

**FIRST RECORD OF A SOUTHERN GIANT PETREL *MACRONECTES GIGANTEUS* AT THE  
CARGADOS CARAJOS SHOALS**

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Giant petrels *Macronectes* spp. are not included in the published lists of birds recorded for the Cargados Carajos Shoals, Indian Ocean (Staub & Gueho 1968, Staub 1976).

On 25 June 1986, a large seabird, subsequently identified as a Southern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus*, came ashore in a sick, injured or exhausted condition at Avoquer Island (16 38S, 59 38E) in the Cargados Carajos Shoals, bearing a ring with the following inscription: HIDDENSEE VOGELWARTE, 22 31 28 VC, DDR/TNP/GDR. The bird was held for two days, and then released. Nobody concerned was able to identify the species, which they said was unknown in the archipelago. Fortunately, the finder (a fisherman or meteorological officer) had the presence of mind to record the ring details. In turn, these were passed on to Adam Bhooyroo, Officer-in-Charge at the Meteorological Station on Rodrigues Island (19 42S, 63 25E) during a radio conversation, and came into my possession when I holidayed there in July 1986.

The details were processed by the South African Bird Ringing Unit (SAFRING), and the following emerged. The bird was ringed as a nestling at the South Shetland Islands (61 12S, 58 54W) on 14 February 1986 by the German Democratic Republic. The minimum (great circle) distance is 9 814 km. Although the climate of the South Shetlands is Antarctic and that of the Cargados Carajos is tropical, this sort of movement is typical for such juvenile birds at this period of their life (Hunter 1984). However, whereas not the most

northerly record, Avoquer Island lies well to the north of the species' normal wintering range (Harrison 1983). Considering that a Lightmantled Sooty Albatross *Phoebastria palpebrata* (sympatric with the Southern Giant Petrel at a number of breeding sites; Harrison 1983) had come ashore on Rodrigues less than three weeks later on 12 July 1986 (Rowlands 1987), the causes of the two occurrences, whether trophic or climatic, may well have been common to both.

I am grateful to Mr. Adam Bhooyroo, Officer-in-Charge at the Meteorological Station on Rodrigues Island for drawing my attention to the ring details, and to Mr. T.B. Oatley, SAFRING, for processing the record.

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