

A NEW SPECIMEN OF THE SUBANTARCTIC SKUA *CATHARACTA ANTARCTICA LONNBERGI*
FROM SRI LANKA

R.I. DE SILVA

Hepporawatte, Dampe, Madapatha, Piliyandala, Sri Lanka

Received 23 August 1991, accepted 23 October 1991

The *Catharacta* skuas present in Sri Lankan waters are mainly Subantarctic or Brown Skuas *C. antarctica lonnbergi* (De Silva 1989a,b, 1990). However, this conclusion was based on old specimens all of which were collected from forty years to more than a century ago (De Silva 1989a,b).

A more recent specimen of *C. a. lonnbergi* was collected alive at Mattakuliya (a suburb of Colombo) on 3 July 1987 by Mr. Prasanna Weerakody. The bird died shortly after and was preserved in the normal manner. I examined the prepared skin some weeks later. Details follow: culmen - 58 mm; tarsus (R) - 76 mm, (L) - 78 mm; wing (L) - 400 mm, wing (R) - 408 mm; overall length - 556 mm; bill - blackish; legs - blackish. I was informed that the irides were blackish and the bird, which was a female, weighed approximately 1 kg at the time of capture.

Because the culmen and tarsus measurements are significantly greater than those of the South Polar

Skua *C. maccormicki* and agree well with those of *C. antarctica lonnbergi* (De Silva 1989a), it is clear that the specimen is of a Subantarctic Skua. The specimen is presently in the private collection of Mr. Prasanna Weerakody at Kirillapone, Sri Lanka.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Prasanna Weerakody for permitting me to examine the specimen. I also thank A.J. Williams for constructive comments on the original manuscript.

REFERENCES

- DE SILVA, R.I. 1989a. Identity of skuas *Catharacta* in Sri Lanka. *Cormorant* 17: 79-81.
DE SILVA, R.I. 1989b. Seabird notes from Sri Lanka 1988. *Sea Swallow* 38: 61-62.
DE SILVA, R.I. 1990. The seabirds of Sri Lanka (an annotated checklist). *Ceylon J. Sci. (Biol. Sci.)* 21: 28-33.