

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

Birds of New Zealand - Locality Guide. 3rd edn.

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Salvins mollymawk (albatross): pp 25-26.



SALVINS MOLLYMAWK

Family Diomedidae

Species *Thalassarche salvini*

Common names Salvins Mollymawk, Bounty Island Mollymawk

Status Endemic

Abundance Common in northern waters

Size 900 mm – 1000 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm)

Breeding islands close to New Zealand Bounty Island and Snares Island.

Breeding months September to April.

Range worldwide Ranges to South America and the South Atlantic.

New Zealand range Ranges around the New Zealand coast.

Description – mature bird

Head Dark grey with black through eye and whitish cap. **Upperwings** Black. **Back** Grey-black merging into darker grey. **Rump and underparts** White. **Underwings** White with thin black edging and black primary tips. **Tail** White, tipped with a broad band of dark grey. **Bill** Dark grey-sided, with yellow edges top and bottom but the yellow on the bottom mandible giving way to a black patch at the tip.

Conspicuous features

- Look for grey head and neck with a whitish cap.
- Bill differs from the Shy Mollymawk being dark-grey sided with a line of

yellow under bottom mandible.

Where to find – North Island

North Auckland – Beyond Great Barrier Island in winter months. P. 289.

Wellington – Regularly seen from the Cook Strait ferry.

Where to find – South Island

North Canterbury – Kaikoura. P. 345.

Foveaux Strait – Regularly seen here with Shy Mollymawk. P. 367.

ALBATROSSES

From Page 19

“Albatrosses, Petrels and Shearwaters of the World”, by Derek Onley and Paul Scofield (2007), lists 13 species and subspecies of albatross for New Zealand waters. These are likely to be seen if the time of year is right for that species. This makes New Zealand an important seabird venue.

Note about names In New Zealand the species of albatross which have white backs, the Wandering Albatross and the Royal Albatross, are called albatrosses. The other species and subspecies in the family Diomedidae, all with black upperwings and black backs, are called mollymawks. The Sooty and Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses, in the genus *Phoebastria*, retain the name albatross.

Mainland nesting sites Only one species of albatross, the Northern Royal Albatross (*Diomedea sanfordi*), nests on mainland New Zealand. All the other species nest on offshore islands from the Chatham Islands south to the Campbell Islands.

“Beach-wrecked” birds Birds collected by members from the Ornithological Society of New Zealand over many years, indicate that all the albatrosses listed here are found in waters right around New Zealand. Auckland west coast beaches, for example, have provided dead birds of all listed species.

Although these birds range widely, they are only in northern waters during the winter months. Generally they do not come close to the shoreline, but during rough weather, Wandering Albatrosses have been known to enter Auckland Harbour near Rangitoto Island, and are recorded in Wellington Harbour. The southern waters, from Cook Strait south, provide the best opportunities to view these birds as they are closer to the breeding grounds.

Note Permission is required from the Department of Conservation to visit most of the seabird nesting islands.

Seabird places and excursions ideas Seabird excursions and land-based seabird sighting places are recorded in the back of the book – Sandspit excursions, P 289; Kaikoura excursions, P 345; land sites, P 376.