

NEWS RELEASE
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**Notable Albatross' Chicks Hatch at Midway Atoll
in Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument**

Honolulu, Hawaii — [Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial](#) in [Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument](#) is the only place on Earth where Laysan, Black-footed, and endangered Short-tailed albatross chicks all live side by side. This year there are two new and noteworthy chicks on the island. One is the offspring of Wisdom - a Laysan albatross and world's oldest known banded wild bird - and the other is the offspring of the only endangered short-tailed albatross pair in the Central Pacific.

Wisdom, who is at least 68 years old, hatched a new chick this week. It is uncommon for albatross to return to lay and hatch an egg every single year, but Wisdom and her mate have not skipped a nesting year since 2006. She has raised at least 31-36 chicks over her lifetime.

“Because albatross don't lay eggs every year and when they do, they raise only one chick at a time, the contribution of even one bird to the population makes a difference,” said Bob Peyton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Leader for Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial.

Pronounced extinct in 1949, short-tailed albatrosses were rediscovered breeding at Torishima Island in Japan in 1950. Listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1973, they have been increasing in numbers thanks to global conservation and recovery efforts. This is the first chick for the Short-tailed albatross pair that nest on Midway Atoll. In 2017, the pair practiced their parenting skills by successfully incubating and raising an adopted Black-footed albatross chick.

“Short-tailed albatross' rarity and size make them stick out in the colony, making it easier to follow them and their interactions with each other,” said Kelly Goodale, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist for Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial.

Throughout the Monument, scientific research and monitoring plays an essential role in managing wildlife, including seabirds. Surveys and banding projects conducted in the Monument and throughout the world help scientists better understand the life cycles and migration patterns of birds.

“Wisdom is incredibly powerful as a symbol of why we do what we do and why people all over the world pay attention to her,” said Beth Flint, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife Biologist. “Banded in the 1950s, Wisdom is rewriting history about our understanding of survivorship, how long birds live, and how often they breed.”



Since 1936, over 250,000 albatross have been banded at the Refuge and Memorial. By pairing modern data analysis with detailed current and historical records, biologists can make more informed management decisions that ensure seabirds have the habitat and resources they need in the future.

For the first years of their lives, albatross grow and mature at sea. Starting around age five, juvenile albatross return to their home colony during breeding season and begin the search for a mate - a process that can take years. During nesting season, juvenile albatross all over Midway Atoll practice elaborate courtship dances or dozens of ritualized movements. When they find that special bird to dip, bow, and preen with, the pair stays bonded for life.

Albatross return to Midway Atoll starting in October to meet their mate and spend approximately seven months on Midway Atoll incubating their single egg and raising the chick. Parents take turns incubating, foraging for food and feeding their chick before it leaves the island to fly out to sea, known as fledging. This process takes up much time and energy, so most Laysan albatross skip laying an egg every few years.

Albatross depend on safe, predator free places to rest and nest. Midway Atoll is by far the most important Laysan albatross colony in the world - over 70% of the world's Laysan albatross, almost 40% of Black-footed albatross, and the endangered Short-tailed albatross all rely on the protected Refuge and Memorial. In addition to albatross, there are 20 different bird species that rely on Midway Atoll as a safe place to rest or nest. Over three million individual birds call the Refuge and Memorial home.

Biologists with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are working to restore the habitat seabirds need at Midway Atoll and remove threats like invasive predators - because protecting the future for seabirds mean protecting the places they call home.

“Laysan albatross and other seabirds depend on the habitat protected by Midway Atoll and other Pacific remote wildlife refuges to raise their young,” said Peyton. “Thanks to the hard work of our partners and volunteers, we have been able restore the native habitat that the birds need for nesting sites, ensuring a future for these seabirds.”

For photos and video, please visit: <https://goo.gl/ucVV7f>

For more details and shareable social media about Wisdom: <https://rebrand.ly/wisdom-e2019>

For more details and shareable social media about the Short-tailed albatross:
<https://rebrand.ly/short-e2019>

Read more stories about Midway Atoll and the Albatross at:

- [Midway's Albatross: A New Threat Puts the World's Largest Colony at Risk](#)
- [Wisdom Returns to Midway - December 2018](#)
- [Video: Battle of Midway Commemoration Film](#)
- [The Return of Midway's Albatross](#)



- [The Laysan Albatross: A Lovesong](#)
- [Midway Atoll: Restoring an Ecological Gem](#)
- [A Future to Count on for Albatross at Midway NWR](#)
- [Discovering Midway's Cultural History](#)
- [War and Peace at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial](#)
- [Return to Midway: A short-tailed albatross love story](#)
- ["Lonesome" George Finds a Friend](#)

Located on the far northern end of the Hawaiian archipelago, Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and located within the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. It is one of the oldest Atoll formations in the world, it provides nesting habitat for millions of seabirds, and it is a touchstone for one of the most significant naval battles of World War II, and in history, the Battle of Midway. To learn more about the Midway Atoll: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/midway_Atoll/

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Papahānaumokuākea is cooperatively managed to ensure ecological integrity and achieve strong, long-term protection and perpetuation of Northwestern Hawaiian Island ecosystems, Native Hawaiian culture, and heritage resources for current and future generations. Four co-trustees - the Department of Commerce, Department of the Interior, State of Hawai'i and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs - protect this special place. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was inscribed as the first mixed (natural and cultural) UNESCO World Heritage Site in the United States in July 2010. For more information, please visit www.papahanaumokuakea.gov.

