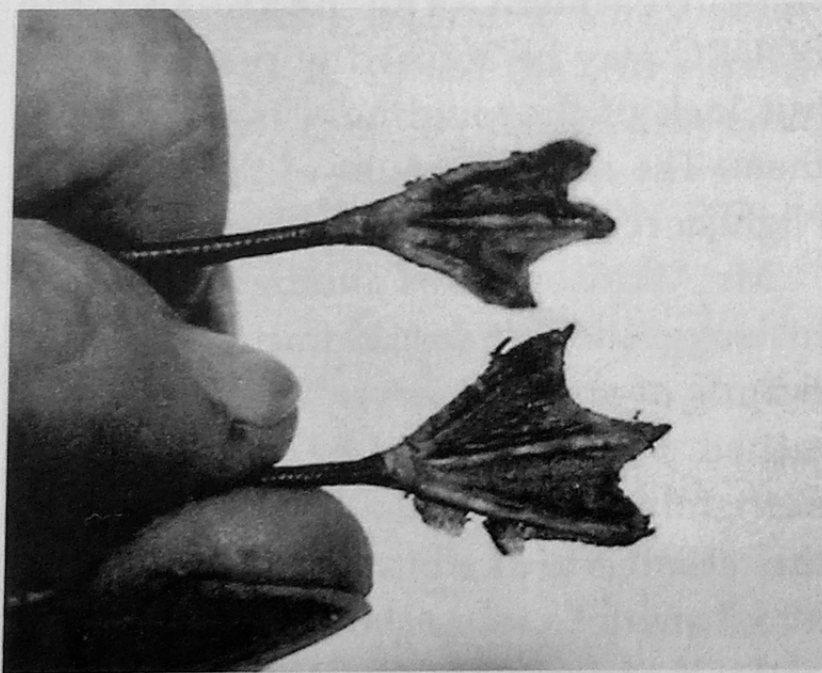


## EUROPEAN STORM-PETRELS LOSING TOES THROUGH DISEASE

Bernard Zonfrillo's theory that disease may be responsible for seabirds losing



179. Diseased feet of European Storm-petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* tape-lured on Nólsoy, Faroe Islands, summer 1994 (Marita Gulkelett)

a foot (*Brit. Birds* 89: 185, 191) is of interest.

I have ringed almost 20,000 European Storm-petrels *Hydrobates pelagicus* in the Faroes, and have seen occasional individuals with a disease which sometimes affected one toe, at other times the whole foot and tarsus, and very seldom both feet (plate 179). It seems to me that first the foot becomes swollen, then the skin falls off, and finally the foot decays. Only once have I seen an individual with one tarsus and half a foot, probably because a storm-petrel without feet will rapidly die. The disease in question reminds me of puffinosis, which was described by M. Brooke (1990, *The Manx Shearwater*).

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