

White-bellied Storm Petrel (*Fregetta grallaria*)

Description

Compact (to 20cm) black and white bird with a square-cut tail. Upper breast black; rump and belly showing white.

Conservation Status

Listed as Vulnerable under the NSW TSC Act 1995 and Commonwealth EPBC Act.

Distribution

Wide oceanic distribution in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Known to breed in a number of island groups including Lord Howe Island, the only breeding colony in Australian waters.

On Lord Howe Island, it breeds on offshore islands; it is not known to breed on the main island today (bred on the main Island prior to 1914). The main breeding areas are Roach Island and Ball's Pyramid, and also breeding areas on Muttonbird Island (Harden 1993).

Ecology

Breeding: Summer breeding seabird (November to May). One finely speckled egg is laid from late January through to March. Incubation is about 37 days by both parents. Fledging takes about 80 days (Hutton 1990)

Nest: Consists of a chamber usually located amongst large rocks (Hutton 1990).

Diet: Cephalopods and crustaceans.

Foraging Behaviour: Take food by dipping and pattering (Marchant *et al.* 1990).

Population Data/Health

Population estimated at 100 – 1000 pairs (Hutton 1990).

Habitat

Marine, pelagic, feeds well out to sea and only at nest on offshore islands at night (Hutton 1990).

Threats

Predation by rodents.

Impacts Upon Other Species

Not known.

References

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Photo: Ian Hutton

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