

# TASMANIAN MOREPORK at Cape Conran

## 11<sup>th</sup> Jun 2017

### VORAC SUBMISSION

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**Other Observers:** Morgana Christina

**Species:** Tasmanian Morepork

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017

**Location:** At marked waterpoint on the Marlo-Cape Conran rd, approx 13km directly east of Marlo township. [GPS: -37.798095, 148.682980]

**Time:** photograph taken at 0843pm

**Notes:** During evening spotlighting around the Cape Conran area we stopped at a 'water point' on Marlo -Cape Conran rd. There are historical records of Masked Owl at this location and track to pull off main rd. Shallow freshwater wetland and surrounding coastal woodland looked promising -is site have checked previously.

No response to playback for either Masked or Sooty Owl, walked back along track when i picked up a small Boobook type in spotlight. Was reasonably close initially but moved to another tree, managed couple of record shots and left at that -assumed was a local bird.

Later that evening when reviewing photographs realised may in fact have a Tasmanian Morepork. Sent images to Tim Bawden and Kevin Bartram for comment and both agreed was a very good candidate.

Can be a difficult ID. Similar to Southern Boobook and likely overlooked and under reported [in Vic] in past. Is only last few years that observations from Cape Liptrap have supported theory species is a regular winter migrant to the mainland. Marlo area directly north of eastern Tas -bird travelling via Flinders Is and maintaining same trajectory could potentially reach coast at this point. Time of year [early winter] may suggest a recent arrival.

Identification. Features consistent with ID of Tas Morepork :

\* small size. Noted in field, was a very small bird. In itself not enough to

exclude Southern Boobook but well within size range of Tas Morepork.

\* plumage. large white spotting on breast [rather than streaking] a good feature [for Morepork] but not diagnostic. Is degree of variability in local birds. White spotting visible on forehead also considered better for Morepork.

\* eye-colour. Probably most useful feature to distinguish from Southern Boobook is yellow iris as visible in this bird. Southern Boobook more typically duller greenish-grey iris but again is variable.

I would suggest combination of features including size, plumage and eye-colour enough to be confident of ID. Will leave in the capable hands of VORAC committee to determine.



