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**PROBABLE COMMON POORWILL *PHALAEONPTILUS NUTTALLII* AT DRY TORTUGAS NATIONAL PARK**

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On 5 May 1995 shortly after dark, I discovered a small nightjar on Garden Key, Dry Tortugas National Park, Monroe County, Florida, near the brick pile on the sandy road leading to the north coal dock. Because the bird was too small to be a Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*), I carefully studied it for 30 to 40 minutes, took notes, and drew the bird. This bird seemed mesmerized or blinded by the headlights on the Park Service's electric cart. Later with a heavy duty flashlight, I was able to get within 8 or 9 m of the bird. I was the only bird observer on Garden Key at the time.

After returning home and reviewing the literature, I found seven details in my field notes and drawing that convinced me that I had seen a Common Poorwill (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*).

**LENGTH OF PRIMARIES AND TAIL.**—As described in my field notes and drawing, the tip of the primaries came to the end of the tail. This feature eliminates all North American *Caprimulgus* as their tails go beyond the tip of their primaries. According to Csada and Brigham (1992) this feature would also eliminate *Caprimulgus*, Pauraques (*Siphonorhis*), poorwills in Mexico, and the Least Pauraque (*Siphonorhis brewsteri*) in the West Indies (Bond 1960).

**COLOR AND SIZE OF EYE.**—The eye was very large and red. Jacklighted Chucks and Whip-poor-wills (*C. vociferus*) reflect an orange color after dark. Oberholser (1974) wrote of the Poorwill that the "Eyes glow like pink-hot coals in flashlight beam . . .". Csada and Brigham (1992) in describing the Common Poorwill mentioned the large eyes.

**LENGTH.**—During flying and perching in the dark and in the flashlight beam, it was obvious that this nightjar was smaller than a Chuck. I estimated that the bird's length was 20.3 cm. Coues (1872) listed this bird's length as 17.78 to 20.32 cm; Beveir (1993) gives 17.78 to 21.59 cm.

**WHITE SPOT AT BEND OF WING.**—At the forward bend of the wing, I saw a distinct, white elongated mark running parallel and vertical with the closed wing. This thin mark shows in Urdvady (1977), in Brasher's drawing (Pearson 1936), and in Csada and Brigham's (1992) photograph.

**ZIG-ZAG PATTERN IN WING COVERTS.**—The zig-zag pattern that bordered a light gray streak on the wing coverts is in my field notes and drawing and was mentioned by Coues (1872). The gray streak is shown in Csada and Brigham (1992) and mentioned in Howell and Webb (1995) as "marbled pale gray wing coverts."

**BLACK PRIMARIES AND TAIL.**—In my field notes, I wrote "dark primaries and tail" and drew these features. Oberholser (1974) wrote that the tail is "fuscous black," and Pearson (1936) described the "primaries, buff-banded with black." Small (1974) showed this point well in his photograph.

**RUMP AREA.**—My field drawing and notes show a very light- gray rump area. Pearson (1936) commented that the "upper tail coverts sometimes [are] nearly immaculate" and [are] "palest [light gray] on . . . upper tail coverts."

**STATUS.**—Although the Common Poorwill's range extends southward to central Mexico (Csada and Brigham 1992), the occurrence on the Dry Tortugas seemed unlikely. Nevertheless, migrating nightjars do wander off course occasionally. For instance, the Jungle Nightjar (*Caprimulgus indicus*) from the Asian mainland has occurred on Buldir Island in the Aleutians (A. O. U. 1983). Even the Common Poorwill has been reported in Mani-

toba, Minnesota, and Oklahoma (A. O. U. 1983). The migratory movements of this species are difficult to determine because of the bird's nocturnal behavior. This sighting is eventful because the Dry Tortugas is approximately 2,000 km ENE of the southern edge of the poorwill's wintering range.

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