

## Revisiting an Old Record of Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* Bandar-e Lengeh, 28 August 1979

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The Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* is a tropical seabird species (Nelson 1979). There is an old report of a ship-assisted individual of this species off the east coast of Oman and the United Arab Emirates on 27 August 1979 and reaching Bandar-e-Lengeh area on 28 August 1979 - this was reported by tanker Captain Peter W G Chilman. This sighting was accepted as the first record for Oman and the UAE (I Harrison, in litt.). However, this report was overlooked in published rare bird lists of Iran (Scott 2008, Roselaar & Aliabadian 2009, Khaleghizadeh *et al.* 2011) until 2014 when it was discussed and accepted as the first Iran record (Mobasser 2016, Khaleghizadeh *et al.* 2017).

The following is an extract from the Oman Bird Records Committee (OBRC) database sent to the author by OBRC Recorder Jens Eriksen, 1 June 2014, quoting the notes supplied by Captain Chilman. It was thought that the record was published in *Sea Swallow* but no reference has been found.

“First seen on foc'sle at 09:00 [on 27 Aug 1979] in position 23°08'N, 59°36'E. Didn't move all day even when closely approached, sitting with wings spread. On 28th fishing from foc'sle. Usually sat with bill open. Last seen at dusk 18:00 on 28th in position 2621N 5443E (off Bandar-e-Lengeh, Iran). Dark brown above with white flecks. Pale brown head and underside. Primaries and tail dark brown. Pink bill with dark tip. Bluish round eye. Red feet, pinkish white claws. Moulting heavily.”

As Eriksen noted, Captain Chilman was an experienced birdwatcher and had supplied numerous records of seabirds and had written several articles. However, as the validity of this record was criticised, even after published articles (Mobasser 2016, Khaleghizadeh *et al.* 2017), the Iran Bird Records Committee (IBRC) discussed the record again in May 2021. It was

noted that the bird was observed not very far from its usual range and also that it fished independently and was not fed by the ship's crew. Therefore the final view of IBRC was to accept this record, as it met the criterion of a ship-assisted occurrence. After re-acceptance of this record, it was confirmed as the first record of this species for Iran and Hormozgan province and was published as such on the IBRC website on 25 May 2021 (IBRC 2021).

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