

the silvery throat of a grebe. Whenever a bird moved on the water, he started a series of circles. The Franklin Gull, pivoting around, made a series of circular ripples, while a diving grebe made a double series, one set for body, one for bill. A grebe was also seen riding with concentric rings ahead of it.

When my week on the lake was over, I realized what would be the delights of a close intimate study of a nesting colony of these original birds; for while my study had been a long distance one, it was enough to fill me with enthusiasm for the rarely beautiful birds—the Grebes of the Silvery Throats.

(To be continued)

SOME OCEANIC BIRDS FROM OFF THE COAST OF WASHINGTON AND VANCOUVER ISLAND

By STANTON WARBURTON, JR.

WITH ONE PHOTO

DURING the summer of 1917 the writer, through the courtesy of Mr. E. A. Kitchin of the Glacier Fish Company, was able to take a trip on one of the company's halibut fishing boats. One week, from June 26 to July 3, 1917, was spent fishing on the Pacific Ocean off the coast of the state of Washington and Vancouver Island. As I had very few duties connected with the boat's routine, most of my time was spent in observing and collecting birds. The boat was a gasoline launch about sixty feet long, with accommodations for ten people. One day was spent opposite Grays Harbor, Washington, and the rest of the time in the vicinity of Vancouver Island. The boat carried a liberal supply of ice in which the fish were kept, which made it possible to take good care of the specimens collected. Luckily the weather was excellent, so good in fact that all birds shot were very easily picked up.

The captain, Joe Magher, was very much interested in the work and did all in his power to make the trip a success. Many of the specimens could not have been secured but for the interest he took and the trouble he went to in collecting them. The crew also were always ready to help me in any way, and went to considerable pains to keep my specimens on ice.

On Tuesday morning, June 26, we left Tacoma, and arrived at Cape Flattery, Washington, on the morning of the next day. Here the Tufted Puffins (*Lunda cirrhata*) were very common and exceedingly tame. The presence of the boat did not seem to bother them in the least; in fact, most of the time they only swam out of its immediate path. The California Murre (*Uria troille californica*) was also quite common, but not as much so as the Puffins. The California Murres were always seen in pairs; one pair was collected.

On Thursday, June 28, about thirty miles west of Grays Harbor, a pair each of the Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus fuliginosus*) and Pink-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus creatopus*) were collected. Both species were quite common about here, many flocks of each being seen; but perhaps there were more Sooty Shearwaters than Pink-footed. While in flocks they seemed rather wary, but when single birds were encountered they were very tame. They were feeding on the fish which the fishermen left as worthless, these fish, caught at a great depth, be-

ing unable again to reach the bottom. On this date I collected a specimen of the Skua (*Megalestris skua*), taken while eating a dead rock cod which was floating on the surface. About six of these birds were seen during the day. The captain, who is a keen observer, said that this was the third time in eleven years of fishing in this locality that he had seen them. He described the species to me at the

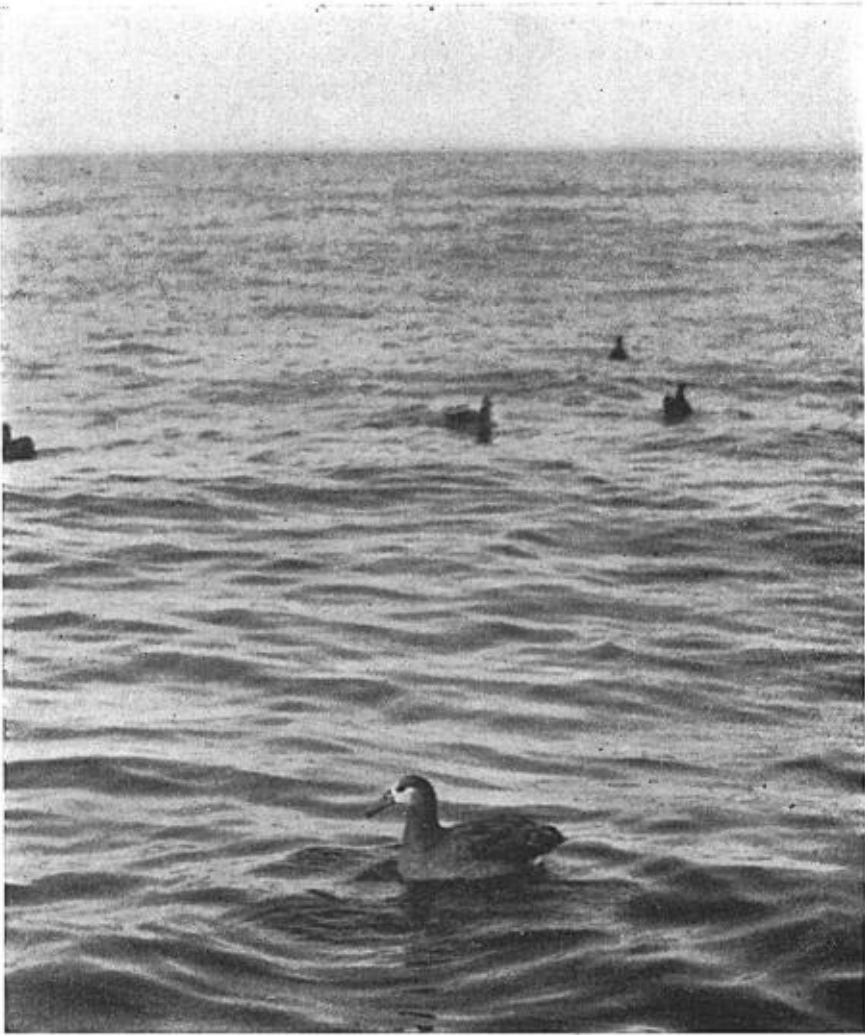


FIG. 34. BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSSES PHOTOGRAPHED OFF THE COAST OF WASHINGTON.

start of the trip, calling it the "strange bird", and the rarest bird in that locality.

While not of a strictly ornithological nature it may be of interest to note that on this date a school of the Alaska Fur Seal were observed playing quite close to the boat. One Black-footed Albatross (*Diomedea nigripes*) was seen on this date.

The next day, Friday the 29th, our location was shifted to the fishing grounds opposite Vancouver Island. Here a pair of Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and also a pair of Tufted Puffin were collected. The Terns were a pleasant surprise, appearing suddenly while the captain and myself were talking on the front deck. After the first bird was shot the other turned around and came back, making it possible to collect this one also. The Black-footed Albatross was very common on this date, and in fact until we left two days later. A few Cassin Auklets (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*) were seen here. They were all in pairs and very tame, but were seen at a time when it was impossible to collect them.

On Saturday I woke up to find the captain laughing at me, as he had just shot two Skuas and an albatross and the shots had not awakened me. I admitted the joke but took the first dory and hastened to get the birds. Before I could return the captain had another Black-footed Albatross dead in the water. Although this bird was shot at very close range it was made into a good specimen. While retrieving these birds I got so close to an albatross that I raised the oar to see if I could collect him in this manner, but before the fatal blow could descend the bird lazily arose and flew about twenty-five yards, where he sat, wondering what kind of tactics these were. That afternoon three Fork-tailed Petrels (*Occanodroma furcata*) were collected. The albatrosses were so plentiful and tame here that in the afternoon I made a few attempts to photograph them.

On Sunday I went out in a dory while the fishermen pulled in their gear. The albatrosses did not seem to have any fear of the dory, as they often came to within ten or fifteen feet of me, sitting in the stern. Here I got my best picture (see fig. 34) of them as they followed the dory to get the fish which the fishermen would leave floating. Occasionally two birds would claim the same fish and then there would be a tug-of-war, the victorious bird swimming to one side to eat it, while the other would follow the dory, hoping that the next fish would be his. The flight of the albatross, as I observed it, was very low, mostly sailing; indeed, I can think of no instance where I saw them over fifty feet above the water. Occasionally, while sailing, one would drag the very tip end of a wing through the crest of a wave without seeming to affect his balance. Sometimes a bird would fly so low in the trough of a wave that it would be lost from sight for an instant.

On Monday, July 2, running out of bait, we started for Tacoma, arriving there on the afternoon of July 3. For the identification of both the Pink-footed Shearwater and the Skua I am indebted to Mr. H. S. Swarth of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, who kindly determined them for me. The others, about which there can be no doubt, were identified by Mr. J. H. Bowles, of Tacoma, and Mr. D. E. Brown, of Seattle. The skins taken on this trip are mostly in the collections of Mr. Brown and myself.

Tacoma, Washington, February 28, 1918.