

Short-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus tenuirostris*

Unlike other seabirds that breed in the southern hemisphere and migrate to the North Pacific, the Short-tailed Shearwater occurs off California mainly in the northern winter. Off San Diego County it

is generally uncommon to rare, though influxes of larger numbers are known in at least two winters. Like the Black-vented Shearwater, the Short-tailed prefers waters rather close to shore; it is seen typically within 5 miles of the coast.

Winter: A winter day's trip by boat into the Short-tailed Shearwater's preferred zone often yields one or two individuals. Seven off Oceanside (H5) 24 December 1988 (D. W. Povey, AB 43:365, 1989) and 10 off La Jolla (P7) 1 January 1999 (G. McCaskie, NAB 53:208, 1999) were high numbers for most years. Irruptions took place, however, in 1941–42 and 1983–84. In the former winter, Kenyon (1942, 1943) saw at least 120 one quarter mile off La Jolla 16 December 1941 and collected 18 specimens, both at sea and as beached casualties. In the latter winter, McCaskie saw 75 off San Diego 21 January 1984 (AB 38:357, 1984) and one was picked up dead on shore at Imperial Beach (V10) 1 December 1983 (SDNHM 43349). Because of the species' typically inshore distribution, it has been seen from shore on numerous occasions, with up to six at La Jolla 9 December 2001 (S. Walens).

Migration: Dates for the Short-tailed Shearwater in San Diego County extend from 19 October (1983, two off San Diego, D. W. Povey, AB 38:246, 1984) to 28 April and 2



Photo by Richard E. Webster

May (1997, individuals found sick or dead on the beach at Coronado, T9, B. Foster, E. Copper, FN 51:927, 1997; specimens not saved).