

FIRST SPECIMEN RECORD OF THE GREY-HEADED ALBATROSS *DIOMEDEA CHRYSOSTOMA* FOR NAMIBIA

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The Grey-headed Albatross *Diomedea chrysostoma* breeds on sub-Antarctic islands between 46° and 56°S, and on Diego Ramirez Island, Chile. Sightings and recoveries suggest that the oceanic distribution of the species is circumpolar, generally between 46° and 64°S during summer, and between 39° and 51°S during winter (Marchant & Higgins 1990). Grey-headed Albatrosses are rare visitors to the southern part of southern Africa (Ryan 1997). Off Namibia only three sightings, all of juveniles, in the months of May, August and November have been reported (Lambert 1968, Williams 1987, Komen *et al.* 1988, Lambert 2001). Most birds in southern African waters are immatures (Ryan 1997).

On 20 November 1993 the fresh carcass of an adult Grey-headed Albatross was found at 22°29'S, 14°28'E on the beach 20 km north of Swakopmund, Namibia (Figs 1 & 2). The only obvious injury was a broken neck.

This record represents the first specimen record of a Grey-headed Albatross (and the first record of an adult bird) and the fourth documented occurrence of the species for Namibia. The frozen carcass is stored at the State Museum, Windhoek (accession number NM 4383).



Fig. 1. Head and bill of the adult Grey-headed Albatross *Diomedea chrysostoma* found in Namibia.

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Fig. 2. Underwing pattern of the adult Grey-headed Albatross *Diomedea chrysostoma* found in Namibia.