

**Memorandum to:** The Director of Birds Australia

**From:** Birds Australia Rarities Committee (BARC)

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> February 2013

**Voting Members:** Andrew Silcocks            Rohan Clarke  
Chris Brandis                            Jeff Davies  
Mike Carter                                David Bishop  
Tony Palliser                                Danny Rogers

**cc.**

**Submission No 742: South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* off Sydney, NSW 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012. Submitted by: Nikolas Haass.**

**Verdict: Accepted**

This submission relates to the sighting of a South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* seen and photographed at sea off Sydney Heads on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

The submission details the diagnostic features of an intermediate/pale morph South Polar Skua. The colder colour tones to the upperparts, less bulky appearance, and strong contrast between the underbody and underwings satisfactorily eliminated the possibility of Brown Skua *S. antarctica* and other similar species. Photographs served to further corroborate the sighting.

The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance. The 14th record of this species to be accepted by BARC.

**Selected Bibliography:**

- Enticott, J. & Tipling, D., (1997), *Photographic Handbook of Seabirds of the World*, Hew Holland, London.
- Higgins, P.J. & Davies, S.J.J.F., (1996), *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand & Antarctic Birds, Vol. 3, Snipe to Pigeons*, Oxford, Melbourne.
- Harrison, P., (1987), *Seabirds of the World: a Photographic Guide*, Christopher Helm, Bromley.
- King, J. & D. Parkin (1997). Great skua upheavals. *Birding World*. 10:362-363
- Olsen, K.M. & Larsson, H. (1997), *Skuas and Jaegers, a Guide to the Skuas and Jaegers of the World*, Pica, Sussex.
- Parmelee, D.F. (1988). The hybrid skua: a Southern Ocean enigma. *Wilson Bulletin*. 100:345-356.
- Pringle, J.D. (1987), *The Shorebirds of Australia*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney.

Tony Palliser  
Chairman, Birds Australia Rarities Committee