

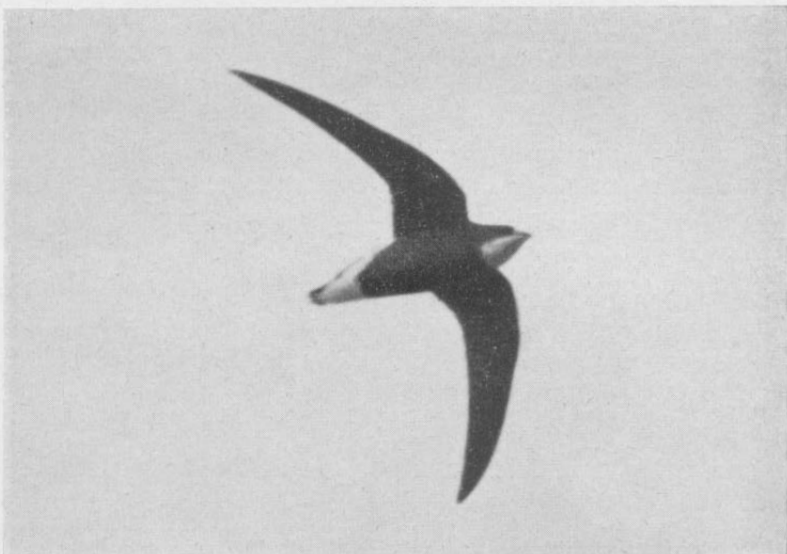
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A Spine-tailed Swift at Macquarie Island.—Following Gibson's and Farner's sightings of a Fork-tailed Swift (*Apus pacificus*) at Macquarie Island on December 11 and 12, 1958 (*Emu*, 59: 64), the discovery there of a Spine-tailed Swift (*Hirundapus caudacutus*) is hardly surprising. I spent the year 1960 at the island as Biologist with the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition. On January 11, 1960, M. Taylor drew my attention to a bird new to him. It was cruising to and fro along the western leeward side of Wireless Hill, and was easily identified as *Hirundapus* by its stout build, white under-tail coverts, and white throat and forehead. There was little aerial plankton at the height at which it was then flying, although some kelp flies might have been taken at lower levels, and it is probable that the bird had reached its "point-of-no-return". It was collected and is now in the National Museum, Melbourne, skeleton specimen number B. 7558.

This is apparently the most southerly record of the species to date. Although the Spine-tailed Swift does occasionally reach Western Australia, and has been seen by the writer in the extreme south of that State (*Emu*, 57: 64), it seems most likely that the present bird came from the eastern side of the continent, or perhaps from New Zealand, despite the influence of the prevailing westerlies, which made Gibson speculate on the possibility of his *pacificus* having come from Western Australia. Since small passerine birds have reached Macquarie from New Zealand, and harriers apparently do so regularly, it is easy to see how powerful fliers like swifts can be over-carried and reach the sub-Antarctic. Furthermore, Oliver (*New Zealand Birds*, 1955, p. 447) records *Hirundapus* as a straggler to Campbell Island, which is only about 400 miles from Macquarie.

The accompanying photograph is not of the Macquarie

Island bird, but of a member of a large flock feeding over a grass clearing in coastal rain forest near El Arish, North Queensland, on November 21, 1958. It is included here as it shows the features of the species quite clearly.—JOHN WARHAM, c/o Antarctic Division, Dept. of External Affairs, Melbourne, 27/2/61.



Spine-tailed Swift, El Arish, N. Queensland.

Photo by John Warham

Shearwaters at the Solitary Islands, N.S.W. — In December 1960 David Dent and the writer made several visits to Muttonbird and North Solitary Islands. Muttonbird Island lies half-a-mile off Coffs Harbour, and is connected to the mainland by a breakwater, while North Solitary, the largest of the group, is situated approximately eight miles off Wooli. Four hundred breeding Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (*Puffinus pacificus*) were banded on each island. No *P. griseus* or *P. tenuirostris* were located, and in view of the number of shearwaters examined it seems unlikely that either species breeds on the Solitary Group.

Fleshy-footed Shearwaters (*Puffinus carneipes*) were observed in thousands on the surrounding waters, and one was captured and examined. Recoveries of Fleshy-footed Shearwaters at sea, off Ballina, N.S.W., October 18, 1960, and off Coffs Harbour, N.S.W., October 27, 1960, and which were both banded by the writer on Lord Howe Island during November/December 1959, support one of the theories advanced by K. A. Hindwood (*Emu*, vol. 44, pp. 241-248) that the N.S.W. coast is within the feeding range of Lord Howe Island-breeding *P. carneipes*. — JOHN McKEAN, Hampton, Vic., 10/12/60.