Birds Australia Rarities Committee
Unusual Record Report Form

This form is intended to aid observers in the preparation of a submission for a major rarity in Australia. (It is not a mandatory requirement) Please complete all sections ensuring that you attach all relevant information including copies of your notes, photographs or other supportive material. (PLEASE USE BLACK INK).

Full Name: Nikolas K. Haass, Rob Hynson, Dan Mantle	Office Use

Address: 98 William Street Leichhardt NSW 2040, Australia	**Phone No:** Home: 02-95726392; mobile 0424603579 **Fax/Email:** nhaass@yahoo.com

Species Name: **Cook's Petrel**	**Scientific Name:** ***Pterodroma cookii***
Date(s) and time(s) of observation:	19/10/2009; 10:20 am
How long did you watch the bird(s)?	A few minutes
First and last date of occurrence:	19/10/2009
Distance to bird:	50 m

Site Location
Continental shelf break, off of Ulladulla, NSW

Habitat:
Pelagic. Continental shelf break.

Sighting conditions (weather, visibility, light conditions etc.):

Good light conditions, clear visibility, overcast, sun in the back. See attached pictures

Optical aids used:
Leica 12x50 BA

To your knowledge, is the species seen frequently at this site?
Cook's Petrel remains a very rare bird in Australia. NH's previous accepted record was only the 3rd acceptable live record: Submission No 559 Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii*, off Wollongong, NSW. 24 November 2007 (Unpublished). Submitted by: NIKOLAS. K. HAASS.

Did you use a field guide? (or any other references for help with identification).
The bird was identified spontaneously without using a field guide. For confirmation ONLEY & SCOFIELD (2007) was consulted on the boat. Additional references:
ENTICOTT, J. & D. TIPLING (1997): Seabirds of the World. London. • HARRISON, P. (1983): Seabirds, an identification guide. Beckenham • HARRISON, P. (1987): Seabirds of the World. A Photographic Guide. London. • HOWELL, S.N.G., S. WEBB & L.B. SPEAR (1996): Identification at sea of Cook's, De Filippi's, and Pycroft's Petrels. Western Birds 27: 57-64. • DEL HOYO, J., A. ELLIOTT & J. SARGATAL (1992): Handbook of the Birds of the World. Vol. 1. - Barcelona. • MARCHANT, S. & P.J. HIGGINS (eds) (1990). Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds. Volume 1: Ratites to Ducks. Melbourne. • ONLEY, D. & P. SCOFIELD (2007): Albatrosses, Petrels & Shearwaters of the World. Princeton. • PIZZEY, G. & F. KNIGHT (2007, 8th ed.): The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia. Sydney. • SHIRIHAI, H. (2007, 2nd ed.): A Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife. London. • SIMPSON, K. & N. DAY (2004, 7th ed.): Birds of Australia. Princeton. • SIMPSON, K. & N. DAY (2004, 7th ed.): Birds of Australia. Princeton.

Other observers. Do any of the other observers disagree with your identification, if so, who?
Rob Hynson, Dan Mantle, Raja Stephenson and more participants of the pelagic. Nobody disagreed with the ID.

How confident are you of your identification?, e.g. 70%, 100%. If not 100%, why not?
100%

Other details:
Cook's Petrel remains a very rare bird in Australia. NH's previous accepted record was only the 3rd acceptable live record: Submission No 559 Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii*, off Wollongong, NSW. 24 November 2007 (Unpublished). Submitted by: NIKOLAS. K. HAASS.

Physical Description

(1) **Number**: one individual was observed
(2) **Age, sex**: unknown
(3) **Size and shape**: small Gadfly-petrel *Pterodroma ("Cookilaria")* relatively long slender bill, long pointed wings
(4) **Plumage colour and pattern**: white forehead; white supercilium; dark eye patch; crown, nape and upperparts grey; blackish "M"-band across upperwings and back, narrowest at the sides of the rump; tail grey with darker tip; underparts white, underwings white with fine black margins and tips; heavier margin on leading edge angles across innerwing toward body in tapering black curve ("tick mark")
(5) **Colour of bill, eyes and legs/feet**: bill and eyes dark; feet not seen
(6) **Calls**: none heard
(7) **Behaviour, movements, flight pattern, and anything else that might help to identify the bird e.g. feeding, interactions with other birds, describe where the bird was – on ground, in canopy, flying etc. Were comparisons made with other species?**
Flight fast direct flight from South to North; there were no direct interactions with other birds. Other birds present: http://www.sossa-international.org/Pages/Pelagic%20Reports/Oct2009Ulladulla.htm

Figure 1 (RH): relatively long slender bill; long pointed wings; white forehead; white supercilium; dark eye patch; grey crown and nape; white underparts; white underwings with fine black margins and tips; heavier margin on leading edge angles across innerwing toward body in tapering black curve ("tick mark")

Figure 2 (RH): relatively long slender bill; white forehead; white supercilium; dark eye patch; grey crown, nape and upperparts; blackish "M"-band across upperwings and back, narrowest at the sides of the rump; tail grey with darker tip

Figure 3 (RH): relatively long slender bill; white forehead; white supercilium; dark eye patch; grey crown and nape; white underparts; white underwings with fine black margins and tips; heavier margin on leading edge angles across innerwing toward body in tapering black curve ("tick mark")

Other species with which you think it might be confused and how these were eliminated?

Other Cookilaria petrels:

Pycroft's's Petrel *P. pycrofti*: shorter bill; longer tail; darkish partial collar; shorter supercilium
De Filippi's Petrel *P. defilippiana*: lack of dark tip to tail in 94% (however, 6% are reported to show dark tip (Howell et al. 1996); bolder underwing pattern; darkish partial collar
Stejneger's Petrel *P. longirostris*: shorter bill; longer tail; dark crown and dark partial collar
Chatham Islands Petrel *P. axillaris*: very different underwing pattern, dark axillaries; dark half-collar
Black-winged Petrel *P. nigripennis*: very different underwing pattern; dark half-collar
Mottled Petrel *P. inexpectata*: very different underwing and tail patterns; dark belly
Bonin Petrel *P. hypoleuca*: very different underwing pattern; large dark carpal patch
Gould's Petrel *P. leucoptera*: black crown extending onto sides of neck; bolder underwing pattern
Collared Petrel *P. brevipes*: very different underwing pattern; dark crown and dark partial or full collar

Other grey-and-white Pterodroma petrels:

White-necked Petrel *P. cervicalis*: larger, different flight style; white collar + dark half-collar
Vanuatu Petrel *P. occulta*: larger, different flight style; white collar + dark half-collar
Juan Fernandez Petrel *P. externa*: larger, different flight style; finer underwing pattern
Barau's Petrel *P. baraui*: larger, different flight style; bolder underwing pattern, dark half-collar

All other *Pterodroma spec*. are ruled out by above description.
Blue Petrel *Halobaena caerulea* and Prions *Pachyptila*: smaller, different flight style; different underwing pattern

(Please append your comments / views following your description)

Was the description written from notes and/or sketches made (tick box):
☐ during the observation or; **x** shortly after the observation or; ☐ from memory?

Please indicate supportive evidence available.
Was the bird: **x** photographed, ☐ taped or ☐ video taped? If yes to any of these, by whom?
Photos by RH

What experience have you had with the species in question?

NH has extensive experience with petrels having been pelagic trip leader on many trips off of California, New Jersey/New York and Delaware/Maryland and having participated on many pelagic trips off of North Carolina, Galapagos, New South Wales and Queensland. NH has been an active member in the Rare Birds Committees of Hessen, Germany, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, and New Jersey, USA. Although NH has only seen Cook's Petrel twice before (NH's previous accepted record was only the 3rd acceptable live record: Submission No 559 Cook's Petrel *Pterodroma cookii*, off Wollongong, NSW, 24 November 2007; the second one was the one collected alive in Sydney and released off of Wollongong, NSW, 25 April 2009), he spontaneously identified the bird and obviously knew that it was a rare bird in the area.
RS has extensive experience with petrels from many pelagic trips off of New Jersey/New York, Delaware/Maryland,

North Carolina, New South Wales and Queensland. However, RS has seen Cook's Petrel only once before (the one collected alive in Sydney and released off of Wollongong, NSW, 25 April 2009).
RH has extensive experience with petrels from many pelagic trips off of New Jersey/New York, Delaware/Maryland, North Carolina, New South Wales and Queensland. However, RH has seen Cook's Petrel only once before (the one collected alive in Sydney and released off of Wollongong, NSW, 25 April 2009).
DM has extensive experience with petrels from many pelagic trips in the Tasman Sea and the Southern Ocean.
In the meantime, RS and NH have had the opportunity to observe many Cook's Petrels at the Hauraki Gulf pelagic, North Island, New Zealand (December 2010). These birds appeared to be very similar to the one reported here.

Signature: **Date: 9/5/2011**

Sent by e-mail

Please forward all material to: The Secretary, Birds Australia Rarities Committee, Birds Australia HQ, Riverside Road, East Hawthorn, VIC 3123