

## REFERENCE

BROWN, S. R. 1973. First record of White-tailed Tropic bird in New Zealand. *Notornis* 20 (4): 380-1.

RAYMOND LEVEQUE

*Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach*  
*Station ornithologique Suisse,*  
*CH-6204 Sempach,*  
*Switzerland*  
6 March 1974

Mr Stan Brown writes that he obtained his information from a magazine article but is unable at the moment to recall the reference. Mr F. C. Kinsky, who identified the New Zealand specimen, comments as follows:

"M. Leveque is quite right, as there are no White-tailed Tropic Birds breeding or otherwise on the Galapagos Islands. Of *Phaeton lepturus*, 5 subspecies have been described and have been generally acknowledged.

*P. l. lepturus*, breeding on islands in the Indian Ocean;

*P. l. fulvus*, confined to Christmas Island (Indian Ocean);

*P. l. dorotheae*, Southwest Pacific islands, including Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Nauru, Cooks and many others;

*P. l. catesbyi*, West Indies;

*P. l. ascensionis*, Ascension Island and some other islands in the Gulf of Guinea (West Africa).

Where Mr Brown obtained his information from, I do not know. He might have possibly seen some pictures of the other "white-tailed" tropic bird normally referred to as the Red-billed Tropic Bird (*P. aetherus*) which, in addition to breeding on islands in the Caribbean Sea and other islands in the tropical Atlantic, breeds on islands west of Central America including the Galapagos."

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The Editor,  
Sir,

## THE SOCIETY AND ITS CONSTITUTION

As still "another longstanding member," may I suggest to Mr J. M. Cunningham that unless we do take action, there may be no "living birds in their natural state" left to study. The original constitution of the OSNZ was admirable when first formulated, but the march of time left it outdated, as often happens with constitutions, and giving power to our officers to do something constructive, if necessary, towards conservation was an overdue measure. As I remarked at the AGM where the constitution was amended, "if we cannot trust our officers to act wisely, why bother to elect them?"

R. J. SCARLETT

*Canterbury Museum,*  
*Christchurch, 1*  
6 June 1974