

BirdLife 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 or andrew.silcocks@birdlife.org.au). Submissions to BARC should be submitted electronically wherever possible.

Full Name: Demetrios Bertzeletos	Office Use
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Address	Phone No:
	Email:

Species Name: South Island Pied Oystercatcher (SIPO)	Scientific Name: <i>Haematopus finschi</i>
Date(s) and time(s) of observation:	14.10.2019-15.10.2019 from between 10 am to 13 pm on both days.
How long did you watch the bird(s)?	A few hours on both days
First and last date of occurrence:	See above
Distance to bird:	Down to 8 meters

Site Location Coila Lake, NSW

Habitat (describe habitat in which the bird was seen): Saline, coastal lake.
Sighting conditions (weather, visibility, light conditions etc.): Fine, hot weather

To your knowledge, is the species seen frequently at this site? No.
Were other observers present Do any of the other observers disagree with your identification, if so, who? (please give names, addresses and phone numbers)? Damian Baxter twitched the bird on it's second day. I do not know their contact details. They agreed with the id.
How confident are you of your identification? , e.g. 70%, 100%. If not 100%, why not? 100%
Please confirm that you are willing for BARC to display your images (fully credited with your name) electronically YES

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?

None

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?

Please refer to the images which leave no doubt that the bird is a SIPO.

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

The only feasible confusion risks are Australian Pied Oystercatcher-*Haematopus longirostris* and pied morph Variable Oystercatcher *Haematopus unicolor*.

Again please refer to the images as to how these two species can be ruled out. In brief SIPO has:

Shorter legs than either. Particularly the tibia.

A longer, finer beak.

More rounded proportions. Particularly around the skull and breast.

A more extensive white rump and underwing. Northern Australian Pied Oystercatcher can display this character as well, but it won't display all the other characteristics.

A white wingbar that reaches the trailing edge of the secondaries. This is much less extensive as a general rule on the other two.

All the above are clearly visible in the attached images.

The bird also differed in its call from Australian Pied Oystercatcher: The call was a higher pitched, somewhat drawn out disyllabic "PIP-queek!" which differed from the lower pitched 'Pip-pip-peep!' of the Australian Pied.

Interestingly the bird was actively courting with Australian Pied Oystercatchers. Given that other SIPOs have stayed for years, the possibility of hybrids between the two is real. As such this is an identification pit fall. However, there are no published reports of such hybrid and as such I can only hypothesize that such hybrids may resemble northern Australian Pied Oystercatchers and as such may be indistinguishable from local birds phenotypically. I very much doubt, however, that my bird is a hybrid.

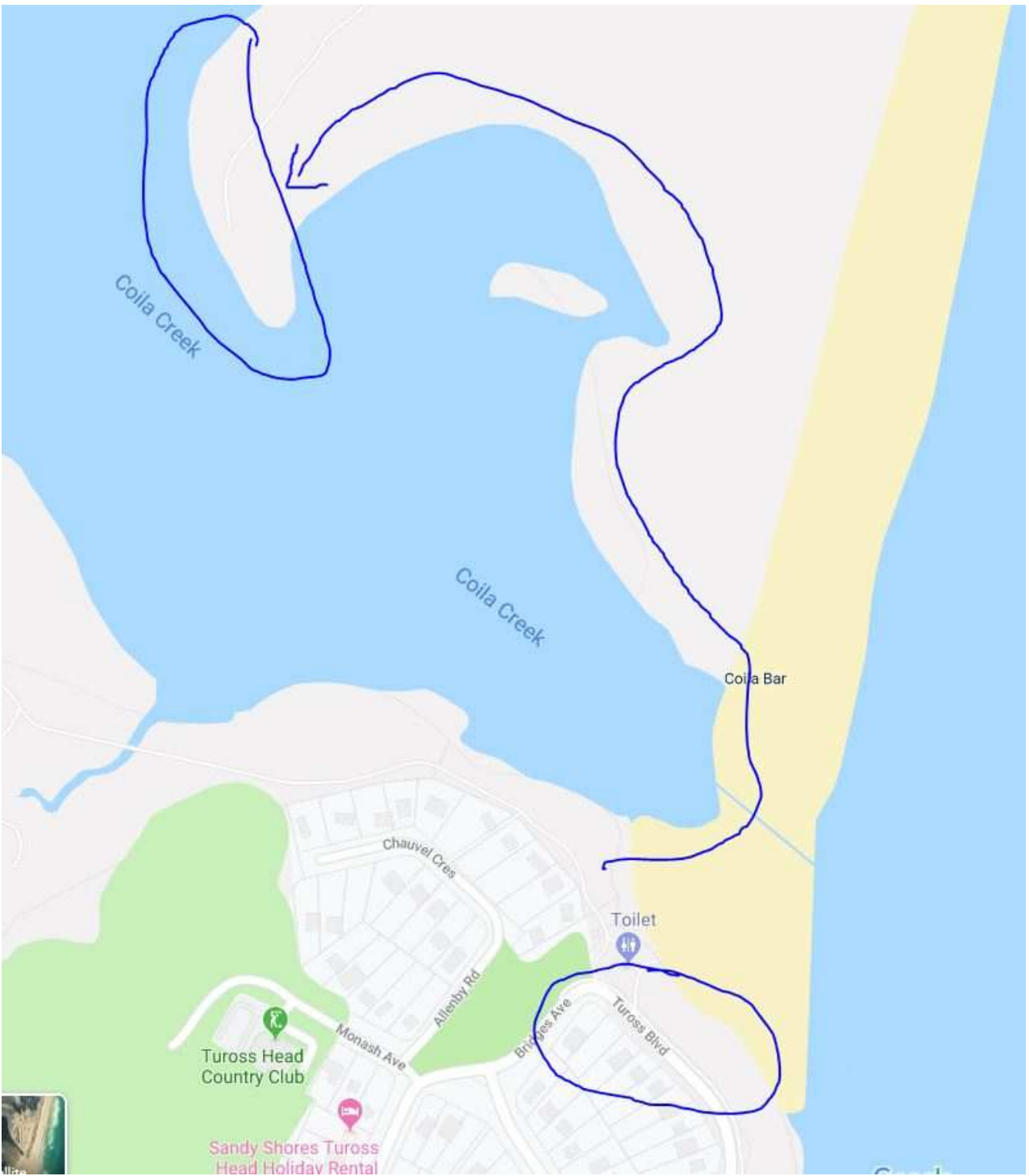
Was the description written from memory? Yes.

Were photographs taken? (please include where possible) Yes, feel free to use them.

What experience have you had with the species in question? No, but I immediately picked the bird as something rarer via its call. Field observations than confirmed its identity.

Name: Demetrios Bertzeletos.

Email Address:





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