

Watola, G. 2011. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (3rd Edition in prep.)
Based on: Watola, G. 2009. The Discovery of New Zealand's Birds. (2nd Edition)
Arun Books, Orewa, New Zealand.
Updated and amended text supplied by George Watola, October, 2011.
Page numbers follow Watola, G. 2009 (2nd Edition)
Wandering albatross p 42.

Wandering Albatross (Toroa) *Diomedea exulans* sensu lato
6/1/1770 west of Aupouri Peninsula, Northland
14/02/1899 Ross Sea
28/10/1979 Norfolk Island

Banks shot an albatross 30 nautical miles west of the Aupouri Peninsula, Northland on 6th January 1770. This was apparently an old adult *D. exulans*, as determined from Parkinson's painting (Lysaght 1959). The Forsters recorded and drew Wandering Albatross at Dusky Sound about April 1773. Ellis drew a Wandering Albatross in 1776, "at sea between Van Diemens Land and New Zealand" (Lysaght 1959). The oceanic birds of various species seen at sea in the 19th Century by observers such as Hutton are perhaps doubtful records, as it is not always certain which species is being referred to.

Checklist Committee (OSNZ) (2010) recognised four species in this complex: Wandering Albatross *D. exulans*, Tristan Albatross *D. dabbenena*, Amsterdam I Albatross *D. amsterdamensis* and Antipodean Albatross *D. antipodensis*. Christidis & Boles (2008) did not recognize any splits in this complex, nor in *D. epomorphora* or the smaller albatrosses Thalassarche.

There was some uncertainty over the correct epithet for the Wandering Albatross, *exulans* or *chionoptera*, as *exulans* could be considered indeterminate (see arguments by Silcock 2008). Schodde et al. (2009) have described a new type specimen under *exulans*, and this seems to be generally accepted now.

Tristan Albatross has been recorded off New South Wales with some regularity recently, so would appear to be a good candidate to appear in New Zealand waters. Amsterdam Albatross has been doubtfully recorded from New Zealand, its close resemblance to Antipodean Albatross being a confounding factor.

Wandering Albatross *Diomedea exulans* (Linnaeus 1758), Native
March 1951 Macquarie Island

Wandering Albatrosses were reported from Macquarie Island by Bellingshausen in 1820. They were also reported in 1911, but not until 1951 were they identified as Snowy Albatrosses *D. e. chionoptera*. The Snowy Albatross is nowadays merged with the nominate form. An account was given by Knightley (1951) of the small breeding colony (four nests) discovered in March 1951. There are presently less than 10 pairs breeding. Scofield & Onley (2007) thought that these may perhaps be hybrids, but DNA analysis has indicated that they are *exulans*. Banded nominate birds from Kerguelen Island, Iles Crozet, Prince Edward Island and South Georgia have been recorded in New Zealand seas.