

All About the Albatross

Common Name: Albatrosses Scientific Name: Diomedeidae

We're heading off to Antarctica this month to learn a bit more about a fabulous bird that can be found in this region - the albatross.

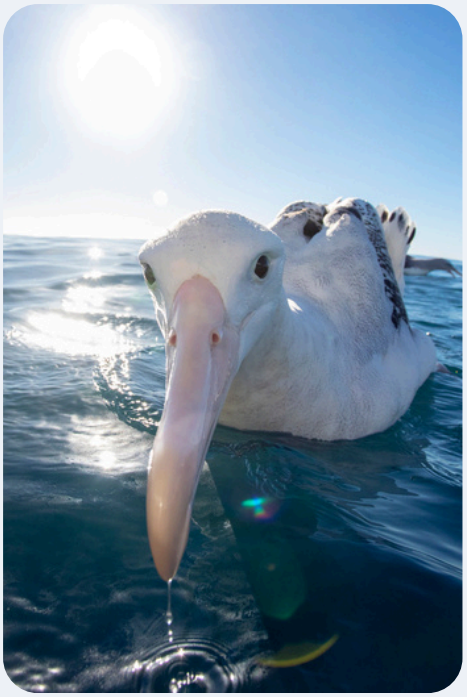
Where do albatrosses live?

Most albatrosses live in the southern hemisphere and spend their lives at sea. They can travel from subtropical to Antarctic waters and travel all around the Southern Ocean. When they're at sea, they can sometimes cover 1,000km in a single day! Phew! That's some mega flying!

Albatrosses don't spend much of their time on land. They usually only head to land to breed, and then they live in big colonies, often on remote, isolated islands.

How many different types of albatross are there?

There are 22 different species of albatross. Sadly though, they are known as the most threatened group of seabirds in the world, with 15 of the 22 species on the brink of extinction. The biggest cause of this is commercial fishing, where albatrosses are getting caught on baited hooks when trying to feed and end up drowning. There is hope though! In 2000, the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and BirdLife International launched the Save the Albatross campaign, aiming to prevent deaths and protect these beautiful birds.



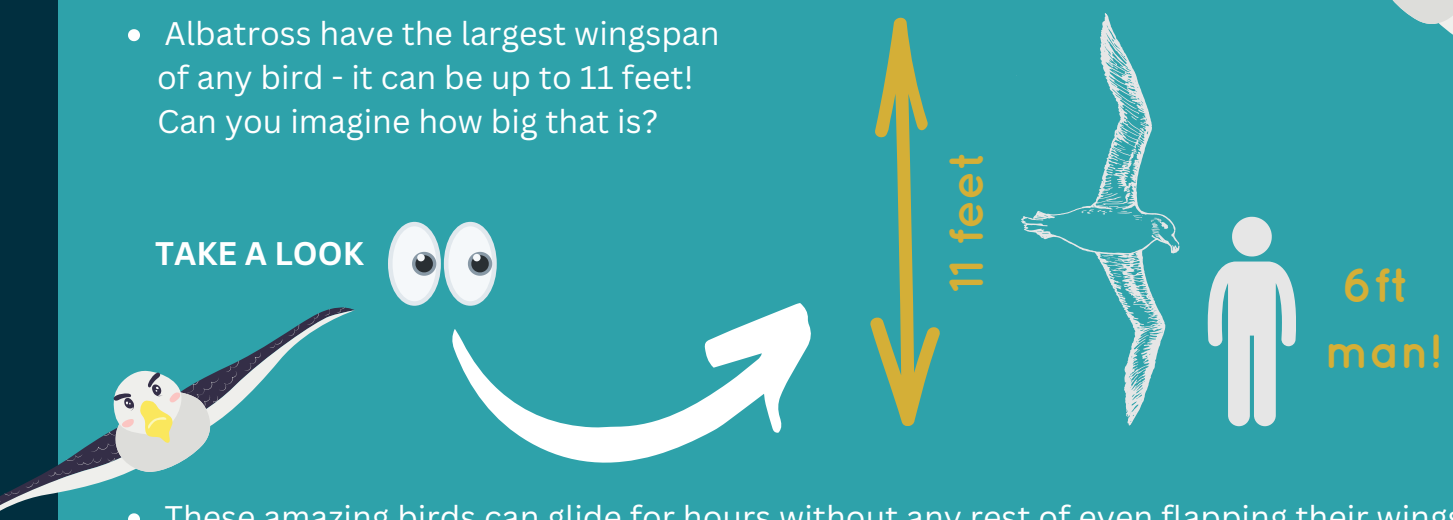
What do they eat?

Albatrosses drink seawater & eat squid or schooling fish.

HERE ARE A FEW COOL ALBATROSS FACTS!

- Albatross have the largest wingspan of any bird - it can be up to 11 feet! Can you imagine how big that is?

TAKE A LOOK



- These amazing birds can glide for hours without any rest of even flapping their wings, they simply ride the ocean winds. A single beat of their wings is enough to keep them in the air for hours.
- An albatross can live for a long time - some more than 70 years, which is incredible for a bird! There's a Laysan albatross named 'Wisdom' who is actually still alive and is at least 69 years old!
- Albatrosses perform a dance when trying to attract a mate, that they've practiced for years to get just perfect!
- A grey-headed albatross was once recorded to travel all the way around Antarctica in just 46 days. Isn't that amazing?!

