



## Birds Australia Rarities Committee Unusual Record Report Form

This form is intended to aid observers in the preparation of a submission for a major rarity in Australia. (It is not a mandatory requirement) Please complete all sections ensuring that you attach all relevant information including any digital images (email to [tonyp@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tonyp@bigpond.net.au) or [a.silcocks@birdsaustralia.com.au](mailto:a.silcocks@birdsaustralia.com.au)). Submissions to BARC should be submitted electronically wherever possible.

<b>Full Name:</b> Observed by Gary Tate, submitted by John Graff (BirdLife WA Records Officer) on Gary's behalf	Office Use
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<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone No:</b> JG: 0424 008 179 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:jgraff2@hotmail.com">jgraff2@hotmail.com</a> or <a href="mailto:sightings@iinet.net.au">sightings@iinet.net.au</a>
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<b>Species Name:</b> Barau's Petrel	<b>Scientific Name:</b> <i>Pterodroma barau</i>
Date(s) and time(s) of observation:	14 <sup>th</sup> January, 2016
How long did you watch the bird(s)?	-
First and last date of occurrence:	Separate single observations of two individuals, same day
Distance to bird:	-

<b>Site Location</b> (e.g 3km SE of Lavers Hill, Victoria) Sighted from the cruise ship Astor while travelling offshore Cape Leeuwin, precise distance uncertain, reported to be approximately 10 nautical miles but likely to be closer to continental shelf edge
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<b>Habitat</b> (describe habitat in which the bird was seen, together with any neighbouring habitats): Open seas
<b>Sighting conditions</b> (weather, visibility, light conditions etc.): Mostly sunny
<b>Optical aids used:</b> N/A

<b>To your knowledge, is the species seen frequently at this site?</b> Few previous records, but little search effort
<b>Did you use a field guide?</b> (or any other references for help with identification).
<b>Were other observers present Do any of the other observers disagree with your identification, if so, who?</b> (please give names, addresses and phone numbers)? No
<b>How confident are you of your identification?</b> , e.g. 70%, 100%. If not 100%, why not? 100%
<b>Please confirm that you are willing for BARC to display your images</b> (fully credited with your name) electronically <b>YES</b>

**Other details:** e.g. Do you have historical and or anecdotal information/comments relating to the prior occurrence/status of the species within or near this location?

There are few records of this species in Australian waters, but it is expected to occur in seas off Western Australia at least occasionally. There is a previous unconfirmed report from seas well west of the west coast (Johnstone & Storr 1998, Handbook of Western Australian Birds) and there are three records (two photographed) offshore from Bremer Bay in 2015 and 2017. These records occurred at a similar time of year to the current record.

It is also worth noting that there has been proportionally limited search effort in seas off the WA coast (compared to east coast and eastern south coast of Australia), particularly in summer and early autumn when the existing records have been made, and it is likely that the species' occurrence in the area has been overlooked. With increased survey effort, it would not be surprising to find that the species is a regular, though scarce, visitor to the region.

**Physical Description of Bird - Please describe only what you saw:** (1) No. of individuals present (living or dead); (2) age (adult, juvenile, immature) and sex; (3) size and shape; (4) plumage colour and pattern (including any details of moult); (5) colour of bill, eyes and legs/feet; (6) calls; (7) behaviour, movements, flight pattern, and anything else that might help to identify the bird e.g. feeding, interactions with other birds, describe where the bird was – on ground, in canopy, flying etc. Were comparisons made with other species?

Two individuals were observed at sea, a single photo of the first and two of the second were obtained. These are included separately with this submission as follows:

Fig 1 – Barau's Petrel, bird 1. Photo Gary Tate

Figs 2 & 3 – Barau's Petrel, bird 2. Photos Gary Tate

**Please indicate other species with which you think it might be confused and how these were eliminated?**

A number of superficially similar species occur globally, the most alike probably Juan Fernandez (*P. externa*), White-necked (*P. cervicalis*) or Vanuatu (*P. occulta*) Petrels. Though the photos are of moderate quality, we consider that the combination of head and underwing pattern visible is sufficient to rule out all other potential contenders. In particular:

- Extensive dark sooty cap merging into paler grey hindneck, lacking white collar or defined dark eyepatch; and
- Underwing largely white with dark trailing edge, dark wingtips, and a broad dark carpal bar.

**Was the description written from memory?**

**Were photographs taken? (please include where possible)**

Yes, three photographs are included with this submission

**What experience have you had with the species in question? (Did you know it was a Rare bird when you first saw it?)**

N/A