

COOK'S PETREL

Pterodroma cooki

non-breeding visitor, occasional

monotypic

Cook's Petrels breed on islands off the coast of New Zealand in Oct-Apr and disperse northeastward to the central and east Pacific (King 1967, Harrison 1983, Bartle et al. 1993, AOU 1998), to molting grounds concentrated off c. Mexico (Pitman 1986, Roberson and Bailey 1991, CBRC 2007, Raynor et al. 2011, Howell 2012). They appear to occur in Hawaiian waters rarely in Apr (worn plumage) and fairly commonly in Jun-Nov (fresh plumage), during northbound and southbound migrations to and from molting grounds, respectively (Raynor et al. 2011).

Most records are from research vessels *at sea*. In Northwestern Hawaiian Island waters, 6 individuals flying south on 3, 4, and 15 Nov 1984 off Lisianski, Laysan, and Gardner Pinnacles are the earliest records of Cook's Petrel in Hawaii (Pyle and Eilerts 1986). Six additional Cook's Petrels were between Gardner Pinnacles and Laysan 24-26 Jun 1989, one was off Pearl and Hermes 13 Aug 1993, and one was just W of Nihoa 17 Aug 1993. [HICEAS](#) observers (Rowlett 2002; [HICEAS data](#)) recorded Cook's Petrels on nearly half of 82 observing days in Northwestern waters during 25 Aug-15 Sep in 2002 (total 53 birds) but only four (during 21-25 Oct 2010) in 86 days in the same area from 15 Sep-25 Nov, suggesting annual variation in migration strategies; uniform distributions around the Southeastern Islands (Wixhip et al. 2016) suggest broad-front migration rather than feeding in these waters. At-sea reports in Southeastern Hawaiian Island waters include one 60 km SW of Maui 7 Oct 1987, three 55 km E of Hawai'i I 26 Aug 1989, and 2 birds > 275 km SE of Hawai'i I 1 Sep 1989. [HICEAS](#) observers recorded 75 Cook's Petrels off Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui, and Hawai'i during 186 survey days spread evenly from 6 Aug - 24 Oct in 2002 and 2010, with one record S of Hawai'i I 23 Nov 2002. No Cook's Petrels were reported on earlier survey cruises (King 1970, Spear et al. 1999).

In the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands*, a Cook's Petrel was captured and released after it struck a mast on a Coast Guard cutter just off *Laysan* 23 Oct 1993. In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*, small numbers have been encountered during single-day trips from *Kaua'i*, *O'ahu*, *Maui*, and *Hawai'i I*, primarily in Jun-Nov (e.g. [CRC data](#); [HRBP](#) 5222, 6165, 6169-6171), with one record of a worn and molting individual off Hawai'i I 12 Apr 2010 Apr ([HRBP](#) 6162-6164); small numbers have also been reported from shore off the ne. coast of Hawai'i in Aug-Nov, with a high count of 16 observed from Keokaha SB 28 Sep 2016. Additional Cook's Petrels landed on cruise ships off Kaua'i and were brought to [SOS](#) 1 Sep 2006 ([HRBP](#) 5309-5310 published *NAB* 61:181), 15 Oct 2007 and 15 April 2013 ([HRBP](#) 6166-6168), the last record being one of only two in spring for the Hawaiian Islands (see above). One turned into SLP probably from Bellows Field, O'ahu, 30 Nov 2002 was photographed ([HRBP](#) 5060) before it eventually died 23 Jan 2003, and one hit a wind turbine in Kawailoa Valley, O'ahu 18 Sep 2012 and is now BPBM 185788 (identification confirmed by PP examination). Cook's and [Pycroft's](#) petrels are very difficult to distinguish in the field (Spear et al. 1992, Howell et al. 1996, Rowlett 2002, Howell 2012) and some of the sight records of Cook's Petrels reported in Hawaiian waters could have been of Pycroft Petrel (Spear et al. 1992).

Raynor et al. (2011) indicate that Cook's Petrels in Hawaiian waters and throughout the N Pacific largely come from populations breeding on Little Barrier Island, New Zealand, and that temporal and other differences from other populations may

warrant subspecies status (in which case these would pertain to the nominate subspecies, *P. c. cooki*) although we consider the species monotypic at this time, in accordance with other taxonomists (Clement et al. 2016, Gill and Donsker 2016).

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

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