

Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) in the Beskydy Mountains according to Jan Prášek

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Abstract: In the Beskydy Mountains (Lachia area, 49°25′/20°15′), Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) was caught of spring, probably before the school year 1902-03, probably in Nižní Lhoty in Silesia. The record of this specimen without any information in a school in Opava and an incomplete report of J. Vrbka about "Common Fulmar" in the Olomouc region (probably European Storm Petrel, *Hydrobates pelagicus*) do not exclude occasional flights of Tubenoses into the inland Silesia and central Moravia in the past.

Key words: Northern Fulmar, *Fulmarus glacialis*, Jan Prášek, Beskydy Mountains, historical ornithology

Introduction

Northern Fulmar's, *Fulmarus glacialis* (Linnaeus, 1761) habitat are northern and low arctic zones of the Northern Atlantic and Northern Pacific and it can be found there in three subspecies (BirdLife International 2015, Lindner 1919, Carboneras & Bonon 2018, von Franeker & Wattel 1982). An attempt at nesting in Wangerooge in Lower Saxony in Germany recorded in July 1950 (Bauer & Glutz von Blotzheim 1966). Since 1972 it has been isolated breeding in Helgoland, where it flew already in the 19th century (von Dalla-Torre 1889, Guse *et al.* 2005, Boschert 2005, Hüppop & Hüppop 2012), and in Denmark (Sorensen 1999). In 1865 it was seen in Borkum in Lower Saxony (von Droste-Hüllshof 1866, 1869), and occasional flights to the inland of central Europe are known only since the beginning of the 20th century from Germany, Czechia, Slovenia and Ukraine (Bauer & Glutz von Blotzheim 1966, Reiser 1925, Schneider 1921, Heyder 1922, Musílek 1929-30, Krüger 1941, Hanzel & Šere 2011, Gorbaň 1997, Hudec *et al.* 1995, Šťastný & Hudec 2016). Flying to the Polish inland is not known, on the Baltic shore were found only dead specimen (Stawarczyk *et al.* 2017).

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Prášek (1903) recorded that in the school year 1902-03 brought Ludvík Varcop from Nižní Lhoty in Silesia, a pupil of the third grade of the Czech higher grammar school in Místek, a stuffed "Gull Petrels", in Czech "racek bouřňák". Nižní Lhoty (GPS: 49°38′46"/18°26′12", 359 m above sea) are situated on the bottom of the Beskydy. In the description of avifauna of the Lachia (in Czech Lašsko) and Místek areas, Prášek (1908) explicitly stated: "In the Beskydy Mountains was caught one specimen of the Northern Fulmar (*Procellaria glacialis*), a relative of gulls. Its nostrils are made up by one tube-like hole, the bill is xanthous, the body surface grey. The hind finger is only a tiny hummock" (Fig 1). I know'n occurrence of the Sooty Shearwater's, *Ardenna grisea* (Gould, 1844), in intermontane highlands above at 450 m above sea, in Styria in Austria (Hanf 1868). Application of name paint a picture of the Common Gull's, in Czech "racek bouřní" (*Larus canus* Linnaeus, 1758). Etymological issue: in Czech "bouřňák" is derived from deverbative adjectives *sturný*, in Czech "bouřný", and apparently inactive older name (Mikeska 2005: 80). Right in Czech "buřňák", in German "Sturmvogel"

(Franta Šumavský 1851, Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen & von Dalla-Torre 1886, Hudec 2012). The Common Gull in collection of Czech higher grammar school in Místek was not, only European Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus* Pontoppidan, 1763, Black-headed Gull, *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* Linnaeus, 1761), and "Gull", in Czech "racek", probably meantime undetermined Fulmar (Prášek 1905b). Tubenosed seabirds (Procellariidae) in the past arrange to Gull birds (Laridae). According to this, it was recorded in another fauna list of the Místek region by Linhart (1915) as "gull with three fingers" / Northern Fulmar. Black-legged Kittiwake, *Rissa tridactyla* Linnaeus, 1758, apperaed in river Ostravice, according to Prášek (1908); simultaneously along with Northern Fulmar. The farmer, and probably lord mayor, Pavel Varcop lived in Nižní Lhoty, house number 29, his wife Johanna died of pneumonia on May 28, 1922 at the age of 70, and was buried by the priest J. Nihel (Anonymus 1894-1923). Probably they were parents of the above mentioned boy. Jan Prášek (1874-?) was a high school teacher at the Czech grammar school in Místek, a custodian of natural scientific collections and he was primarily interested in geology. Come from Bohemia, in 1903 marriage in Valašské Meziříčí, of later to exit. In the school year 1902-03, the collection contained 297 numbers in 1192 specimen, out of which were 300 birds (Prášek 1905a; 1908). Teaching at the Místek 's grammar school, established in 1895, was unfortunately officially stopped on October 16, 1941 and on March 21, 1942 it was totally abolished (Anonymus s. d., e; Matějová 1980; Kulhánková 2014). The state and relocation of the collections cannot be further documented since inventory record keeping was shredded.

Z řádu dlouhokřídých častěji zabloudí k nám racek chechtavý, vulg. rybjorka (*Larus ridibundus*), ale nehnízdí — a racek tříprstý (*Rissa tridactyla*); na Ostravici. — V Bezkydech uloven na jaře jeden kus buřňáka ledního (*Procellaria glacialis*), příbuzného rackům. Nozdry tvoří jediný trubičkovitý otvor, zobák žlutavý, vrch těla světlý. Zadní prst toliko jako nepatrný pahýlek. —

Fig 1: Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) in Beskydy Mountains: text of Prášek's (1908) reports



Fig 2: Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*). Specimen without data and locality, ex Masaryk's agricultural high school Opava, now Comenius Museum Přerov, Ornithology, number 60/2001. Photo Jiří J. Hudeček

Other records of Tubenoses

During school inspections in Silesia and Moravia was found a specimen of the Northern Fulmar, *Fulmarus glacialis*, of fair stage but without a location or date. It was at the Masaryk's agricultural high school in Opava. The specimen was labelled as "Northern Fulmar" with original inventory numbers. It was stuffed softly and its bill's tube was damaged. The specimen was gained by Jiří J. Hudeček for the collection Ornis in Přerov, where it is under number 60/2001 (Fig. 2). The school started teaching on October 18, 1920 and it stopped during the war 1938-45. The origin of the specimen could not be determined out because of shredding the inventory record keeping. Vrbka (1931-32) recorded that "in our (Olomouc) region was found the "Common Fulmar", in Czech "buňák obecný". Its Czech name corresponds to an older term for the European Storm Petrel, *Hydrobates pelagicus* Linnaeus, 1758 (see Jungmann 1835; Bauše 1891). Vrbka's record probably concerns the historical records of the European Storm Petrel at Alojzov in the river basin of the Morava River in 1863 (Jeitteles 1864). Given this, its flying to Silesia and Moravia was possible in the past.

Conclusion and summary

During the last fifty years, Prášek (1908) report has been evaluated differently: as indefinite, entirely without sources and undocumented (Hudec *et al.* 1966, Hudec 1994, Šťastný & Hudec 2016). Mlíkovský (2012) expressed doubts over the generic category and even the location of Northern Fulmar's, *Fulmarus glacialis*, records from the geographic point of view. Nevertheless, Prášek's description absolutely excludes the possibility that it was a gull and features needed for generic categorizing were for that time sufficient; the description also excludes other species of Tubenoses (Procellariiformes). Kněžourek (1912) characterise with there characters: yellow bill, feathers light grey, back fingere as little wart with invalid claw. Jan Prášek was active in the Lachia in Beskydy area, which means that his data concern the Beskydy Mountains in the Moravian-Silesian territory in the environments of town Místek. Of this demarcation approve also Gogela (1905) and Linhart (1915), and it does not include any parts of Poland and Slovakia (Anonymus s. d., a, e, Krulíkovský 2007). The above given challenge in probably the reason why the Czech Rarities Committee for Ornithology does not mention either this records from the Beskydy or other data derivatives, and this without any justification (Anonymus s. d., b, c, f). Prášek (1903, 1908) showed more data, which cannot be overseen and the attempt at "erasing" data cannot be accepted for these reasons. On top of that, the record of the Northern Fulmar covers the first flights of into the European inland after 1900 (Michel & Reiser 1924).

Acknowledgement: Thanks to Marie Indráková, M.Sc., Dr. Josef Chytil and Michal Jakubec for their help.

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