

Mr. F. Lawson Whitlock has done much to increase our knowledge of Australian birds and about a dozen forms have been named after him, to perpetuate his memory. This last find is not the least, and is probably the most important this century.

It seems that there was a heavy, although brief, cyclonic blow on April 12 and 13, and on April 23, 1937, this Shearwater was picked up near Bunbury. The finder says, in a letter to me, that this specimen has the appearance of having been floating about for some time before being cast ashore. It was much eaten away on the right side of the breast, but the corresponding parts were undamaged: the chin and upper throat were also much damaged and the eyes had entirely disappeared.

Entire upper surface blackish-brown: entire under surface white to the tip of the tail: the dark of the upper surface encroached to a small extent on to the sides of the upper breast, and the dark of the neck occupied at least half. Bill black, lower mandible brownish-black with a narrow line of flesh-pink below the cutting edge, widening towards the base: tarsus flesh colour, edged with blackish-brown; inner toes flesh, outer toe blackish-brown; webs cream; nails black. Total length 370 mm, wing 228, tail 71, culmen 36, width of bill at base 9.

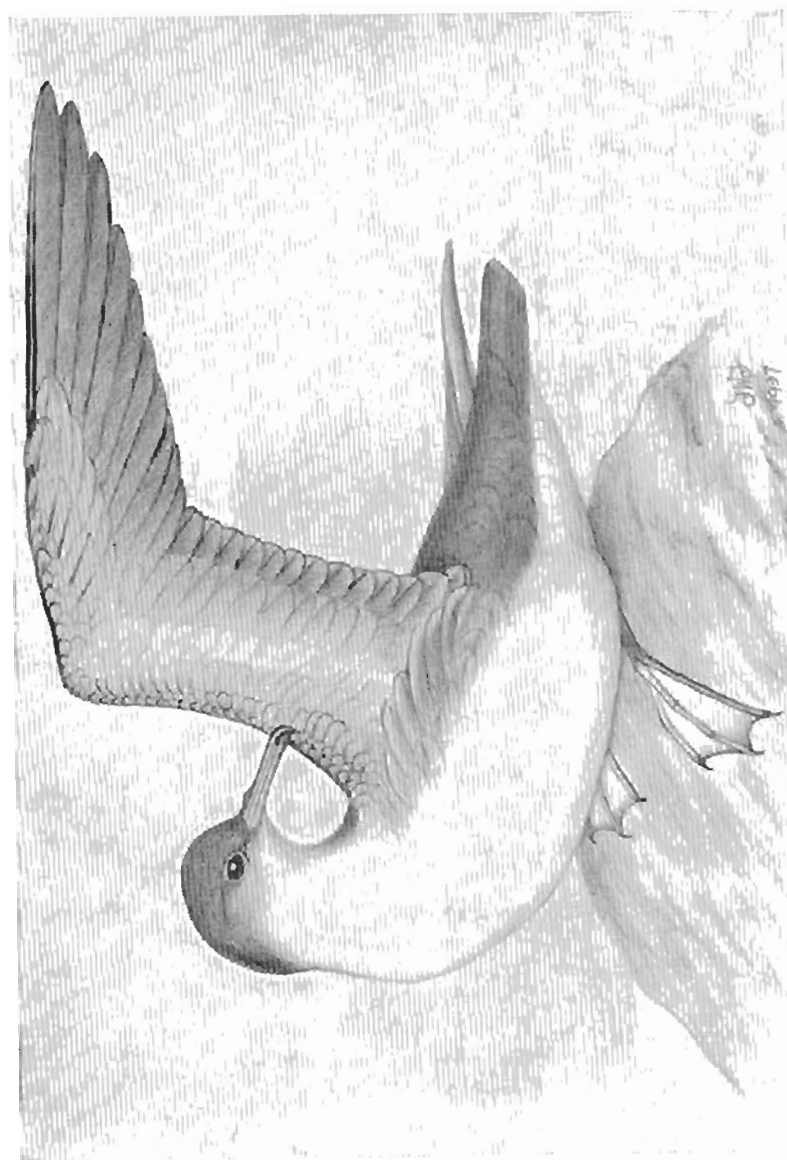
In the drawing the throat and chin have been added as white, and another specimen must tell us how the dark on the cheeks is distributed.

A New Petrel of the Genus *Puffinus*

By F. LAWSON WHITLOCK, Bunbury, Western Australia

On April 23, 1937, I was walking along the south beach at Bunbury, when I noticed a dead bird on the tide line. Viewed from a few yards' distance it had the appearance of a small Pied Cormorant, as it lay with extended neck, long slender bill, and white underparts, amongst the little heaps of sea-weed. A nearer inspection, however, revealed a Petrel of a species which I had not previously met with. I was distressed to see it was in places badly damaged. Obviously it had not been ashore long, as the coloration of the soft parts was quite clear. I find that the salt water preserves these delicate colours, but they quickly fade as the specimen dries.

I took home the remains and made careful notes and measurements, but even with the aid of copious extracts from the *British Museum Catalogue* vol. v, Mathews's *Birds of Australia*, Buller's *Birds of New Zealand*, I was unable to identify my find. The nearest I could get to it was *Puffinus obscurus* (B.M.Cat.) said to be not uncommon in



Puffinus leptorhynchus.

New Zealand seas. Knowing that Mr. G. M. Mathews was monographing the Petrels, I sent to him at once as much of the remains as I could preserve. This comprised the head and neck, both wings, the whole of the tail and coverts, and one leg and foot. Later on I sent the breast bone and shoulder girdle. I received a prompt reply from Mr. Mathews informing me that the Petrel was a new species of *Puffinus*, the wing measurement preventing its being *Alphapuffinus*, and its longer tail its being *Reinholdia*. Mr. Mathews has named it *Puffinus leptorhynchus*, on account of its long slender bill.

The following is Mr. Mathews's description:

"Adult.—Entire upper surface blackish: entire under-surface white: the dark on the cheeks extends to below the lower mandible: under wing lining grey and black, with a pale median tract across the secondaries. Bill blackish, ramus flesh colour: outer toe and part of the outside of the tarsus dark horn colour, inner toes and sides of tarsus flesh colour; webs cream. Total length 370 mm., wing 228, tail 71, culmen 36." [Tarsus 42, middle toe and claw 48—lengths by F.L.W.]

At present nothing is known of its habitat, but I am inclined to the belief it will prove to be tropical. We know absolutely nothing of what birds come ashore after a severe gale on the coast from Geraldton northwards, a distance of many hundreds of miles. In the second week in February last, a willy-willy developed in the neighbourhood of Broome. Instead of passing inland in the usual course the storm-centre travelled down the coast at about one hundred miles from land. The disturbance reached Bunbury on February 11, a violent north-west wind doing considerable damage to the sea-front and causing a very high tide. Master John Whittell, son of Major H. M. Whittell, picked up and brought to me an immature Sooty Tern and a Lesser Noddy. Both birds had been killed, apparently, by being dashed against some hard object in the violence of the wind. The nearest breeding grounds of these two species are the Abrolhos Islands, fully 450 miles away. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that many birds, including the new Petrel, were driven south by the heavy wind, and that having failed to return to their customary haunts, and perhaps failing to find their usual food had eventually perished.

Editor's Note.—The above contribution was set up before Mr. Mathews's paper (*ante*) was received. Slight differences in the description are apparent.

Mr. Gregory Mathews, of Meadway, St. Cross, Winchester, Hants., England, is desirous of inspecting more skins of Prions and would appreciate the loan of material—to be forwarded to him at the above address