

*SUTTON—The White-headed Petrel.**Pterodroma lessoni*, White-headed Petrel.

By J. Sutton.

(Plate XII.)

A bird of this species was donated to the South Australian Museum by Mrs. W. C. Hamilton, of 167 Robin Road, Semaphore. The bird was first seen at 2.30 p.m. on 29th May, 1933, near the fish-ponds in her aquarium. It was lying prone on the ground and moving its head from side to side. The two fox-terriers, which guard the ponds from the Silver Gulls, ran at the bird and it flew away towards the Semaphore jetty upon which it dropped heavily. The bird was then captured and taken to the house, where it lay prone for a time and later got up on its legs, ran about the kitchen, and struck with its bill at food, softened bread, offered to it in a spoon, but did not eat any. The bird was dead in the morning, and was donated to the S.A. Museum.

The forehead, face, all the under surface and tail, white; back of the head and neck, sides of neck, and upper tail-coverts, grey; back, greyish brown; wings, blackish brown, under sides grey brown; black mark around the eye, that portion in front of the eye covering most area; some slight darkish marks in the lores above the base of the culmen.

♀; total length, 41.5 cm.; span of wings, 103 cm.; middle toe and claw, 6 cm.; weight, 395 grammes. The stomach was empty. Iris, dark hazel; bill, black; legs, pale flesh colour; toes and webs, flesh colour to the first joint in the inner and centre toes, then black, including the nails, the outside toes black for their whole length, including the nails. The black parts on the toes and webs were much larger in area than those shown in the plate in Godman's "Monograph of the Petrels." Inside mouth, flesh colour with a bluish tinge.

Dr. E. A. Wilson, of the "Terra Nova Expedition, 1910," writes of the bird . . . "head almost pure white and very pronounced black mark over the eye and wings black on the under side—the whitish head and tail and the very distinct black-V mark made by the wings distinguishing it at a long distance."

This is the third record of the finding of this species in South Australia. The first specimen was obtained at Encounter Bay on 17th December, 1924, the second, a part skeleton, at Robe on 26th December, 1924. For particulars of these see the "South Australian Ornithologist," Vol. VIII., 1925, pp. 42-43, in the

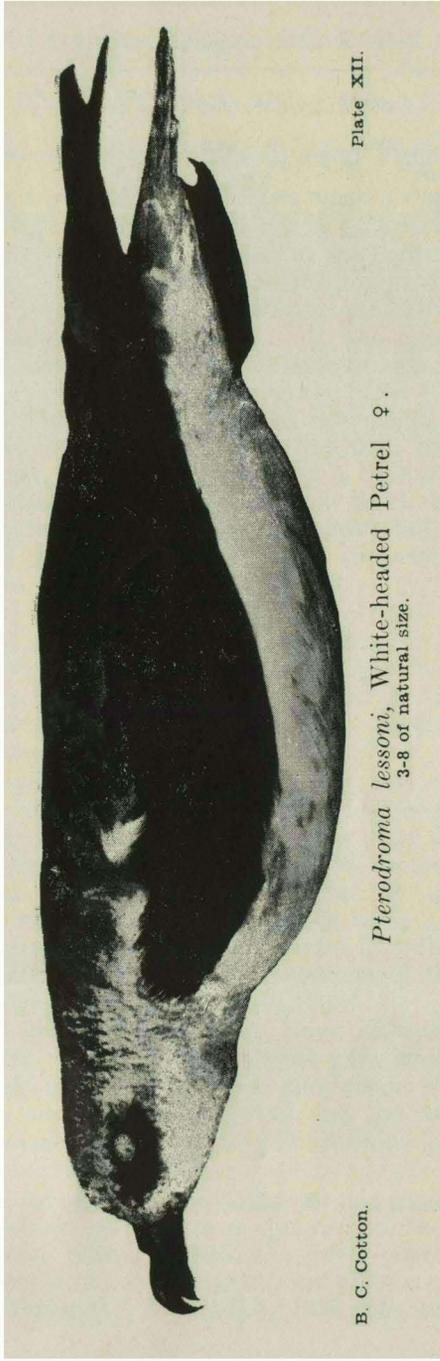


Plate XII.

Pterodroma lessoni, White-headed Petrel ♀.
3-8 of natural size.

B. C. Cotton.

PARSONS—Birds Near Mouth of Murray.

article by Professor J. B. Cleland. On the present occasion there had been severe gales on our coast for some days before the finding of the bird.

Oliver, in "New Zealand Birds," 1930, gives the general distribution as the Southern Ocean from 30 degrees south latitude to the Antarctic Continent. Breeds at Kerguelen, Auckland, Antipodes, Bounty and Macquarie Islands. At Antipodes Islands there are burrows of this species all over the surface, and skeletons of birds eaten by Skuas are strewn everywhere. The eggs are laid early in January, and the young hatched in February. Clutch, one egg.
