



NSW 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 & 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: White-bellied Storm-petrel (WBSP)	Scientific Name: <i>Fregetta grallaria</i>
Date(s) and time(s) of observation:	29 March 2009
How long did you watch the bird(s)?	3 minutes
First and last date of occurrence:	29 March 2009
Distance to bird:	50 meters

Site Location (e.g 3km SE of Lavers Hill, Victoria) Continental shelf break off Ulladulla, NSW

Habitat (describe habitat in which the bird was seen, together with any neighbouring habitats): Pelagic. Continental shelf break.
Sighting conditions (weather, visibility, light conditions etc.): Clear visibility, calm sunny weather, but sun mostly behind the bird. See attached picture.
Optical aids used: Leica 12x50 BA and others; Photos: Canon 30D, Canon 400mm, 5.6

To your knowledge, is the species seen frequently at this site? Rarely.
Did you use a field guide? The bird was identified spontaneously without using a field guide. References: ENTICOTT, J. & D. TIPLING (1997): Seabirds of the World. London. • DOWDALL, J., S. ENRIGHT, K. FAHY, J. GILLIGAN, G. LILLIE, M. O'KEEFE (2009): Unidentified Storm-Petrels, Puerto Montt, Chile, February, 2009. http://scillypelagics.com/Oceanites_Puerto_Montt_Chile.html . • FLOOD, B. (2003): The New Zealand Storm-petrel is not extinct. <i>Birding World</i> 16: 479-482. • FLOOD, B. (2009): A quest for storm-petrels. <i>Birding World</i> 22: 125-127. • HARRISON, P. (1983): Seabirds, an identification guide. Beckenham • HARRISON, P. (1987): Seabirds of the World. A Photographic Guide. London. • 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. • MARTIN, J.P. (2009): The Fregetta petrel in Avon – a bird new to Europe. <i>Birding World</i> 22: 457-458. • ONLEY, D. & P. SCOFIELD (2007): Albatrosses, Petrels & Shearwaters of the World. Princeton. • PIZZEY, G. & F. KNIGHT (2007, 8 th ed.): The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia. Sydney. • SHIRIHAI, H. (2007, 2 nd ed.): A Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife. London. • SIMPSON, K. & N. DAY (2004, 7 th ed.): Birds of Australia. Princeton.
Were other observers present Do any of the other observers disagree with your identification, if so, who? (please give names, addresses and phone numbers)? Other observers: Lindsay Smith, Peter Milburn, 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?

90% - All observable features were 100% consistent with WBSP (see description and photos). However due to distance (50m at closest, often further off) and light conditions, we were not able to observe *all* field marks (e.g. narrow wing-bar and pale fringes to feathers of back, scapulars and secondary coverts).

Other details: e.g. Do you have historical and or anecdotal information/comments relating to the prior occurrence/status of the species within or near this location?

This species is a rare visitor of the area.

Physical Description.

(1) one individual was observed;

(2) age: adult; sex: unknown;

(3) size and shape: Medium-sized storm-petrel; compact jizz with broad, triangular wings and square tail: typical for *Fregatta*. Legs short, no projection beyond tail.

(4) plumage colour and pattern (including any details of moult): **Underparts:** Dark head, chin, throat to upper breast, where sharply demarcated from pure white lower breast to undertail coverts. Dark tail. White underwing coverts, except for some darker primary coverts. **Upperparts:** Generally dark with large sharply demarcated white rump.

(5) colour of bill, eyes and legs/feet: black

(6) calls: none heard

(7) behaviour, movements, flight pattern: Flight style was typical of *Fregatta* – bouncing off waves, interspersed with twisting glides but hard to follow for long at distance and amongst many Wilson's Storm-petrels (WSP).



Figure 1: WBSP (front right) in comparison to WSP (rear left) off Ulladulla, NSW, 29 March 2009. Compact jizz with broad, short, triangular wings and square tail: typical of *Fregatta*. Dark head, chin, throat to upper breast, where sharply demarcated from pure white lower breast to undertail coverts and – just visible – rump. Dark tail. White underwing coverts. Legs short, no projection beyond square tail (Photo: Dan Mantle).



Figure 2: WBSP off Ulladulla, NSW, 29 March 2009. Cropped from figure 1 (Photo: Dan Mantle).

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

Black-bellied Storm-Petrel *Fregatta tropica*: Longer legs (typically projecting beyond tail). If not showing typical black central belly line, usually shows at least a more v-shaped dark upper breast extending further down. Usually shows whitish chin/throat.

White-bellied form of Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (e.g. Puerto Montt) and Elliot's Storm-Petrel *O. gracilis*: Smaller, more butterfly-like flight style. Longer legs (projecting beyond tail). White on underparts not as extensive and clear-cut.

New Zealand Storm-Petrel *Pealeornis maoriana*: Smaller, more Wilson's-like jizz and flight style. Streaks instead of sharp demarcation between dark and white underparts. Very long legs (projecting beyond tail).

Grey-backed Storm-Petrel *Garrodia nereis*: Very small, more Wilson's-like jizz and flight style. Grey back and rump. Longer legs (projecting beyond tail).

Was the description written from notes and/or sketches made (tick box):

during the observation or; 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?

What experience have you had with the species in question? (Did you know it was a Rare bird when you first saw it?)

NH has extensive experience with seabirds having been pelagic trip leader on many trips off California, New Jersey/New York and Delaware/Maryland and having participated on many pelagic trips off North Carolina, Galapagos, New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand. NH has seen a total of 14 species of storm-petrels. Although he had never seen this particular species before, he spontaneously identified the bird and knew that it was a rare bird in the area. NH has seen this (e.g. 13 March 2010 off Sydney, **NSW ORAC CASE 504 –White-bellied Storm-Petrel *Fregatta grallaria***) and similar species (e.g. Black-bellied Storm-Petrel off Southport, QLD; New Zealand Storm-Petrel in Hauraki Gulf, NZ [as well as two NZSP off Ulladulla and Wollongong, submitted to BARC]) after this observation on several occasions. DM has seen 30 plus Black-bellied Storm-petrels off Queensland and New South Wales on almost a dozen occasions but has no previous experience of White-bellied Storm-petrel.

Other observers had studied this species previously on trips to Lord Howe Island.

Signature:



Date: 25 May 2010

Please forward all material to: The Secretary, NSW Rarities Committee, 1/67, Cremorne Road, Cremorne, NSW 2090