

Broad-billed prion *Pachyptila vittata*

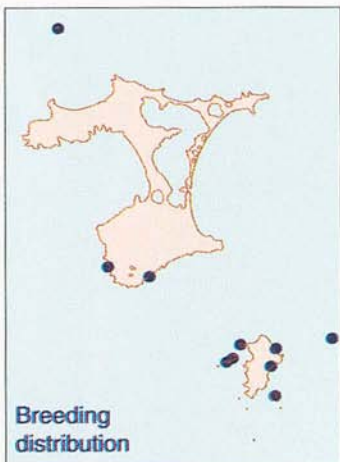
28 cm

NEW ZEALAND NATIVE, NOT THREATENED

Locally known as blue-billies, broad-billed prions have very wide dark grey bills. Larger and darker than other prions, they also have prominent, steep foreheads. Broad-billed prions



breed in the South Atlantic and around southern New Zealand. In the Chatham Islands, they breed on Chatham, Pitt, and Rabbit Islands, Rangatira, Mangere, Tapuaenuku, Star Keys, The Sisters, Houruakopara, Kokope, the Murumurus, and Blyth Stack. The largest population is on Rangatira, where there are an estimated 330,000 pairs in forested areas. Broad-billed prions are uncommon in fossil deposits in the Chatham Islands, suggesting that the population has established or increased since human occupation. This has resulted in increased competition for burrows with the endangered Chatham petrel. In recent years Chatham petrel burrows have been actively managed to reduce prion interference. Prions are vulnerable to predation at sites where introduced mammals are present.



Broad-billed prion, Mangere,
Chatham Islands. Photo:
Dick Veitch (DOC).