

## TAXON SUMMARY

# Pycroft's Petrel

1	Family	Procellariidae
2	Scientific Name	<i>Pterodroma pycrofti</i> (Falla, 1933)
3	Common Name	Pycroft's Petrel
4	Conservation status	
	Australian breeding population	Extinct
	Population visiting Australian territory	Vagrant

### 5 Reasons for listing

This subspecies was last recorded on Norfolk I. in about 1800. On Lord Howe I., it is known only from subfossils.

### 6 Intraspecific taxa

None described.

### 7 Past range and abundance

Subfossils have been found on Lord Howe and Norfolk Is, and a painting of a blue-footed petrel from Norfolk I. has been attributed to this species (R. Holdaway). Still breeds in the Poor Knights Is, the Hen and Chicken Is, the Mercury Is, and Ririwha off the coast of New Zealand, migrating to the North Pacific Ocean (Heather and Robertson, 1996).

### 8 Ecology

Pycroft's Petrels nest in burrows, often within colonies of other petrels. Their diet is little known, but does contain cephalopods (Marchant and Higgins, 1993).

### 9 Reasons for extinction

Predation by introduced cats and pigs, and hunting probably caused the extinction of Pycroft's Petrel

from Norfolk and Lord Howe Is, although numbers on Norfolk I. may already have been suppressed by Pacific Rats *Rattus exulans* introduced by Polynesians 800 years ago (Holdaway and Anderson, 1998, R. Holdaway). On New Zealand islands, Pacific Rats have a significant impact on breeding success, taking eggs and chicks (Heather and Robertson, 1996).

### 10 Bibliography

Heather, B. D. and Robertson, H. A. 1996. *A Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*. Auckland, Viking Press.

Holdaway, R. N. and Anderson, A. J. 1998. <sup>14</sup>C AMS dates on *Rattus exulans* bones from natural and archaeological contexts on Norfolk Island, South-west Pacific. *Archaeology in New Zealand*. 41:195-198.

Marchant, S. and Higgins, P. J. (eds) 1990. *The Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

### Comments received from

Richard Holdaway, Peter Menkhorst.