

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)
Greater frigatebird: pp 96-97.

Great Frigatebird *Fregata minor palmerstoni* (Gmelin 1789), Migrant (21)
Summer 1861 Wakapuaka, Nelson
21/2/1992 Norfolk Island

An adult male was obtained at Wakapuaka, just north of Nelson in summer 1861 (Buller 1888). Whether this is January or December is unclear. He had previously stated it was collected in 1855.

“We shall conclude this short treatise on the birds of New Zealand by recording the capture of two fine specimens of the Frigate Bird (*Fregata Aquila*) which is undoubtedly the noblest member of this family. One of them was killed in Whakapuaka Bay, in the summer of 1855, and is now deposited in the Provincial Museum at Nelson; the other (measuring nearly seven feet in extent) was taken at Castle Point, on the East Coast of the Wellington Province, and came into the possession of George Moore, Esq., who generously presented it to the writer of this Essay” (Buller 1868).

Another frigatebird was shot at Castlepoint, Wellington by George Moore in 1863, and presented to Buller. Buller (1888) later said the Castlepoint bird had been taken alive in February 1863 by a party of Maoris. He also said that the Castlepoint bird was the first record, probably because he referred the Wakapuaka bird to *F. ariel*.

“I have much pleasure in exhibiting a specimen of the Great Frigate-bird, only the second known example obtained in New Zealand. This bird struck itself against the lantern at the Cape Farewell Lighthouse on the night of the 15th April, and was picked up in an injured state. It was kept alive by the lighthouse-keeper for a few days, but could not be induced to eat anything. It was then killed and converted into the very presentable specimen now on the table. This is a more mature bird than the one captured at Castle Point in February 1863, and now with my original collection in the Colonial Museum (Buller 1891b).

It is now regular at Norfolk Island, at least since 1999.