

Grey Ternlet (*Procelsterna cerulea*)

Description

Body and wings light blue-grey, paler on face and breast; primaries darker. Black bill is pointed. Feet and legs black with yellow webs

Conservation Status

Listed as Vulnerable under the NSW TSC Act 1995.

Distribution

Widespread throughout the tropical and subtropical South Pacific Ocean. The Lord Howe Island Group and Norfolk Island are the only known breeding locations in Australian waters.

On the Lord Howe Island Group, breeding colonies are at North Head on the main Island, Ball's Pyramid, the Admiralty Islands, Muttonbird and Gower Island (Harden 1993).

Ecology

Breeding: Grey Ternlets are not migratory. Breeding begins in September when one whitish egg, with small dark and light brown blotches is laid. Incubation 32 days, fledging 37 days (Hutton 1990).

Nest: No nest is built, eggs are laid on a cliff ledge, usually sheltered from above.

Diet: Mainly small fish and crustaceans.

Foraging Behaviour: Sedentary or dispersive. Gregarious, usually feeds in small parties, but often forages or loafs alone. Feeds mainly by surface seizing.

Population Data/Health

Population estimated at 100-1 000 pairs (Hutton 1990).

Habitat

Marine, pelagic. Seen at sea feeding in flocks or at nesting colonies.

Threats

Unknown.

Impacts Upon Other Species

Unknown.

References

- Fullagar, P.J., McKean, J.L. and Van Tets, G. F. 1974. Appendix F. Report on the birds, p. 55-72. In Recher, H. F. and Clark, S.S. *Environmental Survey of Lord Howe Island*. A report to the Lord Howe Island Board. N.S.W. Govt. Printer.
- Harden, R.H. 1993. Fauna Impact Statement. The impact of domestic dogs on protected and endangered fauna on Lord Howe Island. NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service. Report prepared for the Lord Howe Island Board.
- Hindwood, K.A. 1940. The Birds of Lord Howe Island. *Emu* 40:1-86.
- Hutton, I. 1991. *Birds of Lord Howe Island: Past and Present*. Hutton, Coffs Harbour.
- Lindsey, T.R. 1986. *The Seabirds Of Australia*. The National Photographic Index Of Australian Wildlife. Angus & Robertson, UK.
- Marchant, S. Higgins, P.J. (eds.) 1990. *The Handbook of Australian, New Zealand & Antarctic Birds*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Pringle, J.D. 1987. *The Shorebirds Of Australia*. The National Photographic Index Of Australian Wildlife. Angus & Robertson, UK.
- Ross, G.J.B., Weaver, K. & Greig, J.C. (eds) 1996. *The Status of Australia's Seabirds: Proceedings of the National Seabird Workshop, Canberra, 1-2 November 1993*. Biodiversity Group, Environment Australia: Canberra vii + 237 pp.