

<i>Chlidonias leucoptera</i>				
Sex	Wing	Tail	Culmen	Tarsus
♂	210	72	24	18
♀	183	70	23	18

In conclusion, it would appear from these observations, and from previous reports in *The Emu*, that this species is not an unusual visitor to Cleveland, Moreton Bay. It may in fact be a regular summer resident and either have been overlooked or the localities frequented by it may not have been visited, between reports, by observers. On the other hand some birds of the apparent irruption reported by me (*Emu*, 56, 1956, 95-99) on the Queensland coast, in 1955, may have found the waters of Moreton Bay to their liking and may return yearly until there is a year of unfavourable conditions, causing them to desert the locality until another irruption from northern haunts takes place. As J. Gentilli refers (*W.A. Nat.*, 5, 1956, 84-85) to another visitation to Western Australia in March 1956, and as some thirteen birds had returned to Raby Bay on October 25, 1956, either of the above theories could equally apply.

A Victorian Record of *Pachyptila crassirostris*

By NOEL F. LEARMONTH, Portland, Vic.

Of the six species of *Pachyptila* (prions) listed in Alexander's *Birds of the Ocean*, and diagnosed so fully by Fleming (*Emu*, vol. 38, p. 396, and vol. 41, p. 134), and Falla (*Emu*, vol. 40, p. 218), five have been found on the Australian coast. The sixth has at long last turned up—a storm-washed dead specimen near Portland, Victoria. *Pachyptila* records kept by me show that *P. turtur* (Fairy Prion) is a common bird from Portland, whereas *P. salvini* (Medium-billed Prion), *P. belcheri* (Thin-billed Prion) and *P. desolata* (Dove Prion) were, until the winter of 1956, rare birds. During that year many specimens of all three were found. *P. vittata* (Broad-billed Prion) has not yet been recorded locally. This article deals with the finding of *P. crassirostris* (Fulmar Prion).

Where Portland Bay curves north and then east towards Port Fairy, is a wide shelving beach, and here on November 1, 1954, I picked up a number of dead sea birds. A few were retained as suitable to send to the National Museum, among which was a prion of uncertain species. The birds were in early stages of decomposition, and thus put aside until fit to send away. In the meantime, the position of Ornithologist at the Museum became vacant, and no one was appointed for many months. In June 1955, I sent a parcel of bird remains to Dr. D. L. Serventy in Perth. Week after week went by with no reply and the matter was almost forgotten. Then on August 8, 1956, while in the National Museum, I inspected

many prion skins with Mr. W. B. Hitchcock. When the Heard Island *P. crassirostris* skins were placed on the table I said—“I’ve seen that bird somewhere, and am sure I’ve discarded dead ones on the beach in mistake for *P. turtur*.” On arrival home in Portland, the following letter was waiting for me from Dr. Serventy—

10th August, 1956.—You will no doubt be rather astounded why you received no reply to your letter of June 17th of last year. But perhaps you may have learnt since that I had by then left for a long overseas trip, and did not return home until a short time ago. The parcel of skins you forwarded was held here in the laboratory pending my return, and I opened it only a week or so ago.

I was most interested in the problematical ‘turtur’ skin and felt sure it must be *crassirostris* of far southern seas. I at once wrote to the National Museum for the loan of skins of *Pachyptila crassirostris* from Heard Island (we have none in the local Museum). These have just arrived and it seems certain that your bird is a *crassirostris*. This would be an addition to the avifauna of Australia. I am unable to go any further into it at the moment. I will send over my findings to you later.

This was followed by the following letters, the first on October 8, 1956—

Thank you for your letter. Since I have been back from the north I have been involved in a continuous round of work, including several country trips, which have kept me off the prion question. A specimen has recently been received by the local Museum from a beach here, which appears to approach the *crassirostris* series and I want to examine it to compare with your material. However, this week is UNESCO Museum week and it is impossible to get at it. I hope to do this next week and will let you know the general results. At the recent R.A.O.U. Congress here Mrs. Denney from Victoria told us that she had also picked up a *crassirostris*-type specimen this year on a beach near Cape Otway. Mr. McEvey has it.

29th October, 1956. At last I had a chance of visiting the W.A. Museum and getting down to the job of comparing the Prion specimens. I found that the suspected Western Australian example of *Pachyptila crassirostris* was not that species at all but ordinary *P. turtur*. My notes and remarks on the material you sent me are as follows—

Pachyptila crassirostris

The Portland specimen must be referred to *Pachyptila crassirostris*, allied to the subspecies *eatonii* from Heard Island, but in its weaker bill approaching the Australian and New Zealand *P. turtur*. As Fleming (*Emu*, vol. 28, 1939, p. 401) and Falla (*Emu*, vol. 40, p. 228) have shown, there is a graded series in bill form in *crassirostris*, from the heavy-billed *P. c. pyramidalis* from Chatham Is. (with its swollen, bulbous bill plates) to the lighter-billed *P. c. eatoni* from Heard Is., which these authors regarded as being nearest to *P. turtur*. The Portland specimen, however, comes even nearer to *P. turtur* in this respect.

I have compared your specimen with two skins of *P. c. eatoni* from Heard Island (Nat. Mus. Melbourne B6284-5), the head of a skua-killed specimen of *P. c. pyramidalis* from Chatham Is., and several *P. turtur* from Australia and New Zealand. Measurements of the skins are attached. You will note that your Portland specimen was a big bird. Its long culmen exceeds the length of the culmen in the two Heard Island birds available to me, but its dertrum is thinner and less bulbous, when viewed from above. It approaches very closely in bill characters some New Zealand true *P. turtur* which have long culmens. It has, nevertheless, definitely a stronger bill than any *turtur*, which

is emphasized by its considerable bill width (12.3 mm.), greater even than in the two Heard Island skins.

In its wing length, tail length, and width of black tail tip it accords with *crassirostris* and these dimensions are lesser than in most Australian *turtur*.

In my opinion the Portland specimen does not come from Heard Island, but a full description of the latter race has not yet been published to give us an idea of the range of variation which exists in it.

Measurements of Prions in millimetres

Specimen	<i>P. crassirostris</i>				<i>P. turtur</i>		
	Port- land	Heard Is.	Heard Is.	Chatham Is.	Portland Dec- month	W.A. 9/8/36	N.Z.
Culmen	24.3	23.0	22.1	23.0	21.0	21.3	23.3
Bill Width	12.3	11.5	11.0	12.8	10.0	9.6	10.7
Bill depth in front of nostril	7.7	7.6	7.2	9.1	7.2	6.4	—
Wing length	178	182	175	—	170	167	179
Tail	89	90	92	—	82	81	89
Tail band	c.41	c.40	c.40	—	c.35	c.35	c.35
Tarsus	31	32	33	—	32	32	—
Middle toe and claw	39	42	40	—	40	—	—

The finding of *P. crassirostris* on the Portland beaches brings the number of sea-birds from that area to forty-four, and the Pelican and cormorants (except Black-faced) are not included as they are in Alexander. Finally the Prion found by Mrs. Denney near Cape Otway still awaits identification at the National Museum; more comparative material is needed before it can be classed.

The Portland *crassirostris* is now in the National Museum, specimen no. B6840.

On the Post-nuptial Rehabilitation of the Avian Testis Tunic

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the jargon developed within the extensive literature dealing with the physiology of avian migration and breeding seasons, the term 'regression' is generally used to cover a series of complicated, ill-understood, post-nuptial events in the avian testis. Such events include (1) general testis collapse, (2) a massive steatogenesis involving the production of quantities of cholesterol in the seminiferous tubules, (3) the seasonal regeneration of the exhausted interstitial Leydig cells, and (4) the renewal of the fibrous connective tissue tunic investing the organ as a whole. So-called 'regression', therefore, involves vital rehabilitative processes that are