

Watola, G. 2011. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (3rd Edition in prep.)
Based on: Watola, G. 2009. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (2nd Edition)
Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.
Updated and amended text supplied by George Watola, October, 2011.
Page numbers follow Watola, G. 2009 (2nd Edition)
New Zealand storm petrel: pp 82-83.

New Zealand Storm Petrel *Fregetta maoriana* Mathews 1932, Endemic
1932 Bank's Peninsula, Canterbury

Three specimens were obtained in the 19th century. Two specimens, now in the Paris Museum, were collected off East Cape, Gisborne on 8th February 1827 by the *Astrolabe* expedition (Godman (1907) said it was in 1829). Bonaparte identified these as *Thalassidroma lineata* (Peale 1848) in 1856 (the genera *Oceanites* and *Procellaria* have also been used in relation to this species). Peale had described this species from a bird obtained from Upolu Island, Samoa. Murphy & Snyder (1952) said this was actually an aberrant specimen of *Fregetta tropica* Black-bellied Storm Petrel.

Godman (1907) included a bird presented by George Carrick Steet in 1895 to the British Natural History Museum in this species. This was obtained off Banks Peninsula, Canterbury. Buller (1888) did not include this species. *Pealea lineata*, as it became known, was considered to be a phase of Wilson's Storm Petrel by Murphy & Snyder (1952). There does not appear to be any further information on this specimen, and a genetic analysis might be informative.

Mathews recognized that the French and British specimens were different from the bird described by Peale. He redescribed the British Museum specimen as *Pealeornis maoriana* in 1932. Oliver (1955) treated the New Zealand Storm Petrel as a good (extinct) species. Kinsky (1970) did not mention it. Turbott (1990) considered this species to be a synonym of Wilson's Storm Petrel. Marchant & Higgins (1990) also considered it to be a "*pealea*" phase of Wilson's Storm Petrel. Holdaway et al. (2001) recognised it as a good species.

There has been some controversy over the holotype's locality. However, Medway (2004) states that there is no reason to doubt that this specimen did not come from Banks Peninsula. Mathews stated that the French specimens also came from Banks Peninsula, without justification, and Oliver perpetuated this.

A recent sighting of this long-lost species off the Mercury Islands. on 25/1/2003 was entirely unexpected (Saville et al. 2003). They are now frequently seen in summer in the Hauraki Gulf. Wintering areas may be in New Caledonian seas. The New Zealand Rare Birds Committee has recently stated that captured live birds are morphologically identical with the type specimens and recognize its existence.

The Wheturau, Gisborne late-Glacial fauna includes a sub-fossil storm petrel that may be this species (Worthy 2000). Another sub-fossil specimen from Te Ana Titi, Westland is also probably this species.