

BBC PELAGIC 08.25.07

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SATURDAY, 25 AUGUST 2007:

BROOKLINE BIRD CLUB 'Extreme Pelagic' from HYANNIS, MASSACHUSETTS to VEATCH'S & HYDROGRAPHER CANYON (0400-2100 hrs.)

Weather: Mostly clear, morning and afternoon light to moderate fog, S-SW winds 5-10 mph, 62-75 F. Seas: 3-5 feet. Visibility: Generally good, although only fair in light fog and haze at times.

Every trip to these waters is an adventure into the last true frontier of New England ornithology.

More than seventy-five participants plus the captain and crew of the Helen H departed Hyannis at 0400 hrs., crossing Nantucket Sound and this time exiting through Muskeget Channel en route to Veatch's Canyon where water temperatures reached 77 F. We cruised down the center of the canyon and continued south well off the shelf edge into water more about 4000 feet deep before steaming east to Hydrographer Canyon where we worked back north, crossing the cold water Nantucket Shoals (53 F) to Nantucket Sound, arriving back in port around 2100 hrs.

The big event was the observation of a Macaronesian Shearwater (*Puffinus baroli*), formerly considered a subspecies of Little Shearwater (*P. assimilis*), which was photographed by perhaps a dozen photographers on board! Photos will be presented soon. There are two specimen records for *baroli*: one found dead Sable Island, NS, 1 Sep 1896 (AMNH ###; Tufts, R.W. 1986. *Birds of Nova Scotia*, 3rd ed. with revisions by I.A. McLaren and the Nova Scotia Bird Society. Nimbus Publishing Ltd. & The Nova Scotia Museum, Halifax, NS); one found dead Sullivan's Island, SC, Aug 1883 (MCZ #220051; Post, W. and S. A. Gauthreaux, Jr. 1989. *Status and Distribution of South Carolina Birds*. The Charleston Museum, Charleston, SC). There is one recent credible sight record of three birds: Bruce Mactavish saw one 23 Sep 2003 ~80 km sws. Sable Island, NS and two 80 km s. Sable I. 24 Sep (North Am. Birds 58(1):31)

Anyone with photos please send them to scottspangenberg@mindspring.net and Jeremiah Trimble at jtrimble@oeb.harvard.edu ; Scott will post the photos to his website www.scottspangenberg.com and Jeremiah will archive them for records committee review.

Cory's Shearwater (3): One definitive borealis photographed.

Greater Shearwater (41)

Sooty Shearwater (1-2): Nantucket Shoals.

Manx Shearwater (6)

Audubon's Shearwater (3): Vicinity Veatch's Canyon.

MACARONESIAN SHEARWATER, *P. baroli* (1): Pursued and photographed over perhaps a ten minute period in 70+ degree water approximately 18 miles north of Veatch's Canyon at 40 18.2 N, 69 48.1 W. Formerly considered a subspecies of Little Shearwater (*P. assimilis*). Briefly, it was a very small shearwater with a rapid fluttery flight, exceptionally blackish upperparts, save for the notably pale wing panels and a thin white lines along the edge of the greater and median coverts. The face was very extensively white, with the dark eye isolated in the white field. The underwings appeared cleanly white, with narrow, well-defined dark borders, and the undertail coverts were extensively white as well. A careful review of full monitor photographs when they appear may fine tune some of these 'in the field' impressions. This is the first photographically documented N. Am sight record (aside from two specimen records) and obviously a first Massachusetts record, if accepted.

small shearwater sp. (1)

Wilson's Storm-Petrel (415)

BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL (1): Sitting with a Greater Shearwater off the shelf at 40 07.6 N, 69 05.6 W, flushed and closely observed and photographed in flight. About the sixth MA record, and only the second or third photographed.

Northern Gannet (2 sub-ads.)

Hudsonian Godwit (40): A very remarkable sighting of a migrating flock southbound late in the afternoon low over the water over Nantucket Shoals. Nest landfall Argentina?

Ruddy Turnstone (1): Circling the boat along the shelf edge.

Red-necked Phalarope (3+)

Red Phalarope (8)

phalarope sp. (8+)

Herring Gull (1 juv.)

Great Black-backed Gull (1)

Common Tern (4 ads.)

Pomarine Jaeger (1 ad./near ad.): South of Muskeget Channel.

Tree Swallow (3): Vicinity Veatch's Canyon.

Fin Whale (8+)

Humpbacked Whale (3+)

Gray Grampus (170+): Warm water canyons and slope.

SPERM WHALE (1): In 4000 ft deep water over Veatch's Canyon.

Common (Saddleback) Dolphin (40+): s. Nantucket Shoals.

Bottlenosed Dolphin (35+): warm water canyons and slope.

dolphin sp. (50+)

Hammerhead Shark sp. (1)

shark sp. (2)

Ocean Sunfish, *Mola mola* (2)

Manta Ray (1):

Green Darner, *Anax junius* (1): Along shelf edge.

Many thanks again to Ida Giriunas for organizing these trips and to the Brookline Bird Club for including them in their program, to all of the participants who make them possible by signing up, and to Marshall Iliff and Steve Mirick for their informative and insightful commentary and expertise during the cruise. Thanks to to Captain Joe Huckameyer (and crew) of the Helen H. The captain was exceptional and indeed instrumental in the chase of the Macaronesian Shearwater which permitted us to document it so well.