

FIRST RECOVERIES IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE OF TASMANIAN
MUTTON BIRD, *PUFFINUS TENUIROSTRIS* (TEMMINCK), BANDED IN
AUSTRALIA*

By D. L. SERVENTY†

A study of the Tasmanian mutton bird or short-tailed shearwater, *Puffinus tenuirostris* (Temminck), has been in progress at its nesting grounds in islands of the Furneaux Group, Bass Strait, since 1947. This has involved an extensive banding scheme in which some 16,000 birds had been banded up to 1955. However, the chances of obtaining foreign recoveries of banded birds are low indeed, and it was, therefore, of considerable interest to receive reports of the recovery of two of the banded birds in the northern hemisphere.

The first came from Dr. Seiichi Kuzu, chief of the Wildlife Section of the Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Tokyo. A bird of this species, carrying band No. 22208 of the Fauna Board of Tasmania, was taken at sea in a fishing-net off the coast of Tanoura, Okata machi, Kochi Prefecture, Shikoku Island (lat. 33°N., long. 133°E.) on May 27, 1955. The specimen is preserved at Kochi University.

This bird was banded by me as a fledgling in its burrow on the east side of Babel Island, near Flinders Island, in eastern Bass Strait (lat. 39°54' S., long. 148°20' E.) on March 14, 1955. It would have left its burrow for the northern migration during the last few days of April or the first few days of May. Thus in a period of a month the bird must have travelled at least 5500 miles.

The second report was that band No. 20535 of the Fauna Board of Tasmania, had been taken from a mutton bird found dead in a salmon fishing-net by a ship of the Taiyo Fishing Co. on May 11, 1956, at lat. 47° 54' N., long. 170° 27' E. This bird was banded on March 8, 1955, as a fledgling on Little Dog Island (lat. 40° 12' S., long. 148° 13' E.), south of Flinders Island. It was a bird in its second year of life and may have already made one complete circuit of the Pacific Ocean.

The migration of the species to the north Pacific has been plotted on the basis of sight observations and collected specimens (Sudilovskaya 1951; Serventy 1953) and these records fall along part of the predicted route.

A third marked individual of the same age class, No. 22039, has been recovered in Australian waters. It had been banded as a fledgling on March 13, 1955, at Babel Island, and was found washed ashore on Towradgi Beach, near Wollongong, N.S.W., on January 8, 1956. It had died on its presumed return migration from the north.

References

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* Manuscript received June 25, 1956.

† Wildlife Survey Section, C.S.I.R.O., Western Australian Regional Laboratory, University Grounds, Nedlands, W.A.