

BARC CASES PERTAINING TO NSW DECIDED IN 2024

1277	Matsudaira's Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	February 4, 2023	Accepted
1302	Band-rumped Storm Petrel	off Cape Byron	February 25, 2024	Accepted
1310	Sabine's Gull	off Wollongong	June 30, 1985	Accepted
1318	W-necked (Vanuatu) Petrel	Cooperburg Range	April 9, 1983	Accepted
1327	Herald Petrel	off Terrigal	February 2, 2024	Accepted
1328	Herald Petrel	off Wollongong	April 28, 1996	Accepted
1329	Herald Petrel	off Lord Howe Island	April 28, 2012	Accepted
1330	Herald Petrel	off Eden	March 22, 2015	Accepted
1331	Herald Petrel	off Sydney	September 19, 2000	Accepted
1332	Herald Petrel	Phillip Island	May 2 – June 2, 2022	Accepted
1337	Atlantic Y-n Albatross	off Sydney	July 16, 2023	Accepted
1338	Atlantic Y-n Albatross	off Sydney/Terrigal	August 31, 2024	Accepted
1340	Band-rumped Storm Petrel	Britannia Seamount	April 6 – 8, 2024	Accepted

CASE SUMMARIES

Case 1277: This case concerns the sighting of a Matsudaira's Storm Petrel *Hydrobates matsudairae* on the Britannia Seamount on February 2, 2023. The submission, supported by photographs, described key features used to separate this bird from the similar Swinhoe's Storm Petrel including bill length and shape, fairly long less rounded wings, covert bars which reached the leading edge of the wings, and a longer tail which was quite deeply forked. Several members suggested that the bird could have been in its first year nearing the end of its pre-basic moult from juvenile to adult. The committee voted by majority with one dissenting vote to accept this record and it becomes the first to be confirmed for NSW. Paul Walbridge

Case 1302: This case concerns the sighting of a Band-rumped Storm Petrel *Hydrobates castro* at sea approximately 160 NM east of Cape Byron on February 25, 2024. The bird was well seen and photographed in afternoon light from a cruise ship. The submission described the characters which were important to the identification: (a) a medium deep-notched tail, (b) no leg projection beyond the tail, (c) longer more pointed wings, (d) a small amount of white extending on the vent-sides, (e) an evenly narrow white rump band, and (f) an upperwing bar which extends evenly in a slight curve towards the carpal. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 8th accepted record for Australia. Stephen Menzie

Case 1310: This case concerns the historical sighting of a Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* off Wollongong on June 30, 1985. This record has long been accepted in the literature but it had not previously come before BARC. The published account and photographs leaves no doubts as to the identity or provenance of the bird and the committee considered that it was in either first alternate or definitive basic plumage. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 7th record accepted by BARC – interestingly, there have been no subsequent records from Eastern Australia since this sighting nearly 40 years ago. Submitted by Simon Gorta

Case 1318: This case concerns the historical discovery of a White-necked (Vanuatu) Petrel *Pterodroma cervicalis occulta* which was found dead along the Pacific Highway in the Cooperburg Range near Kempsey on April 9, 1983. A full account of how the bird was identified in the Australian Museum was published in *Australian Birds* (1985) and the committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance agreeing that the bird was a White-necked Petrel of the race *occulta*. This is the first record of this taxon in Australia and it is noted that both Clements and the IOC treat this race as a full species. Submitted by Simon Gorta

Case 1327: This case concerns the sighting of a Herald Petrel *Pterodroma heraldica* some 27NM east of Terrigal on February 2, 2024. The submission was supported by a series of very high quality photographic images and care was taken to separate this bird from an intermediate/pale morph Kermadec Petrel. The salient features noted were the dark primary shafts, narrow wings, light build, relatively long tapered tail, pale undertail coverts and a dark head with pale lores and throat. The pale lores also eliminate the highly unlikely Trindade Petrel. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 9th record accepted by BARC. Andrew Robinson, Dean Purcell and Archie Brennan

Case 1328: This submission concerns a 'cold case' record of a Herald Petrel *Pterodroma heraldica* about 18NM off Wollongong on April 28, 1996. The account features within the NSW Annual Bird Report 1996 (Morris & Burton 1999) and also within an eBird checklist. All of the salient features identifying the bird as a Herald Petrel were noted in the account and the committee voted unanimously in favour of accepting the record which becomes the 10th record to be accepted by BARC. Submitted by Simon Gorta on behalf of the observers Kevin Bartram, Phil Hansbro et al

Case 1329: This case concerns the historical sighting of a Herald Petrel *Pterodroma heraldica* between Lord Howe Island and Balls Pyramid on April 28, 2012. The submission reproduces three photographs of the bird which together show the distinguishing features of a Herald Petrel including the lack of pale primary shafts, pale leading edge to the inner wing, pale undertail coverts and a long tapering tail. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 11th record to be accepted by BARC. Submitted by Simon Gorta on behalf of the observer Jack Schick

Case 1330: This case concerns the historical sighting of a Herald Petrel *Pterodroma heraldica* off Eden on March 22, 2015. The report is supported by a remarkable series of photographic images which are conclusive and comfortably rule out the similar Kermadec Petrel and show the pale lores, lack of pale primary shafts, relatively long tail, elongated head and pale leading edge to the inner wing. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 12th record to be accepted by BARC. Submitted by Simon Gorta on behalf of the observer Tobias Hayashi

Case 1331: This case concerns the historical sighting of a Herald Petrel *Pterodroma heraldica* off Sydney on September 10, 2000. The sighting is supported by field notes taken by one of the observers with the account published on the Birding-Aus Listserv on September 11, 2000. The bird was well seen by the experienced birders on the boat and the field notes were comprehensive. The committee voted by majority to accept the record with the one dissenting member feeling that a few features of the description were a little inconsistent. It becomes the 13th record to be accepted by BARC. Submitted by Simon Gorta on behalf of the observers Dion Hobcroft et al

Case 1332: This case concerns the discovery of further Herald Petrels *Pterodroma heraldica* on Phillip Island (Norfolk Island Group) on May 2, 2022 and in June 2022 after the species was first found there in June 2021 (BARC Case 1193). The committee voted unanimously to accept that at least one of the birds was a Herald Petrel on the basis that it was measured and banded in May 2022 with the measurements falling within the range for Herald Petrel. This banded bird was then recaptured and the band number read in the field to confirm that the same individual was present one month later in June 2022. It becomes the 14th record to be accepted by BARC. Mowat E., Kyl G., O'Dwyer T., Wilmot L., and Carlile N. *Australian Field Ornithology*, vol. 41, pp.77-85

Case 1337: This case concerns the sighting of an Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross *Thalassarche chlororhynchos* approximately one nautical mile SSW of Brown's Seamount offshore Sydney on July 16, 2023. The submission contains a thorough description with supporting photographs that leave no doubt as to the identity. The images clearly separate the bird from Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross by the obvious blackish wedges that surround the eyes, the grey hood and the yellow bill stripe that remains broad well behind the nostrils and terminates in a relatively blunt point at the base of the bill. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 10th record to be accepted by BARC. David Mitford and Greg McLachlan

Case 1338: This case concerns the sighting of an Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross *Thalassarche chlororhynchos*. The bird was seen on three occasions over a period of 21 days between August 31, 2024 and September 10, 2024. The first sighting occurred offshore from Sydney near Brown's Seamount on August 31, 2024, the second sighting occurred offshore Sydney near Brown's Seamount on September 10, 2024 and the third sighting occurred approximately 26NM off Terrigal on September 21, 2024. Each submission contains a thorough description with supporting photographs. The images clearly separate the bird from Indian Yellow-nosed Albatross by the obvious blackish wedges that surround the eyes, the grey hood and the yellow bill stripe that remains broad well behind the nostrils and terminates in a relatively blunt point at the base of the bill. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance of these sightings agreeing that the same individual was involved in all three. It becomes the 11th record to be accepted by BARC. David Mitford, Greg McLachlan and Rob Joliffe submitted the two Sydney reports and Andrew Robinson, Dean Purcell and James Bennett submitted the Terrigal report

Case 1340: This case concerns a series of sightings of Band-rumped Storm Petrel *Hydrobates castro* involving five birds between the April 6 and 8, 2024 on the Britannia Seamounts off the northeast coast of NSW. The birds were well seen and photographed down to a minimum range of 10 metres and the images are conclusive and clearly show the characters necessary to eliminate the similar Wilson's and Leach's Storm Petrels. These include a medium deep notched tail, no leg projection beyond the tail, longer more pointed wings, a small amount of white extending on the vent sides, an

evenly narrow white rump band and an upperwing bar which extends evenly in a slight curve towards the carpal. The committee voted unanimously in favour of acceptance and it becomes the 9th accepted record for Australia. Paul Walbridge

Roger McGovern

Secretary NSW Ornithological Records Appraisal Committee

January 17, 2025