

 <p>Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels</p>	<p>Fifth Meeting of the Population and Conservation Status Working Group</p> <p><i>Florianópolis, Brazil, 9 - 10 May 2019</i></p> <p>Research to determine the fate of young black petrels</p> <p><i>Southern Seabirds Solutions Trust</i></p>
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Attachment: Southern Seabirds Solutions Trust. Undated. *Research to determine the fate of young black petrels. Final Report.* Prepared for the Auckland Zoo Charitable Trust.

SUMMARY

Black petrels only breed in New Zealand and, prior to human settlement, formed large colonies in the forested ranges of the North Island and top of the South Island. Black petrels were victims of introduced rats, cats, pigs and stoats. All mainland colonies disappeared. Two colonies survived, the biggest on Great Barrier Island and the other on Little Barrier Island. Black Petrels are Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List, with only 2700 breeding pairs remaining.

Despite regular searches at the colony on Great Barrier Island, very few banded fledglings are recorded there following their first migration across the Pacific Ocean. This research aimed to find out where the fledglings travelled on their maiden flight in the hope this would shed light on the risks for these birds at sea. This report was produced for the project sponsor.

Fourteen fledgling black petrels at Great Barrier Island, New Zealand were tracked using Telonics satellite transmitting tags in May 2018. Once at sea they all immediately began a long flight across the Pacific Ocean. Four of the devices stopped sending signals during the crossing, either because the battery failed, the device fell off, or the young bird died. The other devices kept transmitting, some well beyond the expected lifetime of the battery. Most of the birds did a left turn north, roughly around the same position, and made their way to the seas to the west of the Galapagos Islands. Three birds continued travelling into near shore waters of Ecuador, Colombia and Panama. The final transmitter stopped sending signals on the 25th of August, five weeks beyond the expected life of the battery.