

## SECOND SPECIMEN RECORD OF THE WHITEHEADED PETREL *PTERODROMA LESSONII*

### FOR AFRICA

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The first specimen record in the Cape Province, South Africa, and indeed in Africa, of the Whiteheaded Petrel *Pterodroma lessonii* was obtained on 16 October 1945 at the Kleinmonde estuary (33 32S, 27 03E), eastern Cape Province (Skead 1967), not from Natal (cf. Newman 1982). The specimen is in the Albany Museum Grahamstown, where I examined it some years ago. A second specimen, now in the comparative avian osteology collection of the South African Museum, Cape Town, was obtained on the beach north of Yzerfontein (33 20S, 18 09E), western Cape Province, on 20 May 1989. It was an adult in near fresh condition (approximately three days dead) in advanced moult of the primaries (moult score 39). Following Serventy *et al.* (1971), it was probably a bird which started to moult immediately after the failure of its 1988/9 breeding attempt. The standard measurements were culmen 40, wing 320, tarsus 43 and tail 140 mm.

Brooke & Sinclair (1978) refer without details to a recent winter sight record of the Whiteheaded Petrel by J.C. Sinclair in the seas off the western Cape. This is the record of one bird seen at 30 39S, 15 30E on 14 August 1977 (Sinclair 1978). Since then the Southern African Ornithological Society's Rarities Committee has accepted the following sight records: one off Natal on 26 July 1981 (Sinclair *et al.* 1983) and six off Natal on 28 August 1985 (Sinclair *et al.* 1987). There seem to be no other authentic records of this species in South African, or indeed African waters. These records provide the base for Ryan & Rose's (1989) statement that the Whiteheaded Petrel is a rare

winter visitor to oceanic waters, southern Benguela to Natal, and that it is a vagrant to shelf waters.

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