

Record 098.5-14-15

HAWAIIAN PETRELS

off Oregon Coast

July 2014

Email from Paul Lehman (to Harry Nehls)

On both 7 July and 16 July 2014 a small group of birders were again well off the Oregon coast, aboard the Princess cruise-ship "Star Princess" on a round-trip San Francisco to se. Alaska and return cruise. As has become expected during the past few years, we saw a number of HAWAIIAN PETRELS in Oregon waters. All birds were actually "Dark-rumped" (Hawaiian/Galapagos) Petrels, but given the fact that Hawaiian is proving to be a regular visitor between late April and August to shelf-edge (and beyond) waters off CA and at least southern OR (with fewer birds as far north as off southern BC), and Galapagos Petrel has yet to be recorded off the U.S. West Coast (and hasn't even been rumored), it may well be fine to just call all such birds Hawaiians unless there is a specific reason not to do so with a particular record.

Most of these Hawaiians, below, were also seen by Chris Feeney (Georgia) and Martin Meyers (California/Nevada). None of them were photographed. All were in Oregon waters based on closest-point-of-land criteria.

7 JULY 2014

41.923, 126.064-- ca. 145 km WSW of s. Curry Co. (**Record 098.5-14-11**)

42.060, 126.142-- ca. 145 km W of s. Curry Co. (**Record 098.5-14-12**)

42.771, 126.547-- ca. 167 km W of Cape Blanco, Curry Co. (**Record 098.5-14-13**)

16 JULY 2014

44.228, 125.181-- ca. 85 km offshore, just s. of Yachats, Lincoln Co. (**Record 098.5-14-14**)

43.242, 125.140-- ca. 62 km W of Cape Arago, Coos Co. (**Record 098.5-14-15**)

All birds were seen moderately well, with the bird off Yachats being very well seen. All were immediately noted as being Hawaiian-type Petrels given a combination of plumage and flight style. They were just slightly smaller than a Sooty Shearwater, but

the slimmer build made them look even a bit smaller than that. Their wings and tail extension were, however, slightly longer, proportionately. Sharply contrasting dark-and-white plumage was obvious. With a uniform brownish-tinged slate-gray upperparts from crown to tail, with no white anywhere, and very white underwing with bold, sharp, thin black borders and a partial, somewhat broken dark bar diagonally across the inner wing. The underparts were also gleaming, unmarked white, and that included the undertail coverts and the lower face. The wings were longish, fairly narrow, and distinctly scimitar shaped (at least the majority of the wing was--the part beyond the 'joint,' which was fairly close in to the body). The tail-tip was somewhat wedge-shaped. All of the birds were more acrobatic than the typical shearwater, and they were able to make rapid back-and-forth tilts of the entire body and wings--from a mostly horizontal plane to purely vertical and then 'whip" back to a more horizontal angle. On most (but not all) of these birds we could also see a darker, blackish smallish patch through the eye. And on the 16 July bird off Yachats, it was so close to the bow that we could easily see the band of white extending across the forehead.

I have now seen over 40 Hawaiian Petrels off the West Coast during the past three years, so I think I now have a good "feel" for this species. Martin Meyers had seen a couple Hawaiians previously, and it was a life bird for Chris Feeney on this trip.

--Paul Lehman, 11192 Portobelo Drive, San Diego, CA 92124;
lehman.paul@verizon.net