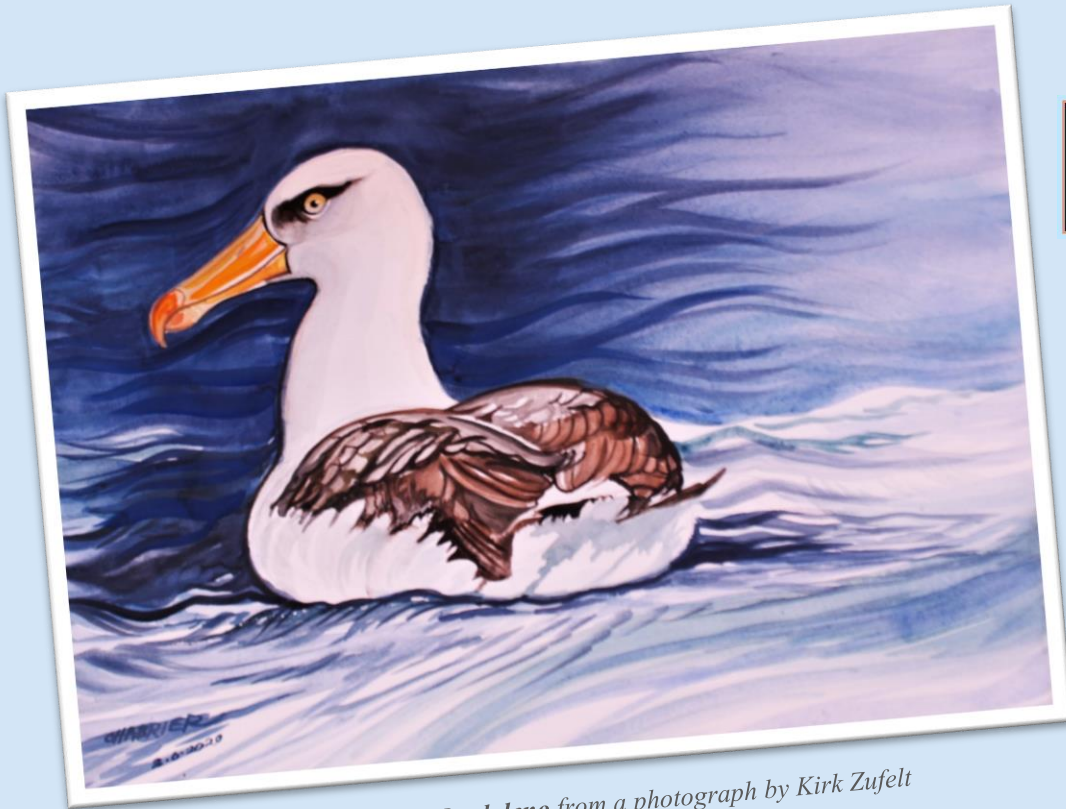


Campbell Albatross



Agreement on the Conservation
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Artwork by *Annie Shoemaker-Magdaleno* from a photograph by Kirk Zufelt

One of the 11 “mollymawk” albatrosses of the Southern Ocean, the CAMPBELL ALBATROSS breeds only on New Zealand’s subantarctic Campbell Island, in the austral summer on ledges along high sea cliffs in mixed colonies with Grey-headed albatrosses. The species’ at-sea distribution extends into Australian waters and eastwards into the South Pacific. As for the others in the genus *Thalassarche* it feeds on fish, squid and crustaceans seized on the sea surface or obtained by shallow surface dives. Scavenging from behind fishing vessels can lead to death by drownings and collisions, offsetting the advantages of ‘free food’.



Dominique Phillip

Like all the mollymawks they are essentially black and white birds. The Campbell Albatross (when adult) has an all-yellow bill and an all-white head save for a triangular black smudge through the eye. A 'sister' species, the wide-spread and abundant Black-browed Albatross, is very similar, but



has a dark, rather than a pale yellow or honey-coloured, eye. However, the two species need to be observed close-up to see this difference with certainty.

The species' population has been most recently estimated at c. 22 000 annually-breeding pairs. "Although numbers decreased steeply between the 1970s and 1980s owing to interactions with fisheries, the population is now thought to be increasing, although there has not been a census since 1996". The Campbell Albatross has both a global and a national conservation status of Vulnerable. Although at risk from having only a single breeding site, its status has benefited by the removal of three introduced mammals from its sole breeding island: first domestic sheep, feral cats (which died out on their own) and lastly Norway Rats. The rat eradication, following an aerial drop of poison bait in 2003 over the whole island, has been confirmed by subsequent visits with trained dogs that have thankfully found no rodent sign. The island is a national nature reserve and forms part of New Zealand's subantarctic World Heritage site, along with three other island groups (Auckland, Bounty and Snares). Limited tourism is allowed to the no-longer manned weather station and along a board walk to view breeding Southern Royal albatrosses.

Sources:

ACAP 2012. Campbell Albatross *Thalassarche impavida*; <https://www.acap.aq/en/acap-species>

BirdLife International 2020. Species factsheet: *Thalassarche impavida*; <http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/22728349>

John Cooper, ACAP Information Officer, 10 January 2020