

SHORT NOTE

Designation of a lectotype and clarification of authorship and date of publication for the New Caledonian petrel (*Pterodroma leucoptera caledonica*)

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Naurois (1978) published a brief article about the Procellariiformes breeding in New Caledonia. In the abstract, he gave the name of a new subspecies of *Pterodroma leucoptera* as "*P. leucoptera caledonica*". However, the subspecific name "*caledonica*" does not appear anywhere in the article again. Subsequently, in correspondence exchanged with J.A. Bartle (Curator of Birds, Museum of New Zealand), R. de Naurois wrote that he had initially intended to describe a new subspecies of *Pterodroma leucoptera* in his article, but had changed his mind because he had "too few good specimens of *Pt. l. leucoptera* from Australia" (*in litt.* to J. A. Bartle). Therefore, he removed the description and the intended subspecific name from the draft manuscript. However, he admitted that, in an oversight, he forgot to remove the name "*caledonica*" from the abstract (*in litt.* to J.A. Bartle). In summary, the intended name for a new subspecies of *Pterodroma leucoptera* appeared involuntarily in print, only in the abstract of an article by Naurois (1978), without any type specimens being designated or any reference to individual preserved specimens. Our conclusion is that the above publication does not constitute a valid description, and that "*P. leucoptera caledonica* Naurois, 1978" is a *nomen nudum*, i.e. not an available name, because it fails to conform to the *Criteria of Publication* and the *Criteria of Availability* as established in the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN, 1999), in particular Recommendations 8D and 9A, Articles 11, 13 and 15 (see also the *Code's* Glossary for definition of a *nomen nudum*).

Three years later, Imber & Jenkins (1981) published a review of *Pterodroma leucoptera*, with special reference to its range at sea and the newly discovered breeding grounds of that species in New Caledonia by Naurois (1978). Throughout the article, Imber & Jenkins (1981) refer to the New Caledonia population as *P. leucoptera caledonica*, crediting authorship and date of publication of that subspecies to "Naurois, 1978", but also referring to Naurois's oversight—see above—as a "pers. comm.". In addition, they provide a detailed morphological comparison between the nominate subspecies, *P. leucoptera leucoptera* (breeding at Cabbage Tree Island, off New South Wales, Australia) and the New Caledonian taxon, with the conclusion that they are, indeed, different taxa.

Although it is clear that Imber & Jenkins (1981) did not intend to claim authorship of the subspecies, they inadvertently provided the provisions required to make the name available in the sense of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN, 1999: Article 11.5) by unambiguously applying *P. leucoptera caledonica* as a valid name for the taxon. Thus, they became the authors of that taxon and, from 1981 onwards, the New Caledonian petrel should have been correctly and consistently cited as: *Pterodroma leucoptera caledonica* Imber & Jenkins, 1981. However, judging from relevant literature published since that date, there is confusion and/or disagreement regarding the correct authorship and date of publication for the New Caledonian petrel. For example, Imber (as part of the New Zealand Checklist Committee OSNZ 1990: ix, 49) as well as Palma & Pilgrim (2002: 56) cited "Imber & Jenkins, 1981" as the authors and date of *P. leucoptera caledonica*. On the other hand, "Naurois, 1978" is incorrectly cited as the author and date for *P. leucoptera caledonica* in some major ornithological publications, such as Marchant & Higgins (1990: 506), del Hoyo (1992: 244) and Dickinson (2003: 75).

Considering that the use of the name *P. leucoptera caledonica* by Imber & Jenkins (1981) was inadvertent, it is not surprising that they did not designate a type specimen for that taxon. However, as they refer to several museum specimens, some of which they identified as *P. leucoptera caledonica* while others they listed as *P. leucoptera* "?" (Imber & Jenkins 1981: 150, Table 1), details of putative type specimens are confusing and need to be clarified. Among the 16 specimens that Imber & Jenkins (1981) examined, they positively identified 11 birds as *P. leucoptera caledonica*. Therefore, we consider that these 11 specimens have equal taxonomic status, i.e. they are syntypes. Collection details of the 11 syntypes are given below; form of preservation and repository institution are given for the 10 extant syntypes only.

- 4 specimens (study skins), Muriwai Beach, Auckland, New Zealand, 12 April 1942, P.C. Bull (Auckland War Memorial Museum, Reg. N^o LB6466 to 6469).
- 1 specimen (study skin), near Pitcairn Island, South Pacific Ocean, 25 May 1955, captured aboard MV *Africa Star*, per S.P.C.A. (Auckland War Memorial Museum, Reg. N^o LB6470)
- 1 specimen (study skin), Otaki Beach, Wellington, New Zealand, 25 June 1961, P.C. Bull (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Reg. N^o 11377).
- 1 specimen (study skin), 43°28'S-163°55'E, 3 March 1965, P.C. Harper (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Reg. N^o 11378).
- 1 specimen (study skin), Titahi Bay, Wellington, New Zealand, 4 May 1973, S.P.C.A. (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Reg. N^o 17366).
- 1 specimen (in alcohol), Muriwai Beach, Auckland, New Zealand, 20 May 1973, R.B. Sibson (Auckland War Memorial Museum, Reg. N^o LB2165). This specimen was a mummified skin when Imber & Jenkins examined it, but it was subsequently preserved in alcohol (B.J. Gill, pers. comm. 2005).
- 1 specimen (study skin), "Noumeá Enterprises" Camp, Kalouehola River, 550m below Mt Dzumac, New Caledonia, 19 February 1978, F. Vuilleumier, J. Greenway (American Museum of Natural History, Reg. N^o 824271; Coll. N^o NC20).
- 1 specimen, Port Waikato, New Zealand, 11 May 1980, K. Bond, A. Habraken & D.M. Walter (not preserved; A. Habraken, pers. comm. 2005).

Thus, to further clarify the status of the taxon *P. leucoptera caledonica*, we select the specimen from New Caledonia listed above (American Museum of Natural History Reg. N^o 824271; Coll. N^o NC20), being the only syntype from a breeding locality, and designate it as the lectotype of *P. leucoptera caledonica*. By this action, the other 10 syntypes become paralectotypes, and the locality of the lectotype becomes the type locality for the taxon (see ICZN, 1999: Article 76.2). Regarding type specimens, Imber & Jenkins (1981: 156) wrote "We understand that type specimens have been deposited in the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris (J.A. Bartle, pers. comm.).". However, considering that they did not examine such specimens, the latter cannot be regarded as types of *P. leucoptera caledonica*.

A relatively minor but still relevant point is establishing the most suitable page for the actual description of *P. leucoptera caledonica* in Imber & Jenkins (1981). Contrary to the Checklist Committee OSNZ (1990: 49), where pages 151, 152 were given, we consider page 153 to be the most suitable page to refer

to the first valid use of the name *P. leucoptera caledonica* in Imber & Jenkins (1981). We select that page because it includes the first use of that species and subspecies combination in the main text of the article, as well as an explanation of Naurois's oversight.

We trust that publication of this note will facilitate the acceptance of "Imber & Jenkins, 1981" as authors and date for the taxon *Pterodroma leucoptera caledonica*, thus promoting the nomenclatorial stability and universality of that name as invoked in the Preamble of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN, 1999: 2).

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