

According to the label the bill was grey with a black tip, the legs pale blue with white webs.

*Measurements.* Wing 196 mm., tail 81 mm., exposed culmen 25 mm., tarsus 40 mm., middle toe and claw 43 mm.

*Type.* British Museum, registered no. 1925:12:22:147, a female taken on Rapa Island in the Tubau Group on April 17, 1925, by Kelsall.

*Remarks.* This bird shows an extreme form of the trend towards increase in size associated with a reduction in pigmentation found in the southern members of the *assimilis* group of shearwaters. Its large size and disproportionately-long tail suggest that it might be a form of *Puffinus lherminieri*, but its markings, and especially the blue legs and feet, are typical of *P. assimilis*, and I think that there can be no doubt that it belongs to that species. The species normally nests in the winter, and it seems likely that a bird taken ashore in April was preparing to breed; the presence of a breeding colony of this sub-antarctic species on Rapa would not be very surprising, for several other sub-antarctic seabirds, such as *Fregetta grallaria* and *Pterodroma (hypoleuca) nigripennis*, also nest in that region, *Fregetta grallaria* also having a large endemic race, *F. g. titan*.

The type of *Procellaria munda* Kuhl taken at 48° 27' S., 93° W. on February 15, 1796 (Lysaght, *Bull. Brit. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, in press) might also have come from Rapa, for Parkinson's excellent scale pencil drawing shows a similar small shearwater with perceptible contrasting feather edgings on the mantle, and a note says it had blue feet. The dimensions of the drawing, wing 180 mm., exposed culmen 26 mm., tarsus 39 mm., middle toe and claw 43 mm., are rather small, however, and it seems equally likely that it came from some other south-west Pacific breeding place. Juan Fernandez is ecologically suitable, and does not appear to have been visited during the winter when *P. assimilis* should be breeding, for example. If *Procellaria munda* should prove to agree with a Juan Fernandez population it is probably worth repeating that the name has recently been declared a *nomen rejectum* in an Opinion of the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature, however.

**Behaviour of Mangrove Bittern.**—While we were sitting in our boat in a mangrove backwater, we were lucky enough to witness part of the courtship display of the Mangrove Bittern. He was prancing around, with one wing touching the ground, and the other one vertical. The hen was not interested, so the bird started to feed.

It lay flat on the sand about a yard from the water's edge, then crept forward inch by inch, and finally made a dive on something in the water.—CHARLES and ESSIE GREEN, Noosa Heads, Qld, 12/5/59.