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Little penguin – pp. 35-37.

Little Penguin (Korora) *Eudyptula minor* (Forster 1781), Native
31/3/1773 Dusky Sound, Fiordland

On the 4th March 1770, Cook saw a penguin off Otago, described as “but Small of the sort”, which may have been a Blue Penguin. It was recorded on Cook's second voyage in Dusky Sound in March 1773 (Forster 1778). G. R. Forster painted it on 31st March. J.R. Forster described it in 1781. The Blue Penguin was the first New Zealand bird to be described (Andrews 1987).

Recent genetic studies (Banks et al. 2002) have shown two distinct groupings of Blue Penguins, one comprising Australian and Otago birds and the other the rest of New Zealand, including some Otago birds. The White-flipped Penguin *E. m. albosignata* was previously considered to be a distinct species, but was relegated to subspecific rank in 1976 by Kinsky & Falla. Baker et al. (2006) showed that White-flipped and Blue Penguin *E. m. minor* were divergent.

Christidis & Boles (2008) have treated the Blue Penguins as conspecific, although there are two distinct clades. More recently, Peucker et al. (2009) have again shown the existence of two distinct clades, but with no subspecific structuring within the New Zealand clade, except perhaps for Chatham Island birds.

(Otago) Little Penguin *Eudyptula (minor) novaehollandiae* (Stephens 1826)

Banks et al. (2002) identified Otago birds as being genetically identical with the Australian taxon. Banks et al. (2008) found further support for this. It may be that Australian birds recolonised Otago when the original penguins became extinct in a cold period in the Pleistocene. Tavares & Baker (2008) showed that Australian and New Zealand Little Penguins are very likely separate species, so it appears that both species are present in the South Island. Presumably the two do not hybridise where they come into contact. This form is found at Catlins, Oamaru, Otago Peninsula, and Motunau Island (Canterbury).