

**SPECIMEN OF THE GREY-FACED PETREL FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.** There are currently two recognised races of *Pterodroma macroptera*. The nominate form, the Great-winged Petrel, breed on islands off the south coast of Western Australia and islands to the west and south-west of this area, such as Tristan da Cunha, Kerguelen, Crozet and Marion. *P. m. gouldi*, the Grey-faced Petrel, breeds on the northern coast of the North Island of New Zealand and its off-shore islands.

Condon (1969) listed *gouldi* as the only form recorded for South Australia. However, Cox (1976) referred all specimens to the nominate form *P. m. macroptera*; this was followed by Parker *et al.* (1979).

Prior to 1996 there were six skins of *P. m. macroptera* taken in South Australia in the South Australian Museum. Additionally I hold one collected from Surfers Beach, (between Goolwa and Middleton), on 6 May 1979 and there is a head in the J. Eckert collection which came from the Coorong Beach (undated). All of these specimens were examined and found to be of the dark-faced form *P. m. macroptera*, an exception being S.A.M. Reg. No. B38457. This specimen, collected from Rivoli Bay in the South East on 27 August 1984, could not be located for its race to be determined. Thus South Australia had no specimen record of the New Zealand form.

This position was altered on 11 February 1996 when a large dark *Pterodroma* petrel was found at Surfers Beach by Ron Robinson. It had a distinct light-grey face (see Figures 1a and b) and the underwing was all dark including the base of the primaries which helps to distinguish it from other light-faced species with which it might be confused. These are the Providence Petrel *P. solandri*, dark phases of the Herald Petrel *P. arminjoniana* and the Kermadec Petrel *P. neglecta*, which all have white at the base of the primaries on the underwing (Marchant and Higgins 1990, plates 28, 31 and 32). While plate 31 does not show a light-coloured face on the dark phase of *P. neglecta*, Alexander (1955) has

a photograph on plate 14 of a dark bird of this species with a pale face which resembles that of *P. m. gouldi* from Surfers Beach. The bird showed some body moult and the new rectrices had not attained their full length. The sex was not determined but it was considered adult by skull ossification. The skin is now in the South Australian Museum collection, Reg. No. B48362. Measurements are: culmen 38 mm, wing length 307 mm, tail (in moult) 135 mm and tarsus 42 mm.

*P. m. gouldi* ranges widely into the Tasman Sea and has been recorded in all months off the New South Wales coast (Morris *et al.* 1981). These authors state "Race *gouldi* predominates, *macroptera* recorded only off the far south coast." The race *gouldi* is regarded as more sedentary than the nominate form and this view is substantiated by the lack of South Australian specimen records before this record.

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Ross D. Robinson: 16 Marchant Rd, Strathalbyn, S.A. 5255

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Figure 1a.

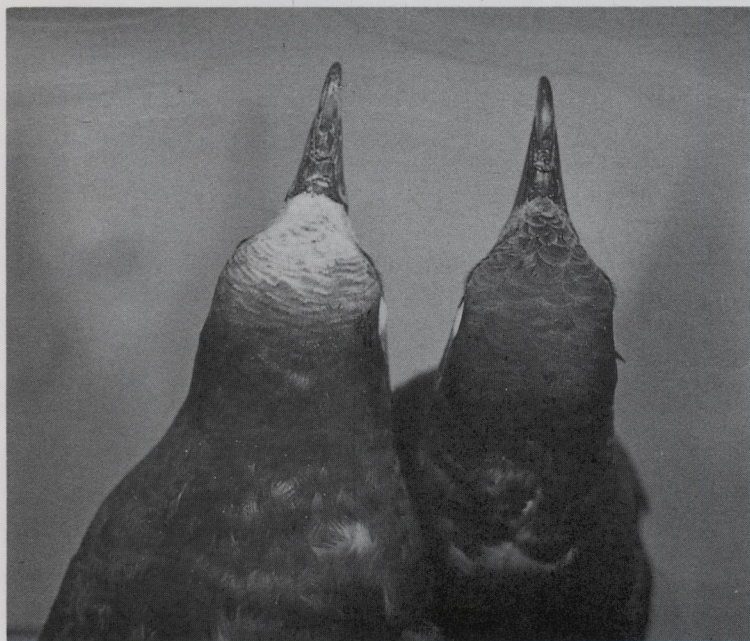


Figure 1b.

Figures 1a and 1b. *P. m. gouldi* - (1a. top and 1b. left) collected 11 February 199, *P. m. macroptera* - (1a. bottom and 1b. right) collected 6 May 1979; both from Surfers beach (photographer D. Deans).