

General Field Notes

JAMES F. PARNELL, Department Editor

Department of Biology, University of North Carolina at Wilmington,
Wilmington, N.C. 28401

JULIAN R. HARRISON, Associate Editor

Department of Biology, The College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C. 29401

First South Carolina Record of Harcourt's Storm-Petrel

JAY SHULER

Box 288, McClellanville, S.C. 29458

Late in the afternoon of 20 June 1972, I observed a petrel on a freshwater pond at my home 5 miles S of McClellanville, Charleston County, S.C. The pond is separated from salt marsh by a narrow dike. The petrel appeared to be exhausted by the winds of tropical storm Agnes, still blowing. The bird was photographed, then picked up alive, but died in a few hours.

At first I thought the bird to be the British Storm-Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*), as the tail did not appear to be slightly forked, a characteristic of the similar Harcourt's. However, both Drs. Alexander Wetmore (U.S. National Museum) and Oliver L. Austin Jr. (Florida State Museum) have identified the specimen as Harcourt's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*). This is the first record of this species for South Carolina and the second record for the Southern Atlantic Coast Region. A single Harcourt's Storm-Petrel was observed at Atlantic Beach, N.C., on 22 June 1972 (*American Birds*, 26:844). This bird was also blown ashore by tropical storm Agnes.

The specimen was contributed to the Charleston Museum, and it was prepared as a study skin (Ch.M. No. 72.37) by Dennis M. Forsythe, Citadel Biology Department. It is a male with the following measurements (in mm): total length 176, wing 147, tail 75, tarsus 21, and bill (from feathers) 16. Its weight was 34 grams, the stomach was empty, and there was no fat.

Escaped Caracara in Northeastern North Carolina

FRANK B. AYCOCK JR.

P.O. Box 427, Elizabeth City, N.C. 27909

On 31 May 1972 at Shawboro in Currituck County in northeastern North Carolina Mrs. Aycock and I saw a Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*). Evelyn Griffin reported its presence to us on 30 May, and early on 31 May we located the bird perched on a mailbox in a yard in Shawboro. We were able to approach to within 15 feet of the bird and studied it from every angle in good light. All field marks including the presence of the carmine color at the base of the bill, the black cap, and the mottled breast were noted. The bird appeared somewhat sluggish and walked rather than hopped. Its stance was upright. It was capable of flight.