Austromenopon pelagicum Timmermann, 1963 (Phthiraptera: Menoponidae) from British Storm Petrels Hydrobates pelagicus in Shetland, Scotland

J.A. Fowler and R.L. Palma

In their study of non-haematophagous ectoparasite populations of Procellariiform birds in Shetland, Fowler & Miller (1984) reported four species of feather lice on British Storm Petrels Hydrobates pelagicus. One of these, Austromenopon sp., could not be identified beyond genus because the original description of a species of Austromenopon from Hydrobates pelagicus was based on a single male, and the four specimens in the 1981 Shetland collection were females. A further 26 specimens were collected in July 1984 which includes males and females. Therefore, it has been possible to identify this species as Austromenopon pelagicum Timmermann, 1963. The specimens are retained as slide mounts in the National Museum of New Zealand.

In a revision of the genus Austromenopon, Price & Clay (1972) described a new species, Austromenopon oceanodromae, based on three females only, each from different Oceanodroma species. Female specimens of Austromenopon pelagicum fit the description of A. oceanodromae. However, to elucidate the status of the latter species, it is necessary to obtain males from its type host, Oceanodroma hornbyi, so that a critical comparison of both sexes can be made. Such a comparison may show that A. oceanodromae is a junior synonym of A. pelagicum; in the meantime both names remain valid.

REFERENCES

J.A. Fowler, School of Life Sciences, Leicester Polytechnic, Leicester LE7 9SU.