

Mascarene Petrel *Pseudobulweria aterrima* from Mumbai: A correction

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Mascarene Petrel *Pseudobulweria aterrima* is a little-known seabird breeding only on Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean. It is frequently mis-identified in the field and there exist only a handful of specimens in the museums across the world—seven as per Attié *et al.* (1997), though recent additions in Muséum de La Réunion have occurred (Vincent Bretagnolle, *pers. comm.*, July 2013). A live bird was taken by fishermen near Colaba light house (18°53'N, 72°48'E), Mumbai, which was received on 15 June 1940 at St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, and identified at Colombo Museum by G. M. Henry as this species (Abdulali & Ali 1940). However, the specimen was later termed as 'lost' and its identity doubted by later works (Ali & Ripley 2001; Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). It was subsequently suggested that this specimen was probably a Jouanin's Petrel *Bulweria fallax*, a species, which was not described then (Jouanin 1970; Robertson 1995).

Tim Inskipp indicated to one of us (PJ) that this 'lost' specimen is now catalogued in Raffles Museum of Biodiversity Research, National University of Singapore (Tim Inskipp, *pers. comm.*, June 2013). PJ contacted LKPK who took several pho-



136. Upper wing of Jouanin's Petrel *B. fallax*.

tographs, and morphometric measurements of this specimen (#ZRC 3.22) in June–July 2013. At the time of re-examination, the specimen already had a second tag labelling it a Jouanin's Petrel [133] by

Ian MacAllen, dated 14 May 2009. Pictures show a dark petrel with a very long tail [133–136] which is quite uncharacteristic of Mascarene Petrel. The specimen being old and stiff, no attempt was made to spread its wings as that would destroy it. However, pictures of the dorsal side show the hints of a pale panel on the wings [134, 135], which is present in Jouanin's. The specimen also does not have the bicoloured feet of a Mascarene [133]. Morphometrics (Table 1; Attié *et al.* 1997) indicate that the bird has a much longer tail, and shorter tarsus, thus fitting those of a Jouanin's. Photographs and morphometrics were sent to Vincent Bretagnolle, and W. R. P. Bourne, who confirmed our identification.

The specimen is labelled, 'Kolaba light house (Bombay)', collected on 13 June 1940, perhaps correctly as Ali & Abdulali (1940) only indicated the date of reception of the specimen as 15 June 1940. Though there are no records to indicate how this specimen reached the collections of Raffles Museum, the museum records indicate that the original tag had the label from St. Xavier's College Bombay [137] and hence is convincing enough proof of its source and identity.

Hence, Mascarene Petrel should be deleted from the list of birds of mainland South Asia and the specimen in the Raffles Museum should be considered as the first record of Jouanin's Petrel from mainland South Asia.

Table 1. Comparison of biometrics of the 'Mumbai Petrel'

	<i>P. aterrima</i>	<i>B. fallax</i>	'Mumbai Petrel'
Wing	229–250	231–245	240
Tail	94–115	108–125	133
Culmen	25–30	27–31	26.6
Tarsus	33–42	28–31	31.1

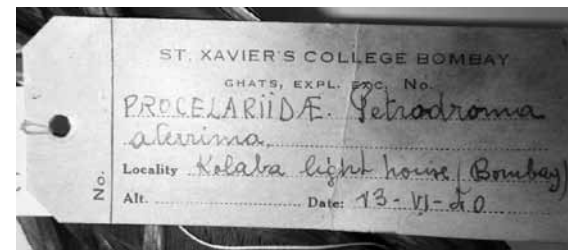
Acknowledgements

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137. The original tag from 'Kolaba light house (Bombay).'



133. Ventral view of Jouanin's Petrel *B. fallax*.



134. Lateral view of Jouanin's Petrel *B. fallax*.



135. Dorsal view of Jouanin's Petrel *B. fallax*.

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Elliot's Laughingthrush *Trochalopteron elliotii* and Black-headed Greenfinch *Chloris ambigua* from Anini, Arunachal Pradesh, India

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During my recently concluded master's study on the 'Role of Brahmaputra River as a biogeographical barrier,' I came across a couple of interesting species for the Indian Subcontinent. I visited Anini, which is the district headquarters of Upper Dibang district, between 23 and 25 April 2012. I birded mainly around Anini town and along the road towards Mipi village, which is located on the border of Dihang Dibang Biosphere Reserve (hereafter DDBR). Anini lies just south of DDBR (28°27'–29°03'N, 94°29'–95°49'E), which spans an area of 5111.5 km² (core: 4094.8 km², buffer: 1016.7 km²), and incorporates parts of West Siang, Upper Siang, and Dibang Valley districts, and the Mouling National Park, Mehao and Dibang Wildlife Sanctuaries. It shares its northern boundary with Tibet and eastern boundary with Myanmar. DDBR is located in the Eastern Himalaya Global Biodiversity Hotspot, recognised worldwide for its rich flora and fauna. Almost completely forested, DDBR encompasses a huge variety of habitats owing to its vast elevational range (500–6000 m asl), from lowland tropical evergreen forests to high alpine meadows.

On 24 April 2012 while birding en-route Mipi (28°50'N, 95°52'E; 1500 m asl) from Anini I glimpsed a pair of Elliot's Laughingthrushes *Trochalopteron elliotii* crossing the road. The birds responded well to song recordings from China (Xeno-canto recording XC68368). They circled around the speaker and gave several good views for over five minutes. However I did not come across this species during the rest of my stay at Anini.

Elliot's Laughingthrush is a common resident of China from eastern Qinghai and adjacent northern Gansu (south-eastern Qilian Shan) east to Southwest Nei Monggol (Helan Shan), south to south-eastern Xizang, central Tunnan, western Guizhou, southern Ningxia, southern Shaanxi and Whubei (Collar & Robson 2007). There has been only one earlier sighting of this species for India, from north-eastern Arunachal Pradesh close to Hotspring (extreme north-eastern of Arunachal Pradesh) where a flock of 20 individuals were sighted on 15 September 1994 (Singh 1995). This species is listed as hypothetical by Rasmussen & Anderton (2012), and considered doubtful by Grimmett *et al.* (2011) for the Indian Subcontinent.

I also found that Black-headed Greenfinch *Chloris ambigua* was very common on all three days of my stay there (28°47'N,

95°53'E; 1600 m asl). These birds were seen perched on overhead electric wires, and conifer trees, on multiple occasions. Black-headed Greenfinch has a very wide distribution in China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam (Robson 2001; IUCN 2013). However it is considered hypothetical for the Indian Subcontinent (Rasmussen & Anderton 2012). However, Singh (1995) had earlier reported this species from Walong, Arunachal Pradesh. Atul Jain, Harkirath Singh Sangha, and Manoj Sharma also sighted the birds at Walong on 7 May 2013 (*pers. comm.*)

Hotspring and Walong are located in Anjaw district, Arunachal Pradesh, c. 130 kms south-east of Anini. The sightings of these hypothetical species are significant as there are several areas in Arunachal Pradesh whose ornithology is still unexplored. Such areas can still throw potential ornithological surprises.

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