez petrels on Rangatira Island during 1984–1999 (Imber *et al.* 1991; these are grouped as a single record in the Unusual Bird Report database).

**Stejneger's petrel (*Pterodroma longirostris*)**

One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 13 Oct 2022 (Aaron Skelton, Scott Brooks, and eight others; UBR 2022/091) was the second live record accepted from New Zealand, and the tenth overall (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Gould's petrel (*Pterodroma leucoptera*)**

One north-east of Tauranga on 28 Mar 2021; two north of the Kermadec Islands on 1 Apr 2021; one at Star of Bengal Banks, north-east of New Zealand, on 3 Apr 2021 (all Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBRs 2022/101, 2022/102 & 2022/103); one east of Poor Knights Islands on 10 Dec 2022 (Scott Brooks and nine others; UBR 2022/111). Most of the 40 or so records of Gould's petrels from New Zealand were beach-wrecked birds found between November and July (Bull 1943; Powlesland 1987). However, there are multiple at-sea records from the south-east Tasman Sea during December to April (Imber & Jenkins 1981). These latest records reveal that the species also occurs to the north-east of New Zealand during the same part of the year.

**Collared petrel (*Pterodroma brevipes*)**

One 68 km north of Raoul Island, Kermadec Islands, on 1 Apr 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/079; images on NZBO) was the fourth record from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Thin-billed prion (*Pachyptila belcheri*)**

Two off Kawhia on 8 May 2018 (Oscar Thomas and nine others; UBR2022/063). Thin-billed prions are regularly found dead on New Zealand beaches in winter (Powlesland 1989). However, the Records Appraisal Committee has accepted only three previous reports of birds seen at sea (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**Great shearwater (*Ardenna gravis*)**

One at Wreck Reef, Stewart Island, on 7 Apr 2011 (Brent Stephenson, Matt Jones, and Ty Jenkins; UBR 2021/019) was the fourth record from New Zealand, and was one of five sightings in April 2011 (Miskelly *et al.* 2013, 2021).

**Pink-footed shearwater (*Ardenna creatopus*)**

One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 24 Jul 2021 (Scott Brooks and eight others; UBR 2022/030, images on NZBO) was the eleventh record from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Great frigatebird (*Fregata minor*)**

One at Rangaunu Harbour entrance, Far North, on 13 Feb 2022 (Les Feasey, Scott Brooks, and Dave

Howes; UBR 2022/013); at least 43 at the Herald Islets, Kermadec Islands, on 30 Mar 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/084, images on NZBO). There are at least 17 previous records, with the only previous flock record being at least eight on and over the Herald Islets in March–April 2016 (Miskelly *et al.* 2017).

**Lesser frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*)**

One at Sandy Bay, Tutukaka, on 14 Feb 2022 (Irene & Crispin Middleton; UBR 2022/033). There are at least 41 previous records, with the most recent in 2018 (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**Frigatebird sp. (*Fregata* sp.)**

A frigatebird of uncertain specific identity was seen at Waihi Beach on 28 Jan 2021 (Greg Upton; UBR 2021/015).

**Red-footed booby (*Sula sula*)**

Three at Napier Islet, Kermadec Islands, on 30 Mar 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/082) was the fifth record of the species from New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2017, 2019, 2021). The image included with the submission showed a white-tailed bird, considered to be of the Indo-Pacific subspecies *S. s. rubripes*.

**Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster novaehollandiae*)**

One at Clive, Hawke's Bay, on 18 Nov 2022 (Steve Sutcliffe; UBR 2022/097) was the fifth record from New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Dollarbird (*Eurystomus orientalis*)**

Two at Upper Waiwera, Warkworth, on 24 Dec 2021 (Suzi Phillips; UBR 2021/074). There are about two dozen previous records, most recently in 2001 (Medway 2002).

**Nankeen kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*)**

One photographed at Otakeho, south Taranaki, on 2 May 2008 (Rod Le Fleming; UBR 2021/014). The nankeen kestrel is an infrequent straggler to New Zealand (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Accepted extra-limital records of New Zealand breeding species****New Zealand dabchick (*Poliocephalus rufopectus*)**

One at St Annes Lagoon, Cheviot, on 16 Jul 2021, with three there on 4 & 28 May 2022 (Matt Jones, Bev Alexander, and Jill Hanna; UBRs 2021/054 & 2022/057). New Zealand dabchicks are widespread in the North Island and have a small, recently established population in the Nelson and



Marlborough regions (Miskelly *et al.* 2019, 2021). They are no longer reportable in Marlborough, Nelson, and Golden Bay.

**Australasian little grebe (*Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*)**

One at Upper Moutere on 25 Nov 2021 (David Melville; UBR 2021/069). This rare breeding species is resident in Northland and North Auckland; however, there have been few records in the South Island since 2008 (Beauchamp 2019; Miskelly *et al.* 2015, 2019).

**Spotted dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*)**

One at Charing Cross Junction, Canterbury, 22 Sep 2021 (Andrew Crossland; UBR 2021/072). The submission referred to several eBird records from the same vicinity between 22 Dec 2020 and 20 Dec 2021. These include several sightings of 3–5 birds, with a maximum count of 5 by Fraser Gurney on 20 May 2021. Spotted doves are not recognised as being established in the South Island (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Long-tailed cuckoo (*Eudynamys taitensis*)**

One found dead at Northwest Bay, Campbell Island, on 6 Dec 2021 (Lindsay Wilson via Colin Miskelly; UBR 2022/016, tail feathers retained as Te Papa specimen OR.031059) was the first record from Campbell Island. Note that there are no confirmed records from the Auckland Islands (Miskelly *et al.* 2020), which are closer to the New Zealand mainland than Campbell Island.

**Northern New Zealand dotterel (*Charadrius obscurus aquilonius*)**

One at Karamea estuary on 18 Sep 2022 (Fraser Gurney and Facebook user “Karamea Wild”; UBR 2022/077) was the first accepted record of this subspecies from the South Island west coast, and the second South Island record (Dowding 2020).

**Subantarctic skua (*Catharacta antarctica*)**

One off the Canterbury coast on 29 Mar 2021 (Glenn Kincaid; UBR 2021/028). Within the New Zealand region, subantarctic skuas breed on the Chatham Islands and the subantarctic islands, with a few in Fiordland and the Stewart Island region (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Brown noddy (*Anous stolidus*)**

One at Muriwai, west Auckland, on 13 Jan 2022 (Sara and Lucy Dean; UBR 2022/066); one at the entrance to Whangarei Harbour on 18 Feb 2022 (Cathy & Peter Mitchell; UBR 2022/020). Within the

New Zealand region, brown noddies breed only on the Kermadec Islands (Veitch *et al.* 2004). There are three previous accepted records from the mainland, most recently in 2002 (Medway 2004).

**Black noddy (*Anous minutus*)**

One at Duffer’s Reef, outer Pelorus Sound, on 4 Mar 2021 (Mike Bell; UBR 2021/020); one at Maunganui Bluff, Ninety Mile Beach, on 13 Feb 2022 (Dave Howes and Scott Brooks; UBR 2022/015). Within the New Zealand region, black noddies breed only on the Kermadec Islands (Veitch *et al.* 2004). There are seven previous accepted records from the mainland (Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Sooty tern (*Onychoprion fuscata*)**

One at Rangatira Island, Chatham Islands, on 3 Feb 2021 (Alan Tennyson, Graeme Taylor, Erin Patterson, and Rachel Hufton; UBR 2021/011) was the first record from the Chatham Islands. One at Black Reef, Cape Kidnappers, on 4 Jan 2022 (Alan Tennyson; UBR 2022/120); one at Pukerua Bay, Wellington, on 5 Feb 2022 (Oscar Thomas and eight others; UBR 2022/007, images on NZBO); one dead on Muriwai Beach, west Auckland, on 26 Mar 2022 (UBR 2022/076; Auckland Museum specimen LB16103). Within the New Zealand region, sooty terns breed only on the Kermadec Islands, with at least 14 previous records from elsewhere in the region (Veitch *et al.* 2004; Miskelly *et al.* 2021).

**Eastern rockhopper penguin (*Eudyptes filholi*)**

One north of Ashburton River mouth on 24 Feb 2022 (Georgie Archibald and Noah Fenwick; UBR 2022/052); one at Nugget Point, Catlins, on 20 Apr 2022 (Oscar Thomas, Ela Hunt, and Nick Beckwith; UBR 2022/046). These are the third and fourth accepted South Island records, as most earlier records did not differentiate between the three species of rockhopper penguins (Miskelly *et al.* 2015, 2019).

**Erect-crested penguin (*Eudyptes sclateri*)**

One at Goughs Bay, Banks Peninsula, on 5 Mar 2016, with another there on 20 Feb 2021 (Philip Crutchley and Sandi Stewart; UBRs 2021/017 & 2021/023); one at Claverly Beach, Hundalees, on 19 Feb 2021 (Stephen Hill and Nora Kahler; UBR 2021/031); one at Onuku, Banks Peninsula, on 30 Jan 2022 (John Davey, Oliver Davey, and Katy Leeds; UBR 2022/010). Erect-crested penguins breed on the Bounty and Antipodes Islands, with at least one bird reported moulting on the east coast of the South Island and on the Chatham Islands during January–March most years (Miskelly *et al.* 2019, 2021).



**Grey-headed albatross (*Thalassarche chrysostoma*)**  
One off Whiritoa Beach, Coromandel, on 7 Jun 2021 (Russell Cannings and eight others; UBR 2021/042). This species is frequently found dead on mainland beaches (Powlesland 1985); however, this is the first live sighting from coastal waters accepted by the RAC.

**Chatham Island albatross (*Thalassarche eremita*)**  
Two east of the Poor Knights Islands on 17 Oct 2020 (images on NZBO), with one there on 30 Oct 2021, two on 23 Oct 2022, one on 1 Nov 2022, and one on 10 Dec 2022 (Scott Brooks and 26 others; UBRs 2022/036, 2022/037, 2022/090, 2022/104 & 2022/105). There are six earlier records from New Zealand mainland coastal waters in the RAC database, and at least 10 earlier unreported records (Miskelly *et al.* 2019). These recent records suggest that the species is regularly present off north-eastern New Zealand during October to December.

**Grey-backed storm petrel (*Garrodia nereis*)**  
One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 24 Jul 2021 (Scott Brooks and eight others; UBR 2022/034; images on NZBO). Grey-backed storm petrel is reportable north of Cook Strait. This is the first northern record accepted by the RAC. For earlier northern records, see Gaskin & Baird (2005) and Miskelly (2006).

**Black-bellied storm petrel (*Fregatta tropica*)**  
One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 6 Nov 2019 (Bruce Wedderburn; UBR 2022/021). Black-bellied storm petrel is reportable north of Banks Peninsula. This is the second northern record accepted by the RAC (Miskelly *et al.* 2011).

**White-headed petrel (*Pterodroma lessonii*)**  
One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 6 Oct 2019 (Scott Brooks and six others; UBR 2022/026); one off Whiritoa Beach, Coromandel, on 7 Jun 2021 (Russell Cannings and at least five others; UBR 2021/039). White-headed petrel is no longer a reportable species.

**Kermadec petrel (*Pterodroma neglecta*)**  
One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 31 Jan 2022 (Dave Howes, Scott Brooks, and at least six others; UBR 2022/005). Within the New Zealand region, Kermadec petrels breed only on the Kermadec Islands (Veitch *et al.* 2004). This is the fourth accepted record from coastal waters around New Zealand's main islands (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**Soft-plumaged petrel (*Pterodroma mollis*)**  
At least 18 off Whiritoa Beach, Coromandel,

on 7 Jun 2021 (Russell Cannings and seven others; UBR 2021/040). Soft-plumaged petrel is reportable north of Cook Strait. This is the seventh northern record accepted by the RAC (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**Mottled petrel (*Pterodroma inexpectata*)**  
One off Whiritoa Beach, Coromandel, on 7 Jun 2021 (Russell Cannings, Johannes Fischer, and five others; UBR 2021/041); one east of the Poor Knights Islands on 1 Nov 2020, with three there on 30 Oct 2021 (Scott Brooks and ten others; UBRs 2022/031 & 2022/032). Mottled petrel is no longer a reportable species.

**White-naped petrel (*Pterodroma cervicalis*)**  
One east of the Poor Knights Islands on 17 Feb 2020, with two there on 20 Feb 2021 (Scott Brooks and 11 others; UBRs 2022/024 & 2022/027, image on NZBO). There are ten previous records from coastal waters off the mainland (CMM, *unpubl. data*).

**Broad-billed prion (*Pachyptila vittata*)**  
One off Kaikoura on 13 Dec 2020 (Fraser Gurney, Luke Richards, and Marissa McDonald; UBR 2021/066). Although commonly found dead on New Zealand beaches (Powlesland 1989), live broad-billed prions are reportable north of Banks Peninsula. This is the second northern record accepted by the RAC (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**Antarctic prion (*Pachyptila desolata*)**  
One south-west of the Kermadec Islands on 27 Mar 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/083, images on NZBO); two east of Poor Knights Islands on both 10 & 30 Jul 2022 (Scott Brooks and 13 others; UBRs 2022/093 & 2022/094). Although commonly found dead on New Zealand beaches (Powlesland 1989), live Antarctic prions are reportable north of Banks Peninsula. There was one previous northern record accepted by the RAC (Miskelly *et al.* 2019).

**Wedge-tailed shearwater (*Ardenna pacifica*)**  
Singles east of the Poor Knights Islands on 17 Feb 2020 and 17 Dec 2022 (Scott Brooks and 12 others; UBRs 2022/028 & 2022/112); one in the outer Bay of Plenty on 26 March 2021 (Fraser Gurney, Kermadec pelagic; UBR 2022/085). Within the New Zealand region, wedge-tailed shearwaters breed only on the Kermadec Islands (Veitch *et al.* 2004). There was one previous live record from coastal waters off the mainland accepted by the RAC (Miskelly *et al.* 2013), and several others have been found dead (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Subantarctic little shearwater (*Puffinus elegans*)**

Three off Otago on 4 Oct 2022 (Oscar Thomas, Graeme Loh, Ela Hunt, Nicholas Winterle Daudt, and Will Rayment; UBR 2022/088). This is the first record of this species accepted by the RAC. Within the New Zealand region, this species breeds at the Chatham and Antipodes Islands (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Otago shag (*Leucocarbo chalconotus*)**

One at Port Levy, Banks Peninsula, on 29 Oct 2020 (Andrew Crossland; UBR 2021/033). Note that Otago shags are no longer reportable south of Banks Peninsula on the South Island (see Crossland 2021 and Miskelly *et al.* 2021, and also Miskelly, Forsdick *et al.* 2022 for taxonomy and nomenclature).

**Leucocarbo shag (*Leucocarbo* sp.)**

A pied morph *Leucocarbo* shag at Akaroa Head, Banks Peninsula, on 10 Jul 2021 (Nicholas Allen and Fraser Gurney; UBR 2021/047) was likely either an Otago shag (*L. chalconotus*) or a king shag (*L. carunculatus*).

**Nankeen night heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*)**

One at Dannevirke on 25 Sep 2021 (Steve Bowie and family; UBR 2021/056). A few nankeen night herons breed along the Whanganui River; they are rarely reported away from there (Miskelly *et al.* 2015; Frost 2022)

**Galah (*Eolophus roseicapilla*)**

One at Fleming Wetland, Catlins, on 12 Nov 2021 (Myrene Otis, Franny Cunninghame, and Petra Simpson; UBR 2021/068). The only known wild galah population in New Zealand is in South Auckland, centred on Ponui Island, Mangatawhiri, Bombay, and Clevedon (Checklist Committee 2022).

**Red-crowned parakeet (*Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae*)**

One at Otatara, Invercargill, on 17 Oct 2021 (Megan Parkinson; UBR 2021/059). There are numerous records of this species between Riverton and Bluff on eBird. Following an illegal release by a local breeder, red-crowned parakeets have established at several sites in coastal Southland where mammalian predators are controlled (Pete McClelland *pers. comm.* to CMM, 17 Mar 2023).

**Records not accepted, or held in suspense**

Some of the following records may have been genuine, but were insufficiently documented to be accepted by the Records Appraisal Committee. At least 11 were considered to be misidentifications.

**Chestnut teal (*Anas castanea*)**

A pair with ducklings photographed at St Anne's Lagoon, Cheviot, on 16 Dec 2022 were considered to be grey teal (*A. gracilis*) with stained plumage (UBR 2022/113).

***Anas* sp.**

An unusual teal photographed at Saltwater Creek, Timaru, on 3 Jun 2022 (UBR 2022/086) was considered likely to be a hybrid, possibly between a mallard (*A. platyrhynchos*) and a grey teal.

**Northern shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*)**

One reported at Lake Hakanoa, Huntly, on 16 Jul 2021 (UBR 2021/045).

**Oriental cuckoo (*Cuculus optatus*)**

One reported at Prince of Wales Park, Mt Cook, Wellington, on 13 Jan 2021 (UBR 2021/009).

**Cuckoo sp.**

A "long-beaked Australian cuckoo" reported from Otaki Beach on 20 Mar 2021 was considered unidentifiable (UBR 2021/025).

**Fork-tailed swift (*Apus pacificus*)**

One reported at Shakespear Park, Whangaparaoa, on 28 Nov 2022 (UBR 2022/100). Two other records from Otago were identified from photographs as being of welcome swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) (UBRs 2022/062 & 2022/073), and a flock of at least 20 reported from Raumatī South, Kapiti coast, on 9 Feb 2021 (UBR 2021/030) was also considered likely to have been welcome swallows.

**Grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)**

One reported at Otaki River mouth on 21 Nov 2022 (UBR 2022/099).

**Greater sandplover (*Charadrius leschenaultii*)**

One reported at Ashley estuary, Canterbury, on 18 Dec 2012 (UBR 2021/073).

**American whimbrel (*Numenius hudsonicus*)**

A whimbrel photographed at Māhia Peninsula, Hawke's Bay, on 17 Feb 2020 (UBR 2022/056) was considered to be a Eurasian whimbrel (*N. phaeopus*).

**Black noddy (*Anous minutus*)**

One reported off Lyttelton Harbour mouth on 4 Mar 2021 (UBR 2021/021).

**Pacific gull (*Larus pacificus*)**

A report of an immature Pacific gull on Dargaville Beach in January 2010 that was initially accepted by the Records Appraisal Committee (UBR 2010/003; Miskelly *et al.* 2013) has been reviewed and now rejected. The species has been removed from the New Zealand list (Miskelly, Forsdick *et al.* 2022).

**Bridled tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*)**

One reported dead on Muriwai Beach, west Auckland (UBR 2022/054), was identified from measurements and photographs as being a sooty tern (UBR 2022/076, *q.v.*).

**Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*)**

One photographed at Te Raekaihau Point on the Wellington south coast (UBR 2022/071), was probably a white-fronted tern (*Sterna striata*).

**Unidentified tern**

An unidentified tern photographed at Waikanae estuary, Kapiti coast, on 21 Jan 2015 was reassessed and considered to possibly be a black tern (UBR 2015/060; see also Miskelly *et al.* 2017).

**Red-tailed tropicbird (*Phaethon rubricauda*)**

UBR 2021/061 (Rakahuri River, Canterbury) was withdrawn when the submitter realised it was a misidentification of a common species.

**Tropicbird sp. (*Phaethon* sp.)**

A report of 12 tropicbirds at Bethlehem, Tauranga, on 24 Aug 2021 (UBR 2021/052) was considered likely to be of a flock of terns.

**Snares crested penguin (*Eudyptes robustus*)**

A crested penguin photographed at Claverly Beach, Hundalees, Canterbury, on 19 Feb 2021 (UBR 2021/018) was assessed as being an erect-crested penguin.

**Chatham Island albatross (*Thalassarche eremita*)**

An albatross photographed in Foveaux Strait on 9 Jan 2021 (UBR 2021/001) was assessed as being a Salvin's albatross (*T. salvini*).

**Australian white-faced storm petrel (*Pelagodroma marina dulciae*)**

A report of a possible Australian white-faced storm petrel photographed east of the Poor Knights Islands on 1 Nov 2020 (UBR 2021/046) has been held in suspense.

**Great-winged petrel (*Pterodroma macroptera macroptera*)**

One photographed at the Star of Bengal Banks, south of the Kermadec Islands, on 3 Apr 2021 (UBR 2022/009).

**Antarctic prion (*Pachyptila desolata*)**

One photographed at New Brighton Beach, Christchurch, on 20 May 2021 (UBR 2021/043).

**Bulwer's petrel (*Bulweria bulwerii*)**

One south of Weka Reef, Port Adventure, Stewart Island, on 7 Jan 2020 (UBR 2021/007).

**Great frigatebird (*Fregata minor*)**

One reported near Stephenson Island, off Whangaroa Harbour, on 14 Feb 2022 (UBR 2022/018) is considered more likely to have been a skua.

**Masked booby (*Sula dactylatra*)**

Two at Paekakariki, Kapiti Coast, on 16 Mar 2021 (UBR 2021/024), and one at Waipatiki Beach, Hawke's Bay, on 9 Dec 2021 (UBE 2021/071).

**Nankeen night heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*)**

A 'night heron' photographed at Parua Bay, Whangarei Heads, on 3 Sep 2021 (UBR 2021/053) was identified as an Australasian bittern (*Botaurus poiciloptilus*).

**Heron sp.**

An unidentified heron reported from Rangitumau, Masterton, on 7 Jun 2021 (UBR 2021/038) was considered likely to have been a cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*).

**Barn owl (*Tyto alba*)**

One heard at Matangi (east of Hamilton) on 31 Mar 2020 (UBR 2021/044).

**Black falcon (*Falco subniger*)**

Dark falcons reported at Melrose, Wellington, on 13 Feb 2021 (UBR 2021/013) and Khandallah, Wellington on 28 Feb 2021 (UBR 2021/013A) were considered likely to have been juvenile New Zealand falcons (*F. novaeseelandiae*).

**South Island kokako (*Callaeas cinerea*)**

Single birds reported at North Bank, Wairau Road, Marlborough, on 1 Aug 2020 (UBR 2021/055) and west of Flanagan's corner, Heaphy track, on 16 Mar 2022 (UBR 2022/074).



**Hihī (*Notiomystis cincta*)**

Two reported at Wairere Falls, Waikato on 12 Jan 2021 (UBR 2021/036) and several birds at Redwood, Tawa, Wellington, on 3 Jun 2021 (UBR 2021/037) were considered to be tomtits (*Petroica macrocephala*) and goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) respectively.

**Whitehead (*Mohoua albigilla*)**

One reported on the Bridle Path, Lyttelton, on 5 Jan 2022 (UBR 2022/002).

**North Island piopio (*Turnagra tanagra*)**

One reported on the Coromandel Coastal Walkway west of Stoney Bay on 22 Apr 2021 (UBR 2021/035).

**Satin flycatcher (*Myiagra cyanoleuca*)**

One reported from Mahurangi River, North Auckland, on 2 Dec 2022 (UBR 2022/118) was identified from a photograph as being a welcome swallow.

**Australian tree martin (*Petrochelidon nigricans*)**

One reported from Otaki beach, Kapiti coast, on 6 Apr 2022 (UBR 2022/060) was considered likely to have been a juvenile welcome swallow.

**DISCUSSION**

The Records Appraisal Committee received 199 Unusual Bird Reports between January 2021 and December 2022, at an average rate of 8.3 per month. This was the second highest reporting rate in the history of the reporting scheme (9.2 per month were received during 2017–18; Miskelly *et al.* 2019). A total of 160 UBRs were accepted (80.4%), which was similar to the acceptance rate of 79.9% for 847 submissions over the previous decade (Miskelly *et al.* 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021).

A feature of the 2021–22 reporting period was the large number of submissions arising from pelagic sea-birding trips off the north-east coast of Northland, including 30 UBRs from east of the Poor Knights Islands, and 10 from a single voyage to the Kermadec Islands. Together, these trips were the source of about 20% of submitted UBRs, and 24% of accepted UBRs. The trips (all organised by Scott Brooks) are changing our understanding of seabird distribution in northern pelagic waters. In addition to numerous records of species rarely seen in New Zealand, the trips have revealed that several petrel species from distant breeding sites are regularly present in northern coastal waters. As a result, white-headed petrel and mottled petrel are no longer considered reportable species, and white-naped petrel is now only reportable south of the Bay of Plenty.

Common tern was the most reported species during the 2-year period of 2021–22, with eight UBRs received (and seven accepted). However, this reporting rate was slightly lower than the average of 6 per annum for this species over the previous 4 years (Miskelly *et al.* 2019, 2021). Species reported (and accepted) in exceptional numbers in 2021–22 included five each of South Polar skua and Gould's petrel, and four whiskered terns. The first two species were mainly reported during the increased pelagic sea-birding effort off the east coast of Northland and near the Kermadec Islands. The high reporting rate for whiskered tern was the most notable, as the rate of 2 per annum was 6.8 times higher than the reporting rate of 0.3 per annum during 1977 to 2020 (13 previous accepted records). The four recent records were spread over time and distance, although it is possible that the bird seen at New River estuary in June and July 2022 was the same individual that was at nearby Waituna Lagoon in January 2022.

The most notable records during 2021–22 were the addition of black tern, black-naped tern, and Matsudaira's storm petrel to the New Zealand list. All three were found on the west coast of the North Island, between January and May 2022. Black tern was the most unexpected find, as New Zealand is a long way from its usual range. The nominate subspecies breeds from Europe across Russia to western Asia, and migrates to western and southern Africa (del Hoyo *et al.* 1996; Thomas & Hunt 2023), making the New Zealand bird at least 12,000 km beyond its usual range. There are three accepted records of black tern from Australia and one from Papua New Guinea (Finch 1986; Menkhorst *et al.* 2017). The Australian birds are all considered to have been of the American subspecies *C. n. surinamensis*, while the Papua New Guinea bird (an adult in breeding plumage in May 1985) and the New Zealand bird are thought to have been of the nominate subspecies (Finch 1986; Higgins & Davies 1996; Menkhorst *et al.* 2017; information in this report).

Black-naped tern breeds on the Great Barrier Reef and in New Caledonia, and also further afield in the tropical south-west Pacific and Indian Ocean (Higgins & Davies 1996; Menkhorst *et al.* 2017). The black-naped tern from the Auckland west coast was found during Cyclone Dovi. This Category 4 severe tropical cyclone passed through New Caledonia before hitting New Zealand during 12–14 February. It apparently brought several tropical seabirds with it, including the black-naped tern, New Zealand's second bridled tern, and at least one each of great frigatebird, lesser frigatebird, brown noddy, and black noddy, all of which were observed north of Auckland during 13–18 Feb 2022 (UBRs cited herein).

Matsudaira's storm petrel breeds on islands south-east of Japan, and migrates to the tropical Indian Ocean during the non-breeding season (Harrison *et al.* 2021). It is a regular but uncommon visitor to pelagic waters north-west of Australia during July to December (Menkhorst *et al.* 2017); there are no accepted records from eastern Australia (BirdLife Australia Rareities Committee website, viewed 21 Mar 2023). The New Zealand record was approximately 4,400 km south-east of its usual range and was found in late May, when breeding adults would be caring for chicks approximately 7,800 km away (breeding timetable from Harrison *et al.* 2021).

The addition of black tern, black-naped tern, and Matsudaira's storm petrel increases the number of bird species recorded naturally from New Zealand since AD 1800 to 358 (Checklist Committee 2022). Of these, 16 are considered extinct. In addition, 35 introduced species are currently considered established in the wild in New Zealand, making the current avifauna 377 species (including 25 migrant species that breed elsewhere, and 140 vagrant species; see Townsend *et al.* 2008 for definitions).

Of the 54 vagrant species accepted by the RAC in 2021–22, 17 species (31.4%) were Arctic breeding migrants (9 Eurasian, 3 North American, 5 either), 11 species (20.4%) were likely from Australia, 9 species (16.7%) were probably from the tropical Pacific, four species were from Asia, four from subantarctic islands beyond New Zealand, three from Antarctica, three from Chile, and one each from Lord Howe Island (providence petrel), the south Atlantic (great shearwater) and Eurasia (black tern). This continues the pattern of Arctic-breeding migratory species, followed by Australian species, being the main sources of vagrant bird records in New Zealand (Miskelly *et al.* 2019). A notable change during 2021–22 was the increase in the number of tropical Pacific seabirds reported, up from four species (7.5%) in 2019–20. This increase was due to increased pelagic seabird search effort in northern waters, and tropical cyclones (particularly Cyclone Dovi in February 2022) bringing birds south.

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