

WHITE-NECKED PETREL

Pterodroma cervicalis

Juan Fernandez Petrel (<1991)

P. c. cervicalis

non-breeding visitor, occasional

White-necked Petrels breed in the Kermadec Islands N of New Zealand in the northern winter and spring (Harrison 1983, Marchant and Higgins 1990, BLI 2016) and, when not breeding, disperse northward to the central w. Pacific including regularly to Hawaiian waters (King 1967, Tanaka and Inaba 1981, Pitman 1986, Marchant and Higgins 1990). White-necked Petrel was treated as a subspecies of [Juan Fernandez Petrel](#) prior to 1991; most reports of "Juan Fernandez Petrel" from Hawaiian waters prior to 1991 could pertain to either species.

At sea, single White-necked Petrels photographed near Pearl and Hermes ([HRBP](#) 0436) and near French Frigate ([HRBP](#) 0479) in Nov 1984 were the first reports from the Hawaiian Islands and the AOU area (Pyle and Eilerts 1986, AOU 1991, Pyle 1992). Subsequently, Rowlett (2002; [HICEAS data](#)) recorded 119 White-necked Petrels during 13 days of observing 275-370 km S of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands during early November 2002. By contrast they found only 5 in 45 days of observing north and east of these islands 25 Aug-21 Oct. Experienced observers have also recorded at least 14 White-necked Petrels from Kure to Nihoa during cruises in November 1989, 1996 (Bailey 1996) and 1997, and in Aug 2015. In Southeastern Hawaiian Island waters, 11 were recorded among [HICEAS data](#) during 35 days of observing in Aug-Nov 2002, including 5 observed 275-370 km NE of Maui 28 Nov. In 2010 at least 60 individuals were recorded in all Hawaiian waters between 6 Aug and 25 Nov ([HICEAS data](#); [HRBP](#) 6197). Spear et al. (1999) reported 23 White-necked Petrels during 3 cruises in Jun 1988 and 1989, all of them 160-320 km (100-200 nmi) S of Hawai'i I. and most beyond 250 km.

The only record during a one-day trip from the *Northwestern Hawaiian Islands* was of one observed from *Midway* 7 Aug 2015. In the *Southeastern Hawaiian Islands*, approximately 70 White-necked Petrel sightings have been reported on one-day trips from *Kaua'i*, *O'ahu*, *Lana'i* ([HRBP](#) 6114-6115), and *Hawai'i I* (e.g., [CRC data](#); [HRBP](#) 5180-5181 5519-5523, 5738-5739, 5804-5807, 6108-6113, 6116-6119, 6313; published *NAB* 59:171, 64:353, and 67:362). Records occur in every month of the year, with peaks in Apr-May (12 records) and Oct-Dec (43 records). A petrel identified as a White-necked was picked up at Kalihi, O'ahu 16 Nov 1996, turned into SLP for rehabilitation, and released on 18 Nov, but this identification was never substantiated. Likewise, one reported stranded on Laysan 6 May 2009 is unsubstantiated.

Two subspecies are recognized, including the smaller *P. c. occulta*, a rare and little-known taxon which breeds in Vanuatu and sometimes considered a separate species (Totterman 2009). White-necked Petrels observed in Hawaii appear large, and we feel comfortable assigning them to nominate *P. c. cervicalis*.

[Acronyms and Abbreviations](#)

[Literature cited](#)

Citation: Pyle, R.L., and P. Pyle. 2009. The Birds of the Hawaiian Islands: Occurrence, History, Distribution, and Status. B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, HI, U.S.A. Version 1 (31 December 2009) <http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/birds/rlp-monograph/>