

BirdLife Australia Rarities Committee

Unusual Record Report Form

This form is intended to aid observers in the preparation of a submission to document a major rare bird in Australia. Its use is NOT mandatory. Please attach and/or include all relevant information including any digital images. Please Email the completed form/submission to the BARC Chair, Tony Palliser tonyp@bigpond.net.au

BARC considers submissions that include a minimum of the submitter's name(s), the bird species claimed and the location and date(s) of the record. However, more information and evidence will usually be required for BARC to accept a record. So, please submit as much detailed information about the bird as possible.

If you choose not to use this form please make sure all relevant information requested in this form is included in your submission. However, it is our preference that you fully complete sections "A" and "B", or follow their headings, so that BARC has some continuity between all submissions.

Section A: Submitter details	
Your name(s)	David James
Submission Date	Draft 2, 13 Jan 2020

Section B: Record details	
Common and scientific names Include subspecies if relevant	Chatham Island Tāiko <i>Pterodroma magentae</i>
Site location (with GPS if possible)	Tasman Sea, including parts of the Australian Economic Exclusion Zone (EEC) around NSW, Qld, Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island
Date(s) and time(s) of record (First and last date of occurrence if known)	Bird 1 on numerous days between at least 4 May 21 September 2009, and again between at least 4 April and 12 June 2012. Bird 2 on numerous days between at least 12 June and 1 Sep 2009. Bird 3 on numerous days between at least 7 June and 19 Sep 2012. Thus the earliest date was 4 May 2009, and the latest was 19 Sept 2012, while the seasonal spread across all years was 4 April to 21 September. These figures are conservative.
How many individuals were there?	Three
What was the distance to the bird(s)?	N/A
Habitat description	Tasman Sea
Sighting conditions (e.g. weather, visibility, light conditions)	N/A
How confident are you in the identification (as a %) and why?	100%. The birds were captured on their breeding grounds on Chatham Island by experienced seabird scientists. No similar species of petrels occur there (Heather & Robertson 1996).
Did you find and/or identify the bird initially? Who else recorded the bird and do they agree with the identification?	No. The birds were not observed by anyone, but were tracked to Australian waters. The birds were captured on their breeding grounds and fitted with geolocator tags for extended periods by Graeme Taylor and colleagues from the New Zealand Department of Conservation.
What experience have you had with this species?	None (N/A)
Has this species been seen at this location	No. This is the first report from Australia.

before? When?	
Have photographs of the bird or discussion of it occurred on the internet? (Please provide the site name, a summary, electronic link, etc.)	The tracking data for the birds are publicly available online at ZoaTrack (Dwyer et al. 2015): https://zoatrack.org/projects/102/analysis The birds that entered Australian waters were E107430, E107447 (including E192274A) and E192274.
Do you permit BARC to display your images etc. electronically (credited with your name)	BARC has my permission to display this submission

You may choose to delete or ignore this page, but please include as much of the requested information in your submission as possible, especially Sections C and E.

Section C: Supporting evidence

Please include evidence that supports the identification, such as photographs, video, call recordings, etc. Digital images can be pasted into this document below, at the end, or provided separately. Digital video and sound recordings can be sent separately to this form. Label photos etc or insert captions to make note of relevant features they show.

Data

As mentioned, the ZoaTrack data are available at <https://zoatrack.org/projects/102/analysis>.

The species was included in the *Australian Bird Guide* (Menkhorst et al. 2017) on the basis of this same evidence. Silcocks (2019) recently wrote an article about the same data set in *Australian Birdlife* and declared that this was a new bird for Australia. Cooper et al. (in press) have provided a supplementary account for the species based on the same data, considering it to be a regular species in NSW waters. Therefore, this submission might be viewed by BARC as something of a formality.

I wrote to Grahame Taylor about the data and occurrence and he replied on 1 August 2019. This is an excerpt:

“I recently sent some information to Andrew Silcocks (Birdlife Australia) about the same topic.

The tracks we got certainly indicate that some of the birds are using the Tasman Sea in winter and appear to do a few sweeps into the outer EEZ of eastern Australia, Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands. Geolocator data is not overly accurate without quite a bit of extra processing. The longitudes are reasonable but the latitudes are affected by equinoxes. Accuracy is typically +/- 180 km.”

Grahame also indicated that his lab intends to reanalyse the data using sea temperature data to improve the accuracy of the positions.

Grahame identified that the longitudes are accurate but the latitudes are not. The latitude accuracy does not really bear on how far east towards Australia the birds came, but only how far north and south they occurred. Nevertheless, each of the birds provided positions considerably more than 180 km (c. 97 nm) north of the NSW-Qld border into Qld, considerably more than 180 km south into NSW and close enough to Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island to nullify the accuracy issues.

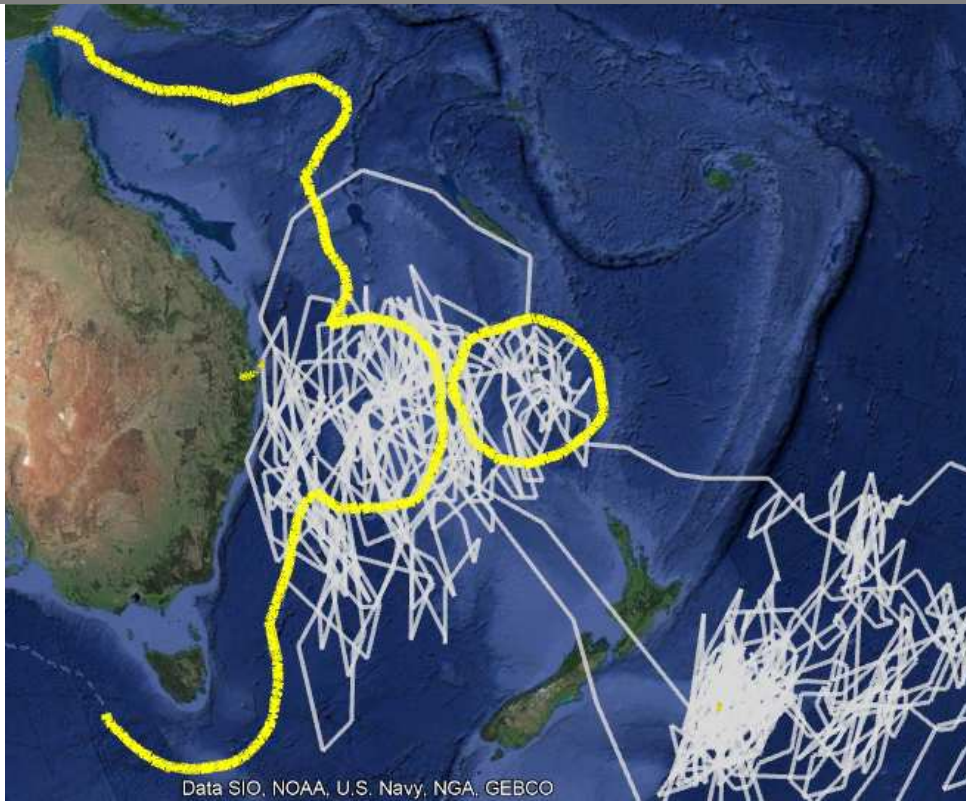
Maps

The following maps show the tracks of the three individual Tāikos that entered the EEZ. The maps were prepared by me using data taken from ZoaTrack. The tracks were exported as kml files and loaded into GoogleEarth Pro[®]. The Australian EEZ Boundary is shown as a bright yellow line. It was created by downloading the Boundary as a kml file from an Australian Environment Department website (http://www.environment.gov.au/arcgis_pub/rest/services/heritage/shipwrecks_query/MapServer/generateKml), projected in GoogleEarth Pro[®] and then traced over to make it more legible. The NSW-Qld border is indicated by another yellow line that was traced over the border as shown in Google Earth Pro[®].

Taxonomy and nomenclature

I use the common name Chatham Island Tāiko following the New Zealand Checklist (OSNZ 2010). Birdlife International prefer “Magenta Petrel”. Birdlife Australia recently used “Chatham Island Taiko”, ie. with ‘a’ rather than ‘ā’ (Silcocks 2019).

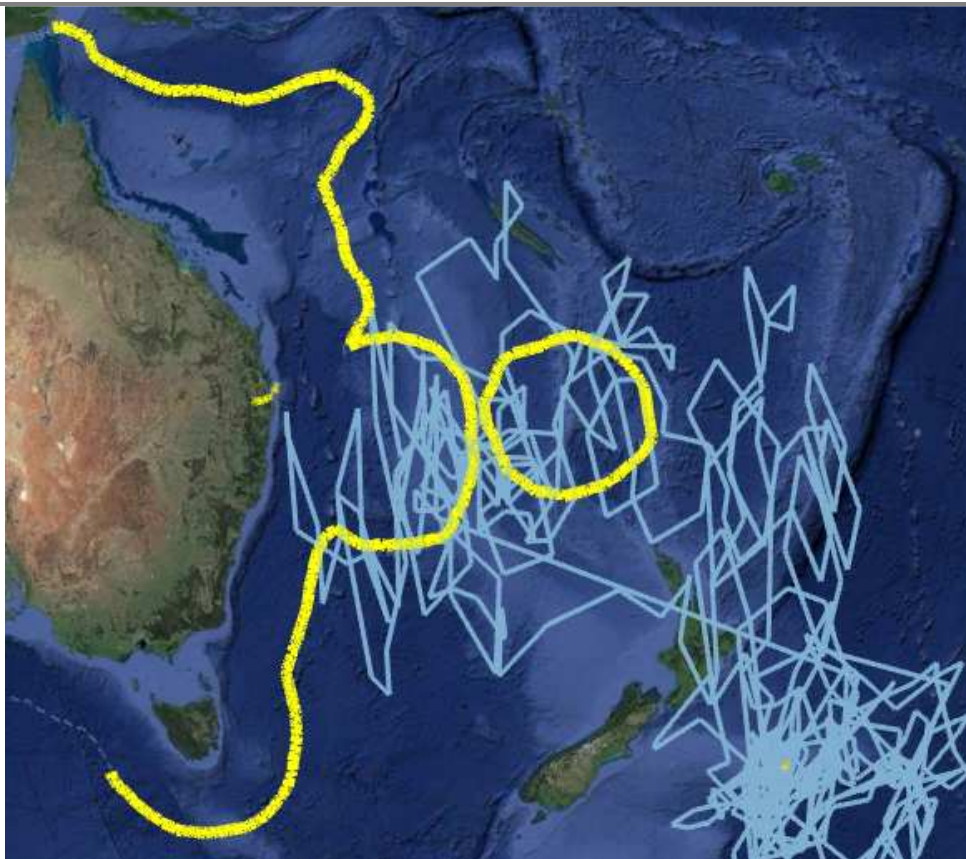
Pterodroma magentae is monotypic. Its specific name was given for the Italian corvette *Magenta*, which was named after the Battle of Magenta. The colour magenta was also named after this battle, and not, as is popularly believed, after the Taiko (Cooper et al. in press).



Bird 1 (E192274 and E192274A):

This bird was tracked from 18 October 2008 to 10 July 2012.

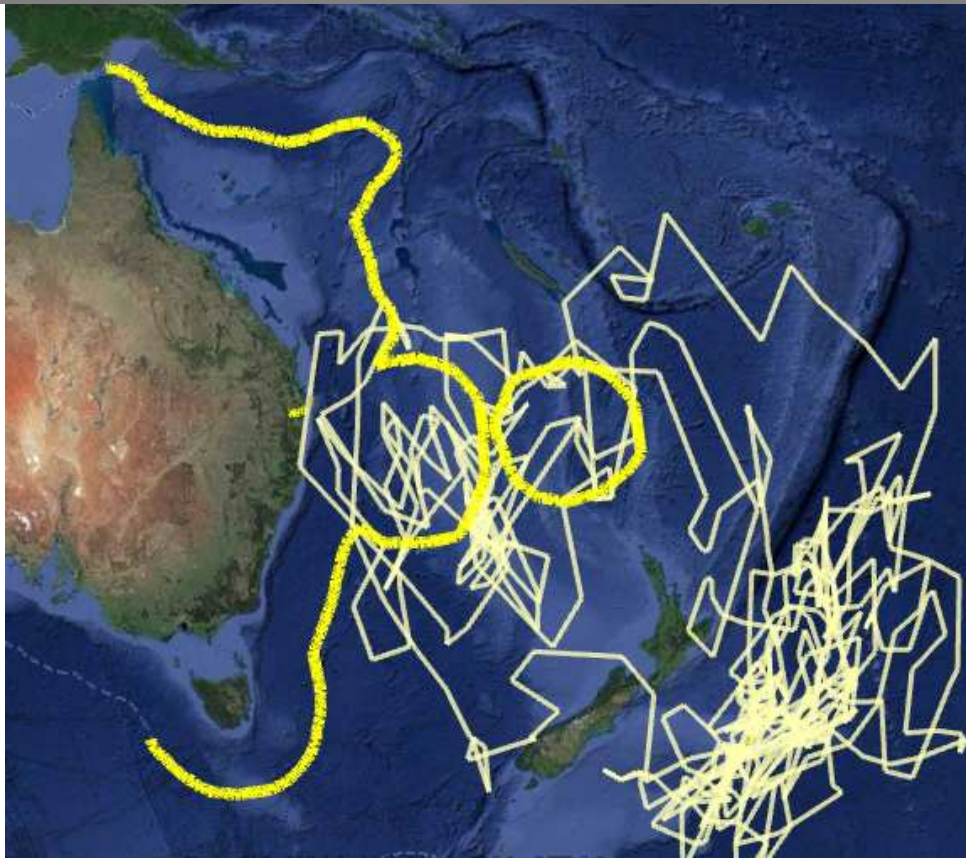
It entered the Australian EEZ on numerous days between at least 4 May and 21 September 2009, and again between at least 4 April and 12 June 2012.



Bird 2 (E107430):

This bird was tracked from 13 October 2008 to 6 October 2009.

It entered the Australian EEZ on numerous days between at least 12 June and 1 September 2009.



Bird 3 (E107447):

This bird was tracked from 12 October 2011 to 3 October 2012.

It entered the Australian EEZ on numerous days between at least 7 June and 19 September 2012.

Section D: Description of the bird(s)

N/A

Section E: Confusion species

N/A

Section F: References and aids

Did you use books, journal articles or on-line sites or pages to help you prepare this submission? Which ones?

Cooper, R.M, McAllan, I.A.W, Brandis, C.C.P & Curtis, B.R. (in press). *An atlas of the birds of NSW & the ACT*, Volume 3. NSW Bird Atlassers Inc., Woolgoolga NSW.

Dwyer, R.G., Brooking, C., Brimblecombe, W., Campbell, H.A., Hunter, J, Watts, M.E, & Franklin, C.E. (2015). An open Web-based system for the analysis and sharing of animal tracking data. *Animal Biotelemetry* 3:1, 29 Jan 2015, DOI 10.1186/s40317-014-0021-8.

Heather, B.D. & Robertson, H.A. (1996). *The field guide to the birds of New Zealand*. Penguin, Auckland.

Menkhorst, P., Rogers, D.I., Clarke, R., Davies, J.N., Marsack, P. & Franklin, K. (2017). *The Australian Bird Guide*.: CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne.

OSNZ (Ornithological Society of New Zealand) (2010). *Checklist of the birds of New Zealand and the Ross Dependency, Antarctica*, 4th edition. Ornithological Society of New Zealand Inc and Random Century New Zealand Ltd, Auckland.

Silcocks, A. (2019). Taiko: meet the Australian bird no one knew existed. *Australian Birdlife* 8(4): 36–41.

Would you like to acknowledge the assistance of others in the identification process or preparation of this submission?

Thanks are due to Grahame Taylor, Tony Palliser, Andrew Silcocks and Ian McAllan, for providing information to assist with this submission. Rohan Clarke helpfully identified a substantial error in the first draft of this submission.