

GREY-BACKED STORM PETRELS AT DOUBTFUL SOUND



Photo: P. E. Gay

FIGURE 1 — Grey-backed Storm Petrel, Doubtful Sound.

While lifting and setting set lines with two others in very heavy rain at Deep Cove at the head of Doubtful Sound at about 2100 on 29 August 1980 I saw a small sea bird. It appeared to become completely disorientated by the light from our torches and very soon collided with a member of the party and fell into the dinghy. It was recovered in a very bedraggled condition and taken ashore for identification.

While removing wet gear before entering the Deep Cove Hostel, we saw another bird fly into the wall of the building. (All lights in the building were on at the time.) It also was recovered, but in excellent condition.

Both birds were readily identified from the "Field Guide" as being Grey-backed Storm Petrels (*Garrodia nereis*). Figure 1 shows the second bird.

Both birds were held overnight and released the following morning, when both immediately flew strongly down the sound.

There had been almost no wind experienced at Deep Cove for at least 36 hours before the birds were recovered, although there had been very strong westerlies on the coast.

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