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Fluttering shearwater: pp 70-71.

Fluttering Shearwater (Pakaha) *Puffinus gavia* (Forster 1844), Endemic
16/10/1769 Cape Kidnappers

Banks (Beaglehole 1963) described this scene between Cape Kidnappers and Cape Turnagain on 16/10/1769: "Vast shoals of fish were about the ship, pursued by as large flocks of brownish birds a little bigger than a pigeon *Nectris munda*. Their method of fishing was amusing enough, a whole flock of birds would follow the fish who swam fast along: they continually plunged themselves under water and soon after rose again in another place, so that the whole flock vanished sometimes, at others a large part of it and rose again often where you did not expect them, and in less than a minutes time they were down again and so alternately as long as we saw them."

This appears to be a good description of Fluttering Shearwaters feeding. *Nectris munda* is a nonem nudum, and seems to have been applied to any small dark and white shearwater. E.G. Turbott suggested that these were indeed Fluttering Shearwaters. Banks had also shot *Nectris munda* (? species) previously on 7/10/1769.

The species was obtained by J.R. Forster on Cook's second voyage in Queen Charlotte Sound. His description was not published until 1844 by Lichenstein. Mathews (1937) thought that Forster's name *gavia* was indeterminable, mainly because he was thought that the Little Shearwater *P. assimilis* was the same species. For many years it was not recognised by New Zealand authorities, which is surprising as it is extremely common in northern waters. Gray (1862) included it in his list of New Zealand birds, with Forster and the *Erebus & Terror* expedition given as references.

Hutton correctly identified specimens in 1871 from the Otago Museum as *P. gavia*. This species had been identified with *P. opisthomelas* Coues 1864 up to this time. Finsch (1872) later described it as "almost unknown". Salvin recognised one from Buller's collection in 1888, when it was apparently still a mystery, though Hutton (1871) said it was not uncommon in Queen Charlotte Sound.

Buller (1874) previously noted: "on the last occasion of my coming through the French Pass (Sept. 27 (1874)), I observed a flock of these birds numbering about 200. They flew in a compact body, fluttering near the water and occasionally resting upon it, keeping so close together as quite to darken the surface", but he confused this species with the Sooty Shearwater *P. tristris* = *P. griseus*. He later (1888) correctly identified this species.