

ARCTIC TERN, *STERNA MACRURA* NAUM., BANDED IN RUSSIA AND RECOVERED IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA*

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On May 16, 1956, during a period of stormy weather, a tern landed on a small fishing-boat off Naval Base, about 8 miles south of Fremantle, W.A. It was caught easily and sent to the Wildlife Survey Section of C.S.I.R.O. in Perth. The bird, a male Arctic tern, *Sterna macrura* Naum., was still alive but weak. It was killed and preserved in the Western Australian Museum, Perth. The band, bearing the inscription "197357 F MOSKWA", was returned to the Bird-Ringing Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture in Moscow, which advised that this tern had been banded as a juvenile on July 5, 1955, in the Kandalaksch sanctuary on the White Sea, about 125 miles south of Murmansk. The great circle distance between Kandalaksch and Fremantle is about 9000 miles.

During the preceding week the Fremantle area was affected by storms of wind and rain moving in a south to south-west stream and extending as far west as Amsterdam Island. It is possible that this bird was deflected from its usual route.

This species is known in the Antarctic during the southern summer (Downes 1952), and the four previous Australian records (Hitchcock 1952, 1954; Morgan 1954; Storr 1956) all refer to the period from October to December. Hitchcock (1954), however, cites a further, but doubtful, record for July 1928. This Russian bird was found during the southern winter. From the information received from Moscow, Arctic terns must begin nesting in the Kandalaksch area about the beginning of June or even earlier, and it is very doubtful whether this individual could have bred there this year. Since Arctic terns are known to live for 20 years (Thomson and Spencer 1954) it is possible that there is an immature period of several years. Austin (1942) shows that, while some common terns, *Sterna hirundo* L., a closely similar species, breed when 1 year old, many do not do so until they are 4 years old. However, the distribution of the immature birds is not known.

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