

December 16, 1987
099- 72-11A

You asked for details on the Mottled Petrel I saw off the Columbia River mouth in 1972. I am not sure just how far off shore I was, but the bluff on the north side of the river was clearly visible, but the South Jetty was not.

This was a fishing trip and captains don't like to give exact locations of where they are fishing to strangers. The date was Sept. 30th, the weather was sunny, with little wind. The bird flew by going north within 300 feet of the boat in excellent light. I was impressed by the speed of the birds flight. It was chunkier than the assorted (mostly Sooty) Shearwater around me and shorter. The wings were a bit broader proportionately.

Below mostly white, edge of tail tip dusky, area from lower throat to abdomen dull grey with irregular paler edgings, trailing edge of wings narrowly blackish, a black stripe on lower wings starting at a point somewhat out from the body in the middle and slanting to the forward bend of the wing and thence along the fore edge part way to the tip. I did not note the white spot at the bend illustrated in Harrison.

Above primarily similar to breast in coloration, dark dusky Osprey-like ear patch ending before neck, crown a bit paler (which surprised me as illustration in Western Pough Audubon Guide showed dark grey cap, but Harrison indicates some individuals have this) broad dusky W (like immature Little Gull) across mantle getting darker toward tip, some whitish shafts in upper primaries. The tail was paler than the back without mottling. The rounded tip was dark dusky. The bill was much shorter and thicker than shearwaters. Nostril tubes easily visible when bird made closest approach to boat. I was using Bushnell 7 × 50's.

Hope this is what you wanted.