

## SHORT NOTE

The scientific name, author, and date for the “Fuegian storm-petrel”, a subspecies of *Oceanites oceanicus* from southern South America

RICARDO L. PALMA\*

ALAN J.D. TENNYSON

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, P.O. Box 467, Wellington, New Zealand

CHRIS P. GASKIN

Kiwi Wildlife/Natural Lines Consultancy, P.O. Box 686, Warkworth, New Zealand

ALVARO JARAMILLO

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, 524 Valley Way, Milpitas, California 95035, U.S.A.

The recent discovery of a new species of storm-petrel in the Puerto Montt area of southern Chile (Harrison *et al.* 2011) and the recognition as a valid taxon of a formerly synonymised subspecies of Wilson’s storm-petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820)) (Onley & Scofield 2007: 219) – mainly known from the Fuegian region and along the coast of Chile and Peru – have shown the need to confirm the correct name, author, and date of publication for the resurrected subspecies. However, we found that the taxonomic history of this subspecies, the Fuegian storm-petrel (Johnson 1965: 104), is complex and does not allow for a simple and direct way to establish these details. The literature shows a high degree of disagreement among authors who have discussed or listed this subspecies, the 3rd to be recognised as valid within the taxon *Oceanites oceanicus* (see Annotated taxonomic history below).

Major world checklists, such as Jouanin & Mougín (1979: 103) and Dickinson (2003: 77), as well as regional checklists, such as those for South

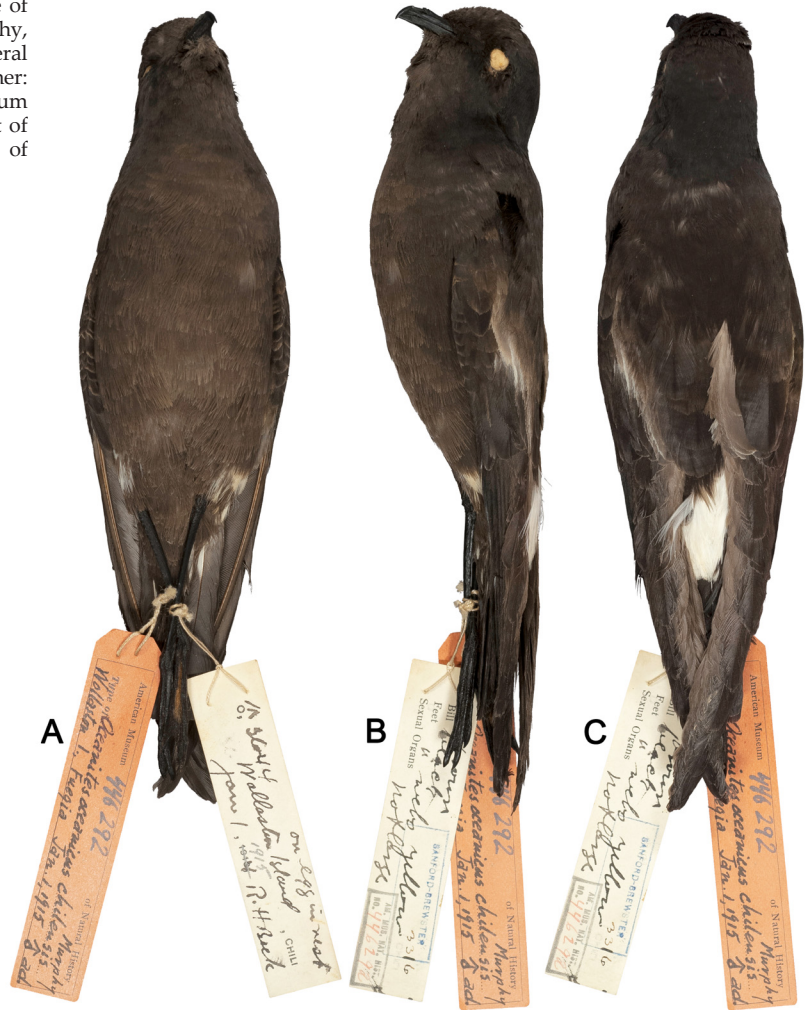
America (Meyer de Schauensee 1970: 17), New Zealand (OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010: 125) and Chile (Jaramillo 2003: 224) recognise only 2 subspecies of *Oceanites oceanicus*, i.e. *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820) and *Oceanites oceanicus exasperatus* Mathews, 1912. However, other authors recognise 3 subspecies (e.g., Murphy 1936: 754; Mathews 1937: 141; Johnson 1965: 104; Onley & Scofield 2007: 219; Jaramillo 2009: 31). Although we believe that the subspecies of *Oceanites oceanicus* breeding in southern South America may be a valid taxon, its correct name, author and date of publication need to be confirmed to avoid further confusion, regardless of its validity as a natural entity.

The 1st published reference to the 3rd subspecies was made by Alexander (1928: 86), where he wrote, under the heading for the Wilson’s storm-petrel: “Breeds ... islets off Cape Horn (*O. o. chilensis*)”. This brief reference is not sufficient to make that name available in the sense of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (ICZN 1999: 8). Therefore, Alexander’s name is an unavailable *nomen nudum*. Several subsequent authors (Peters 1931: 68; Mathews 1934: 191; Reynolds 1935: 94; Murphy 1936:

Received 1 Dec 2011; accepted 2 Mar 2012

\*Correspondence: ricardop@tepapa.govt.nz

Fig. 1. AMNH 446292. Holotype of *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936. (A) ventral view; (B) lateral view; (C) dorsal view. Photographer: Matthew Shanley, American Museum of Natural History. © Department of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History.



755; Jouanin & Mougín 1979: 103; OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010: 125) all agree that Alexander's trinomial is a *nomen nudum*. Therefore, the question is: who made the name *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* available in the sense of the Code (ICZN 1999)?

OSNZ Checklist Committee (2010: 125) believed that the name *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934 was available in the sense of the Code (ICZN 1999) because: (1) Mathews (1934: 191) listed "*Oceanites oceanicus chilensis*, W.B. Alexander" as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus*; and (2) Jouanin & Mougín (1979: 103–104) mentioned *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936 as being preoccupied by *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934. Others did not know about, or ignored, Mathews's (1934) synonymy (e.g., AOU Checklist Committee 1946: 429; Johnson 1965: 104). Murphy (1936: 754), published the 1st comprehensive description of *Oceanites oceanicus*

*chilensis*, but made no mention of *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934. We do not know why Murphy did not mention that reference: he may not have been aware of its existence or may have considered it irrelevant.

In addition, Murphy (1936: 755) pointed out that Alexander's (1928) name, even though a *nomen nudum*, was based on a specimen held in the American Museum of Natural History which Murphy had labelled previously as the future type specimen (Fig. 1) of his yet unpublished name. Murphy explained that Alexander had assumed that the name had been published and was hence available. This is a good example of the bad curatorial practice of labelling specimens as types before a proper description designating them as the types of a valid name has been published.

Some authors interpreted Murphy's (1936) name as being an invalid homonym of *Oceanites*

*oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934. Hence, Mathews (1937: 141) coined the replacement name *Oceanites oceanicus wollastoni* (but see below), and Roberts (1940: 153) created his new name *Oceanites oceanicus magellanicus* (see below).

The status of *O. o. wollastoni* Mathews, 1937 is ambiguous, but we believe it should be treated as another *nomen nudum*. In a key to the storm-petrels, Mathews (1937: 141) used 2 names for this taxon, 1st "*O. o. chiliensis*" [sic] without author or date, and added "(*O. o. wollastoni* alternative name)". We consider that Mathews (1937) regarded *O. o. chilensis* incorrectly as a preoccupied name, which therefore required a new name. However, as he did not include an author and date, we suspect that the name he was replacing was *O. o. chilensis* Murphy, 1936 which would, in his opinion, have been preoccupied by his own *O. o. chilensis* Mathews, 1934.

Roberts (1940: 150) regarded *O. o. chilensis* Alexander, *O. o. chilensis* Mathews, and *O. o. wollastoni* Mathews as all being *nomina nuda*. However, he mistakenly believed that *O. o. chilensis* Murphy was an invalid homonym, not appreciating that *nomina nuda* have no standing in taxonomic nomenclature and can not enter in homonymy (ICZN 1999: 111). Hence, in agreement with Murphy himself, Roberts (1940: 153) created a new replacement name (*O. o. magellanicus*) for *O. o. chilensis* Murphy. Alexander (1955: 55) followed Roberts (1940) in using *O. o. magellanicus* for the Fuegian storm-petrel, showing that he accepted that *O. o. wollastoni* Mathews was a *nomen nudum* and that *O. o. chilensis* Murphy was an invalid homonym. Blake (1977: 123) also followed the treatment in Roberts (1940). Jouanin & Mougin (1979: 103) regarded *O. o. wollastoni* Mathews, 1937 as a *nomen nudum*, perhaps because of the ambiguity of the name given by Mathews as "*O. o. chiliensis*" [sic].

A recent Chilean bird field guide (Araya-Möding & Millie-Holman 2005) and some online references (e.g. *Global Names Index*: [http://gni.globalnames.org/name\\_strings](http://gni.globalnames.org/name_strings); *Sealife base Org*: <http://sealifebase.org/Nomenclature/NominalSpeciesList.php?family=Hydrobatidae>) give the authorship of *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* to Murphy.

From the foregoing, the key issue appears to be determining the status of the name *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934. Although it has been taken as being taxonomically available (even by RLP and AJDT as members of the OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010), the information given by Mathews (1934: 191) is no more, perhaps less, than the data given by Alexander (1928), so its availability is highly questionable. Both authors give a subspecies name within the species *Oceanites oceanicus* and, while Mathews only refers to Alexander's name as

a *nomen nudum*, Alexander gives a locality "islets off Cape Horn". If Alexander's name has been deemed to be a *nomen nudum*, despite including a locality, we believe that the name given by Mathews must also be regarded as a *nomen nudum* because (1) it was 1st published as a junior synonym (see Article 11.6. ICZN 1999: 11) and (2) it is not accompanied by a description or definition purporting to differentiate the taxon (see article 13.1.1. ICZN 1999: 17).

In his annotated list of type specimens of birds held in the American Museum of Natural History, Greenway (1973: 231) briefly discussed the nomenclatorial history of this taxon reaching the same conclusion, that *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934 is not an available name.

In summary, *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Alexander, 1928, *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934, and *Oceanites oceanicus wollastoni* Mathews, 1937 are all *nomina nuda* and taxonomically unavailable. Murphy (1936), who properly described the taxon, gave a type locality and designated a type specimen, made the name *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* available. That type specimen is also the type of *Oceanites oceanicus magellanicus* Roberts, 1940. Furthermore, as stated by Murphy (1936), the same specimen was the reason for Alexander's (1928) inclusion of the name *O. o. chilensis* and, consequently, for the listing of *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* by Mathews (1934). Therefore, despite the confused status of some of the names discussed here, they all refer to the same specimen, the type of *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936 (Fig. 1). The logical and most parsimonious conclusion is to recognise this name, author, and date as the correct combination for the population of *Oceanites oceanicus* breeding in southern South America, also known as the "Fuegian petrel" (Murphy 1936: 754) or, our preferred name, "Fuegian storm-petrel", from Johnson (1965: 104).

#### Annotated taxonomic history

*Note*: Scientific names and annotations (in quotes) are taken verbatim from the sources given. Other annotations are ours.

#### *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936

*O. o. chilensis* Alexander, 1928: 86 – "Islets off Cape Horn". *Nomen nudum*.

*O. o. chilensis* Alexander, 1928; Peters 1931: 68. Mentioned in a footnote as a *nomen nudum*.

*Oceanites oceanicus chilensis*, Alexander, 1928; Mathews, 1934: 191. Listed as a junior synonym of *O. o. oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820). No locality given. *Nomen nudum*.

*Oceanites oceanicus* subsp.; Reynolds 1935: 94.

*Oceanites oceanicus chilensis*; Reynolds 1935: 94. "is a *nomen nudum*".

*Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936: 754 – Wollaston Island, Tierra del Fuego, Chile.

- O. o. wollastoni* Mathews, 1937: 141. "Wollaston and other islands near Cape Horn (Falklands?)". "alternative name" for "*O. o. chilensis*" [sic]. *Nomen nudum*.
- Oceanites oceanicus* (? *chilensis*) (Murphy); Hamilton 1939: 140. "West Falkland".
- Oceanites oceanicus magellanicus* Roberts, 1940: 153 – "Tierra del Fuego". Unnecessary *nomen novum* for *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936.
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy; AOU Checklist Committee 1946: 429. "Additional subspecies".
- O. o. magellanicus*; Alexander 1955: 55. "islets off Cape Horn and the Falkland Is."
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy; Johnson 1965: 104.
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936; Greenway 1973: 231. "Both the names "*wollastoni*" Mathews and "*magellanicus*" Roberts are synonyms of *chilensis* Murphy".
- Oceanites oceanicus magellanicus* Roberts, 1940; Blake 1977: 123. Follows Roberts's rationale.
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936; Jouanin & Mougín 1979: 103. Listed as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).
- Oceanites oceanicus wollastoni* Mathews, 1937; Jouanin & Mougín 1979: 103. Listed as a *nomen nudum* and as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).
- Oceanites oceanicus magellanicus* Roberts, 1940; Jouanin & Mougín 1979: 103. Listed as a *nomen novum* for *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936 and as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934; Jouanin & Mougín 1979: 104. Mentioned as a senior homonym of *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936.
- O. o. chilensis* Murphy; Araya-Mödinge & Millie-Holman 2005: 68.
- O. o. chilensis*; Onley & Scofield 2007: 219. "breeds in the Chilean fjords".
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis*; Jaramillo 2009: 31. "The subspecies found in Chile".
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Mathews, 1934; OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010: 125. Listed as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).
- Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936; OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010: 125. Listed as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).
- Oceanites oceanicus wollastoni* Mathews, 1937; OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010: 125. Listed as an unnecessary *nomen novum* for *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936 and as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).
- Oceanites oceanicus magellanicus* Roberts, 1940; OSNZ Checklist Committee 2010: 125. Listed as an unnecessary *nomen novum* for *Oceanites oceanicus chilensis* Murphy, 1936 and as a junior synonym of *Oceanites oceanicus oceanicus* (Kuhl, 1820).

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Paul Sweet (Department of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, New York, U.S.A.) for supplying the original photographs of the holotype, and to Raymond Coory (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand) for preparing the images for publication.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Alexander, W.B. 1928. *Birds of the ocean. A handbook for voyagers*. New York & London: Putnam.
- Alexander, W.B. 1955. *Birds of the ocean. A handbook for voyagers*. Rev. edit. London: Putnam.
- AOU Checklist Committee: Wetmore, A. (Chairman) 1946. Twenty-first supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union check-list of North American birds. *Auk* 63: 428-432.
- Araya-Mödinge, B.; Millie-Holman, G. 2005. *Guía de campo de las aves de Chile*. Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria.
- Blake, E.R. 1977. *Manual of Neotropical birds: Spheniscidae (penguins) to Laridae (gulls and allies)*. Vol. 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Dickinson, E.C. (ed.). 2003. *The Howard and Moore complete checklist of the birds of the world*. 3rd ed. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Greenway, J.C. 1973. Type specimens of birds in the American Museum of Natural History. Part 1. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History* 150: 207-346.
- Hamilton, J.E. 1939. Additions to the Falkland Islands list. *Ibis* 3(14th series): 139-140.
- Harrison, P. et al. 2011. New species of seabird. A new species of storm-petrel found in Chile (<http://projectpuffin.org/pdfs/NewSeabirdSpeciesHarrisonFeb2011/pdf>) Accessed 21 Nov 2011.
- International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature [ICZN] (1999). *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature*. 4th edition. London: International Trust for Zoological Nomenclature.
- Jaramillo, A. 2003. *Field guide to the birds of Chile including the Antarctic Peninsula, the Falkland Islands and South Georgia*. Helm Field Guides. London: Christopher Helm.
- Jaramillo, A. 2009. Humboldt Current seabirding in Chile. *Neotropical Birding* 4: 27-39.
- Johnson, A.W. 1965. *The birds of Chile and adjacent regions of Argentina, Bolivia and Peru*. Vol. 1. Buenos Aires: Platt Establecimientos Gráficos S.A.
- Jouanin, C.; Mougín, J.L. 1979. Order Procellariiformes. Pp. 48-121. In: Mayr, E.; Cottrell, G.W. (eds) *Checklist of Birds of the World*. Vol. I, 2nd ed of Peters, 1931 Check-list. Cambridge (Massachusetts): Museum of Comparative Zoology.
- Mathews, G.M. 1934. A check-list of the Order Procellariiformes. *Novitates Zoologicae* 39: 151-206.
- Mathews, G.M. 1937. Key (*dichotomous antithesis*) of the storm petrels. *Emu* 37: 136-143.



- Meyer de Schauensee, R. 1970. *A guide to the birds of South America*. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd.
- Murphy, R.C. 1936. *Oceanic birds of South America*. New York: American Museum of Natural History.
- Onley, D.J.; Scofield, P. 2007. *Albatrosses, petrels & shearwaters of the world*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- OSNZ Checklist Committee. 2010. *Checklist of the birds of New Zealand, Norfolk and Macquarie Islands, and the Ross Dependency, Antarctica*. 4th ed. Wellington: Ornithological Society of New Zealand & Te Papa Press.
- Reynolds, P.W. 1935. Notes on the birds of Cape Horn. *Ibis* 5 (13th series): 65–101, 3 pls.
- Roberts, B. 1940. The life cycle of Wilson's petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (Kuhl). *British Graham Land Expedition, 1934–37, scientific reports* 1: 141–194, 7 pl.

**Keywords** Fuegian storm-petrel; nomenclature; *Oceanites oceanicus*; South America