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December Sight Record of Sooty Shearwater in South Carolina

DOUGLAS BRANCH MCNAIR
Ornithology Department
The Charleston Museum
360 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29403

I observed a Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*) for 45 sec when it flew parallel to shore one km off North Folly Beach, Charleston County, South Carolina at 0815 hr on 3 December 1990. The sooty body coloration, rather large and slender size, long slender straight wings which were held rigidly in flight, and short rounded tail were distinctive. In a steady 40 km SE-S wind, the shearwater's arcing flight was also distinctive; the bird rose as high as 2-3 degrees above the horizon. These characteristics, except for body size, distinguish the Sooty Shearwater from any large dark *Pterodroma* petrel (Bailey et al. 1989). I never saw the shearwater flap its wings, nor did I see any apparent evidence of wing molt. The bird was flying north, in the appropriate migratory direction for the Sooty Shearwater at this season, though this may have been the result of the prevailing wind direction and storm conditions. Most seabirds, primarily Northern Gannets (*Morus bassanus*) and Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) were also flying north, an inappropriate migratory direction for them at this season.

The Sooty Shearwater is a rare to uncommon visitor offshore and the most likely shearwater seen onshore in the southeastern Atlantic States from May through July, peaking in late May and early June (Clapp et al. 1982, Lee 1986, Lee and Booth 1979, Post and Gauthreaux 1989). The Sooty Shearwater becomes much scarcer by September with few sight reports afterwards north of Florida (Clapp et al. 1982, Lee 1986, Lee and Booth 1979). In South Carolina, only one prior post-September report exists (few details) (*in* Clapp et al. 1982; ChM files; D. Forsythe, *in litt.*). T. Dobbs (*not* J.B. Kelley) saw one, possibly as many as three Sooty Shearwaters 19 km off Charleston on 13 (*not* 10) November 1972; this observation is probably correct (D. Forsythe, *in litt.*). While my record described herein was not verified nor confirmed, it is the first documented sight record of a Sooty Shearwater on a highly unusual out-of-season date in the Carolinas.

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Breeding Status of the Black-throated Blue Warbler in the Mountain Bridge Wilderness Area, South Carolina

IRVIN PITTS, JR.
S.C. State Parks
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

The Cairn's Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens cairnsi*) is the local race of the Black-throated Blue Warbler that breeds in the southern Appalachians. This race was named by Dr. E. Coues in 1897 in honor of J.S. Cairns who first described it from the North Carolina mountains (cited in Bent 1953). Although similar to the northern race, *D. c. caerulescens*, the Cairn's Warbler is distinguishable by several characteristics, most notably the presence of black mottling on the male's back. Its breeding range extends from northern Maryland and central Pennsylvania south through the mountains of northern Georgia and northwestern South Carolina (Sprunt and Chamberlain 1949).

The Black-throated Blue Warbler is considered to be fairly common above 800 m but no nest has been reported in the state (Post and Gauthreaux 1989). On 26 June 1934 Hudson and Sherman (1936) discovered birds on Sassafras Mountain near the North Carolina line and reportedly took a juvenile male at that location. However, because of the close proximity to the North Carolina line and the unknown location of the specimen, this breeding record has not been accepted (Post and Gauthreaux 1989).

Prior to 1936, information concerning the status of *D. c. cairnsi* in South Carolina is scarce. Loomis (1890, 1891) apparently did not encounter this bird during his work in the South Carolina mountains, as he does not include it in his accounts. A.T. Wayne (1910) regarded this species as a transient of the state and further added that "it breeds in the higher mountains of North