

Gymnorhina sp. Magpie.

Apart from the MacDonnell Range area near Alice Springs, Magpies were not commonly seen during our travels. Most of 'The Alice' birds appeared to have broad black saddles. However, C.A. reported a bird 'with a pure white back' eight miles east of Alice Springs, and saw another twelve miles to the south of that town. A few Magpies were seen on Henbury Station and some at Ayers' Rock.

The Crested Penguins of New Zealand

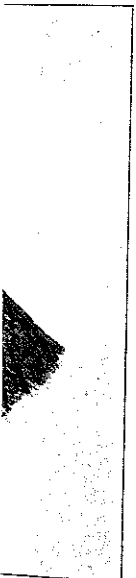
By W. R. B. OLIVER, Wellington, New Zealand

In preparing a second edition of my book *New Zealand Birds* (1930) it was necessary for me to review the crested penguins and especially to determine the status of the Black Penguin from the Snares, named by Hutton (*Ibis*, 1875, p. 114) *Eudyptes atrata*. On account of the loss of the type specimen in a shipwreck, the identity of the bird has always been uncertain. However, some new information has come to light since Buller's plate was published (1888), first through the collection of specimens of the ordinary Snares Penguin and secondly the photographing of another black penguin identified by Dr. R. A. Falla as *E. sclateri*. These, with a study of the form of the superciliary crests of all the New Zealand species of *Eudyptes*, have brought the following results.

The species of *Eudyptes* found in the New Zealand region can be defined definitely by the form and position of the yellow superciliary crests in association with the form of the bill. In the Royal Penguin, *E. schlegeli*, and its South American counterpart *E. chrysolophus*, the crests, which are golden yellow, meet in front of the crown, pass over the eyes and flop rather untidily over the sides of the head behind them. They are very long and extend down well below the eyes. The long heavy bill of these species is also characteristic and separates them from the other species of *Eudyptes*. They constitute the subgenus *Catadyptes*.

In one species, the Erect-crested Penguin, commonly known as *E. sclateri*, the crest arises midway between the gape and the nasal groove and, after passing over the eyes, the feathers turn upwards and thus no part of the crest comes below the level of the eyes. The culminicorn viewed from above is parallel-sided and grooved longitudinally at the base. These characters of crest and culmen serve to distinguish this species from all the other species of *Eudyptes*.

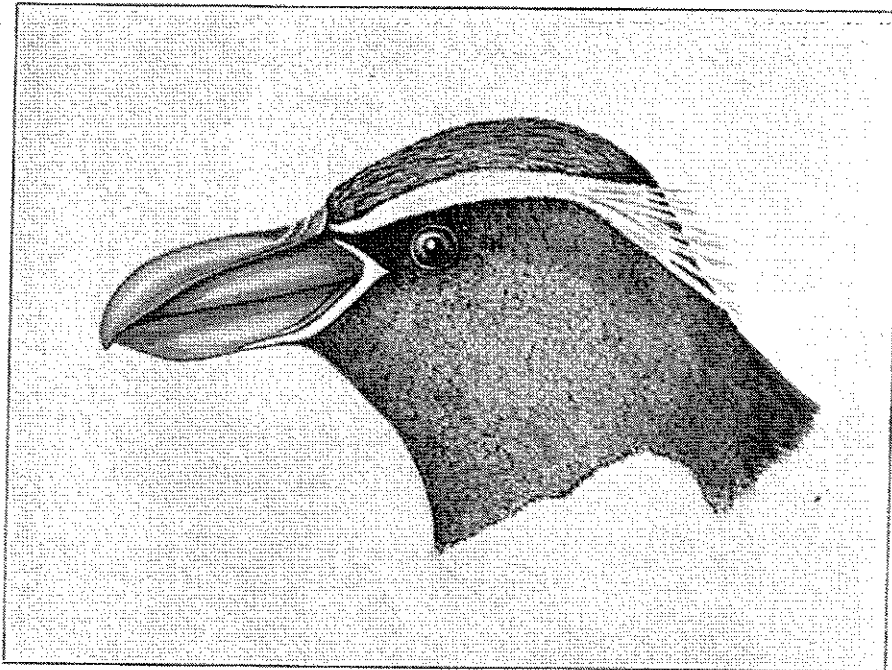
The remaining three species of crested penguins have drooping crests originating on a level with the junction of the culminicorn and latericorn, and the culminicorns are bowed, that is they narrow towards the base when viewed from above. First may be separated out a small species, *E. chrysocome*, in which the narrow crest begins





Bower of Western Bower-bird, Finke River.

Photo. by Eric Thake.



Eudyptes robustus, Snares Islands.

Drawn by C. McCann.

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at a little distance from the bill and passes over the eyes to spread and droop behind them. The yellow feathers are very long. This is the Rockhopper Penguin, at once recognized in life by its red eyes, but the small size and form of the crest together with the bowed culminicorn are diagnostic.

In the Fiordland Crested Penguin, *E. pachyrhynchus*, and the Snares Penguin, the crests originate as in *E. chrysocome*, but the yellow feathers are not so long as those of *E. chrysocome* and they spread out horizontally or droop a little distance behind the eyes. The base of the culminicorn is ridged transversely. There is a large species breeding at the Snares and a smaller one breeding in the Fiordland district of the South Island. Besides its larger size, however, the Snares Penguin has a much more robust bill, narrower superciliary streak, darker plumage, and a wide band of white bare skin below the bill not present in *E. pachyrhynchus*.

The following key will serve to emphasize the features expressed above:

Crests meeting on the crown, *E. schlegeli*, *E. chrysolophus*
Crests separate

Culminicorn with parallel sides. Crest erect, *E. atratus*.

Culminicorn with bowed sides. Crests drooping.

Crest elongated and spreading, *E. chrysocome*

Crest shorter, drooping at posterior end.

Size larger. Broad band bare white skin below bill, *E. robustus*

Size smaller. No band bare white skin below bill, *E. pachyrhynchus*

The identity of *Eudyptes atrata* Hutton must now be discussed. Hutton's type was figured by Buller in the second edition of his *Birds of New Zealand* (1888) in a coloured plate by Keulemans. The type specimen was afterwards lost in the wreck of the *Assaye*. The bird was black, evidently much blacker than was represented in the coloured plate. The crest, which was not subject to the melanistic change, is precisely that of *E. sclateri*. The place of origin between the nasal-groove and gape is correct and the erect tendency of the yellow feathers is characteristic of *E. sclateri* and of no other species. There are, however, faults in the picture. No crested penguin has a bill the shape that Keulemans has drawn it, and the flipper is too short. The character of the crest, however, should be considered as settling the identity of this black penguin. In addition, in the original description, Hutton says "culminicorn not tapering posteriorly" which is a diagnostic characteristic of *E. sclateri*. As if to confirm this classification, Falla records the occurrence of a black *E. sclateri* on the St. Kilda beach, Dunedin, in 1934 (*Rec. Auck. Mus.*, 1, 325, 1935). The Snares Penguin and *E. sclateri* are so

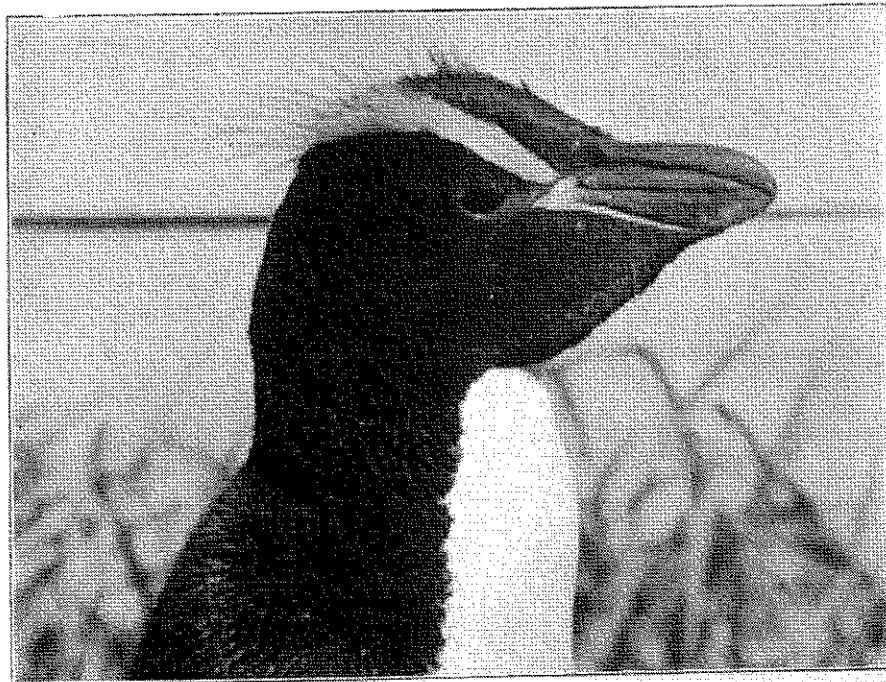
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Photo.



Eudyptes atratus, melanistic bird, Snares Islands. From Buller, *Birds N.Z.*, 2nd edn., 1888.



Eudyptes atratus, Wellington Harbour.

Photo. by W. R. B. Oliver.

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near in size that the differences are of little taxonomic value.

The Snares Penguin is thus nameless, and to remedy this I propose the following:

Eudyptes robustus sp. nov. Culminicorn viewed from above posteriorly tapering and transversely grooved. Head jet black, paler on the crown; remainder of upper surface bluish black, each feather having a narrow central streak of pale blue. A rather narrow pale golden yellow band begins near each nostril, passes over the eye and ends in a backwardly and downwardly projecting crest. Flippers with whitish front margins and with one row of white feathers along the posterior margin. Under surface behind the throat white, of flippers white with dark blue patch at base and apex and a connecting band along the front. Bill reddish brown; bare skin at gape and along lower edge of lower mandible white. Iris brown. Feet pinkish white, with claws, soles and front of webs above dark brown. Bill 53-63, flippers 180-220, tail 80-110, tarsus 36-40, mid toe and claw 70-90 mm.

Snares Islands. Breeding.

Type from Snares Islands, 1892. No. 1209.6 in Canterbury Museum.

As indicated above, *Eudyptes robustus* is nearest related to *E. pachyrhynchus*.

The chief references to the Snares Penguin are:

Eudyptes chrysocomus, Buller, *Birds N.Z.*, 344, col. pl., 1873. The measurements given are too large for *E. pachyrhynchus*.

E. pachyrhynchus, Buller, *Birds N.Z.*, 2nd ed., 2, 287, 1888. Same bird.

Catarrhactes pachyrhynchus, (part), Buller, *Suppl. Birds N.Z.*, 1, 86, fig. p. 89, 1905.

E. pachyrhynchus, (part), Oliver, *New Zealand Birds*, 73, 1930.

E. pachyrhynchus atratus Hutton, Falla, *Rec. Auck. Mus.*, 1, 324, 1935.

Snares Penguin, Murphy, G. E. B., *Nat. Hist.*, Nov. 1948, p. 412.

As regards the erect-crested penguin known since 1888 as *Eudyptes sclateri*, but now to be called *Eudyptes atratus*, the synonymy will stand as follows:

Eudyptes atrata Hutton, *Ibis* 1875, p. 114. Snares Islands.

E. atratus Hutton, Buller, *Birds N.Z.*, 2nd ed., 2, 296, col. pl. 1888. Snares Islands.

E. sclateri Buller, *id.*, p. 289, 1888. Auckland Islands.

As *Eudyptes* is masculine in gender I recommend the spelling be *atratus* as adopted by Buller.