

CHAMBERS, S. 2009.

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

Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.

Bullers shearwater: pp 34-35.



### **BULLERS SHEARWATER**

**Family** Procellariidae

**Species** *Puffinus bulleri*

**Common name** Bullers Shearwater

**Status** Endemic

**Abundance** Common

**Size** 460 mm (cf sparrow 145 mm, Flesh-footed Shearwater 450 mm)

**Breeding island close to New Zealand** Poor Knights Islands of the east coast of Northland.

**Breeding months** October to May. 1 white egg is laid in a burrow.

**Range worldwide** To Australia and northwards into the northern Pacific and to the North American coast.

**New Zealand range** From the northern South Island and around the North Island. It is especially common off the Northland coast.

**Discussion** This shearwater is generally easy to find and to identify. It ranges away from its breeding islands and comes in close to land to be seen from the coastline. It feeds in bays and into wider harbours. Since the removal of pigs

from Poor Knights Islands in 1936 its numbers have increased remarkably.

### **Description**

**Head** Dark brown above the eye. Pure white under the eye. **Upperparts** Light grey. **Upperwings** Light grey with dark brown open M marking across wings and rump. Primaries are black. **Rump** Dark brown. **Underwings** Clean white, edged with black. **Underparts** Pure white. **Tail** Brown with a black tail tip. **Bill** Bluish-grey. **Feet** Bluish-grey.

### **Conspicuous features**

- Slightly bigger in size than the Sooty Shearwater and the Flesh-footed Shearwater both of which are common in the same waters of Northland.
- The clean white underparts are distinctive.
- The brown open M marking on the wings and rump is very noticeable.

### **Conspicuous characteristics**

- Regularly comes in close to boats.
- Often seen in rafts with Fluttering Shearwaters.
- Will join up with feeding groups of other Shearwaters.
- Soars along waves close to water.

### **Where to find – North Island**

**Bay of Islands** – A conspicuous shearwater regularly seen close to land.

**Auckland** – Can be seen around Tiri Tiri Island and from Whangaparaoa Peninsula. Look for Fluttering Shearwaters here too.P. 292.

**Coromandel Peninsula** – Can be seen from the coast north of Coromandel town.

**Wellington** – Cook Strait Not regularly seen here but possible.