

WITTEN, G.J. 1982b. Phyletic groups within the family Agamidae (Reptilia: Lacertilia) in Australia. Pp 225-228 in W.R. Barker and P.J.M. Greenslade, eds, *Evolution of the Flora and Fauna of Arid Australia*. Peacock Publications, Frewville, South Australia.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

First Record of a New Zealand Great-winged Petrel *Pterodroma macroptera gouldi* (Hutton) in Western Australia — On 26 April 1985 Mr P. Lambert of the Department of Conservation and Land Management, found a dead Great-winged Petrel at Busselton, Western Australia. The bird was donated to the Western Australian Museum where it was prepared into a study skin (registered number A19561).

Details of the specimen are as follows: total length 422 mm, weight 340 g, exposed culmen 39.0 mm, entire culmen 52.5 mm, tail 126 mm, tarsus 44 mm, male with small dark testes 4 x 2 mm, skull fully ossified, legs and bill black, upperparts blackish-brown, underparts greyish-brown, the forehead, chin, throat and face light greyish-white. No wing measurement was possible because the other two primaries of both wings were moulted. The bird was in poor condition with no body or subcutaneous fat. Judging from the size of the testes and the plumage this bird was a non-breeder.

New Zealand birds differ from the nominate race in their greater size including heavier and longer bill and in having a whitish face. They breed on most islands and many headlands of the North Island, New Zealand, from the Three Kings Islands south to North Taranaki and East Cape (Falla, Sibson, and Turbott, 1975. *A Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*). It is a winter breeder with eggs being laid between May and August. The young and adults leave the breeding sites around November-December; so that birds are absent from the breeding grounds for only a very short period. New Zealand birds disperse west to the Tasman Sea and off the coast of New South Wales, north to about 30°S and east to the south-central Pacific Ocean (Jouanin and Mougins, 1979. *Checklist of Birds of the World*. Vol. 1). Breeding birds are fairly sedentary, and as with many seabirds it is the juveniles that travel furthest.

The nominate subspecies *Pterodroma macroptera macroptera* (Smith) breeds on Tristan da Cunha, Cough, Marion, Crozet (east) and Kerguelen Islands, and on islands off the south coast of Western Australia from Albany to Cape Arid (Jouanin and Mougins 1979). Morris, McGill and Holmes (1981 *Handlist of Birds in New South Wales*), mention that the race *gouldi* predominates off New South Wales with *P. m. macroptera* recorded only off the far south coast of that State. Cox (1976, *S.A. Orn.*, 27: 49-53) referred all South Australian specimens to the nominate subspecies. It would appear that New Zealand birds infrequently reach Western Australian seas, and still more rarely round Cape Leeuwin.

Odd specimens of Great-winged Petrel from the Albany region (but not the Archipelago of the Recherche) have the face a little paler than in typical *P. m. macroptera*, e.g. the type of *P. m. albanii* Mathews. This misled Murphy and Pennoyer (1952, *Am. Mus.*

Novit. No. 1580: 13) into including Western Australian breeders in *P. m. gouldi*.

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Taxonomic Status of Pheasant Coucal, Red-tailed Black-cockatoo and Red-backed Fairy-wren in the Pilbara, Western Australia — Storr (1984, Rec. West. Aust. Mus. Suppl. no. 16: 39) recognised Pilbara Pheasant Coucals (*Centropus phasianinus highami* [Mathews]) as a larger subspecies than the Kimberley-Cape York Peninsula *melanurus* Gould, whereas Mason *et al.* (1984, *Emu* 84: 1-15) combined it with *melanurus*. Storr gave the wing length as 286, and 296 mm for two female *highami* versus 247-263 mm for six female *melanurus* from the Kimberley and Northern Territory. Mason *et al.* gave 243, and 255 mm for two males and 280, and 282 mm for two females of *highami* and 240 ± 7.1 mm for seven males and 267 ± 4.4 mm for three females from the Kimberley and argued that the Pilbara population was a general extension of a north-south cline in the size of *melanurus*, and was not different in plumage colour. However, data in their Figure 3, a plot of wing-length versus latitude, indicate no size cline in *melanurus*.

A female (WAM A 20396) collected in tall sedge understorey of cadjeput forest at Skull Springs, Davis River, on 6 May 1986 had a wing of 243 mm. This small bird does not support the retention of *highami* as a distinct large subspecies; however the specimen might have been incorrectly sexed. Though the Pilbara population is sometimes treated as an isolate it may be narrowly connected with the Kimberley one along the coastal strip contiguous with the Eighty-Mile Beach; coucals have been seen in dunes at Cape Keraudren and in paper-bark swamps on Anna Plains Station (Storr 1984, *ibid*; Ford 1987, *West. Aust. Nat.* 16).

Red-tailed Black Cockatoo

Ford (1980, *Emu* 80: 103-120) mapped a supposedly isolated population of the Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo (*Calyptrorhynchus magnificus*) along the upper De Grey drainage (mainly the Davis and Oakover Rivers) but had no specimen for subspecific determination. He suggested that birds along this river system might belong to either the Kimberley subspecies *macrorhynchus* or the coastal mid-western *samueli*. The third subspecies in Western Australia, *naso* of the forested lower south-west, was ruled out on geography.

On 6 May 1986 I collected three specimens from a flock of 34 Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos at Skull Springs. Their measurements (WAM A20390, WAM A20389 and WAM A20388 respectively) in mm are: 390, 385, 360; tail 252, 245, 245; culmen length 44.1, 47.0, 41.1, upper mandible width at base 28.0, 16.0, 25.7, lower mandible width at base 30.1, 30.5, 29.5; upper mandible depth 29.9, 29.2, 29.2; and weight 660, 660, 565 g. A female has dull yellowish spots on the face. Both measurements and colouration demonstrate that the population in the north-eastern Pilbara belongs to *samueli*, and so it may be intermittently connected to the main population of *samueli* further south.