

A CALIFORNIA SPECIMEN OF THE WEDGE-TAILED SHEARWATER

STEVE N. G. HOWELL, P. O. Box 423, Bolinas, California 94924

While examining specimens at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (MVZ), University of California, Berkeley, I came across a specimen of the Wedge-tailed Shearwater (*Puffinus pacificus*) that lay misidentified as a Short-tailed Shearwater (*P. tenuirostris*). The bird was collected in Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, California, on 1 April 1915 by A. G. Vrooman, in "Read's Yard" (apparently somewhere in the town). It was originally kept in the collection of O. P. Silliman (when the identification as the Short-tailed was made), which was later donated to the MVZ.

The original data include measurements (in inches) of total length (17 $\frac{3}{4}$ "), wing (11"), bill (1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "), tarsus (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "), tail (5"), and extent or wingspan, (37 $\frac{1}{2}$ "), scrawled on a receipt from A. C. Snyder's dry-goods store in Santa Cruz, together with the annotation "Pac. Sooty SW [presumably = Pacific Sooty Shearwater (*P. griseus*)] or Slender-billed SW – under wing cvts. not whitish." In 1915 the Wedge-tailed Shearwater was unrecorded in the United States, and the only dark-bodied shearwaters known from California were the Short-tailed (= Slender-billed), Sooty, and Flesh-footed (*P. carneipes*). Additional data noted on the specimen's label are "outside tarsus and outside toe bluish, webs, middle and inside toe flesh, pale." The bird's bill is slender and dark overall, unlike the stout and mostly pink bill of a Flesh-footed.

The specimen has a broken left wing but otherwise is in good shape. It is completing molt, with the outermost primary (p10) still about 5 mm short of p9, left rectrices 5 and 3 growing, and right rectrices 5 and 2 growing. My measurements of the bird are wing chord 273 mm (longest primary growing), tail 125 mm (growing), exposed culmen 35.5 mm, and tarsus 45.2 mm; these agree very closely with those of Vrooman. The bird is a typical dark-morph Wedge-tailed Shearwater with the long and strongly graduated tail characteristic of that species; from Loomis (1918), the Wedge-tailed Shearwater's tail measures 128–148 mm ($n = 47$), the Short-tailed's 77–90 mm ($n = 44$), and the Sooty's 80–98 mm ($n = 165$).

Although the Wedge-tailed Shearwater is common across most of the tropical Pacific, including waters off western Mexico, it is remarkably rare north of Mexico. There are but seven other records from the western United States, all since 1986 and all but one between late July and late October: four from California (Stallcup et al. 1998, McCaskie and Webster 1990, Erickson and Hamilton 2001, Rogers and Jaramillo 2002), two from Oregon (Marshall et al. 2003), and one from Washington (Wahl et al. 2005). Five of these seven birds have been dark morphs, including the only two North American specimens: from Newport, Oregon, on 26 March 1999, and near Ocean City, Washington, on 10 September 1999. A specimen of the light morph, collected on an unknown date before August 1919 and labeled as from Vancouver, British Columbia (San Diego Natural History Museum 19417, Jewett 1929), is now regarded as of uncertain origin, and the record is regarded as hypothetical (e.g., Godfrey 1966). The Santa Cruz specimen predates other North American records by over 70 years and is also the first from California. Details of the specimen and four photos of it have been deposited with the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC record 2007-048). I thank Carla Cicero at the MVZ for access to the collection and for help in checking the specimen's history, and I thank Kimball Garrett and Guy McCaskie for their review of this note.

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