

SHORT NOTE

An Eastern Rockhopper Penguin (*Eudyptes chrysocome filholi*) at the Chatham Islands

During studies of seabirds on Mangere Island from 20 October 1987 to 24 March 1988, I observed a Rockhopper Penguin (*Eudyptes chrysocome*) ashore moulting. It remained on rock ledges on the southeast side of "The Neck" from 28 February to 13 March. I caught it on 13 March, when its moult was nearly complete, and examined and measured it.

The skin at the base of the gape was pink, the eyes were bright red, and the dark chin observed when the bird was first seen was maintained after the moult. The under-flipper pattern was pale, and similar to that shown for the "southern race" in Watson (1975, fig. 5). Its principal measurements (mm, following (Warham 1972)) were: culmen length 42.7, bill width 9.0, bill depth 16.7, flipper length 168; longest new crest feather 48.4. From these characters, I identified the bird as a typical Rockhopper Penguin of the Eastern race (*Eudyptes chrysocome filholi*), a subspecies that I have observed before in the New Zealand subantarctic.

The bird was immature because it had short old crest feathers before moulting, and adults moult mainly in April, whereas young birds moult as early as January (Warham 1963). Given that the new crest feathers were almost adult length (Tennyson & Miskelly 1989), it was probably a two-year-old (Warham 1963). The bill measurements suggest that it was a female (Warham 1972).

Although *E. c. filholi* is the only race of Rockhopper Penguin to breed in the New Zealand region (at Macquarie, Campbell, Auckland, and Antipodes Islands), and small numbers occur regularly elsewhere in New Zealand away from the breeding islands (Turbott 1990), the only published record of a Rockhopper at the Chatham Islands was a bird of the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean race *E. c. moseleyi* (Moors & Merton 1984). A third record from the Chathams is of a Rockhopper Penguin of uncertain race seen moulting on Rangatira Island in the late 1970s (B.D. Bell, pers. comm.).

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