

## **Cook's Petrel**

*Pterodroma cookii*

17 April 2012

45km off Cape Blanco, Curry County, OR from the cruise ship *MS Oosterdam*

I took these coordinates on my GPS when the bird disappeared from view: 42°48'18.32"N, 125° 6'8.93"W

Barbara Carlson spotted the bird initially, Brad Waggoner got on it about 30 sec later. It took me about two minutes to finally spot it in my scope, but even then I was able to watch this *Pterodroma* for about two minutes. Initially I saw it flying toward the bow of the ship at a medium distance, and after watching it for 30-45 seconds it switched directions to be flying off to the port side away from us.

Clearly a gadfly petrel as opposed to a shearwater by the shape and plumage. Buller's Shearwaters, in addition to their more shearwater-like shape and it being the "wrong" time of year for them, have a dark cap unlike this bird's pale gray cap.

This bird had dark wings, with the upper mantle and head being a paler gray. At a distance it appeared uniformly clean white through the entire underside though at closer range I could see that the wings were outlined in a fine black border which was about twice as bold on the leading edge of the wing as the trailing edge, and at the forward bend in the wing this black border was about twice as bold as the rest of the leading edge of the underwing. At first I thought it appeared too large for Cook's Petrel, though I then saw a Sooty Shearwater fly past which was substantially larger so apparently the view was just much closer than I'm used to when watching Cook's from a cruise ship. I have seen about 270 other Cook's Petrels in California during two previous repositioning cruises in the springs of 2010 and 2011, in addition to a couple hundred in New Zealand back in 2004. Good, extended views by Barbara Carlson, Brad Waggoner, Dan Waggoner, Paul Lehman, and myself.

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