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SHORT NOTES

MANY ANTARCTIC PETRELS AROUND FOVEAUX STRAIT

In normal years, Antarctic Petrels (*Thalassoica antarctica*) are rarely seen, but towards the end of winter 1978 there were unusual numbers from Preservation Inlet to Stewart Island.

Roy Milford, who fishes these waters, passed on these comments to me. "Three or four have been round every fishing boat; and altogether there must have been some hundreds. It is nice to have a new bird around. They are very tame, the tamest seabird of all. In fact, you can reach down and pick them off the water. They seem completely fearless. Near the boats they sit alongside the Cape Pigeons (*Daption capense*) eating scraps, and the Cape Pigeons bully them. The Antarctic Petrels appeared in such numbers at the beginning of September. Coinciding with their arrival was an unusual abundance of octopus."

Roy Milford, with 70 pots, added that normally he would get three or four octopus per daily round, but that in 1978 he was getting 20 per day and other crayfishermen were reporting similar numbers.

Any connection ?

MAIDA BARLOW, 38 Filleul Street, Invercargill.



ARCTIC SKUAS AT SEA

On 1 Nov. 1979 at 34° 11'S 177° 07'E, seven Arctic Skuas (*Stercorarius parasiticus*) were seen. They were in a loose flock spread over a front of about 100 yards and between 50-150 feet high. The birds were on a course of about south-west and were flying at a speed estimated to be about 20-25 knots.

JOHN JENKINS, 14 Lochiel Road, Remuera, Auckland.