

*Pterodroma
phaeopygia*

HAWAIIAN:
'Ua'u

Dark-rumped Petrel



The Dark-rumped Petrel is an endangered seabird that ranges across much of the tropical Pacific, but nests only in the Hawaiian and Galapagos Islands. The name *Pterodroma* is derived from the Greek words *pteron*, which refers to feathers or wings, and *dromos*, which refers to a racecourse or any quick movement. "*Phaeopygia*" is derived from the Greek *phaios*, for dusky or brown, and *puge*, for rump or buttocks (Gotch 1981). Thus, the name describes a fast-flying, dark-rumped bird.

This petrel is a member of a large order of seabirds, the Procellariiformes, long-winged pelagic birds that are characterized by their tube-shaped nostrils. Most come to land only to breed and are highly adapted to an ocean existence (Alexander 1954, Tuck and Heinzel 1978). Members of the family Procellariidae,

which also contains the shearwaters and the fulmars, Dark-rumped Petrels are often called gadfly petrels because of their erratic, swooping flight behavior at sea. The 25 species of gadfly petrels in the genus *Pterodroma* are most commonly found in tropical and subtropical zones, where they feed primarily on squid, fish, and crustaceans caught near the sea surface at night.

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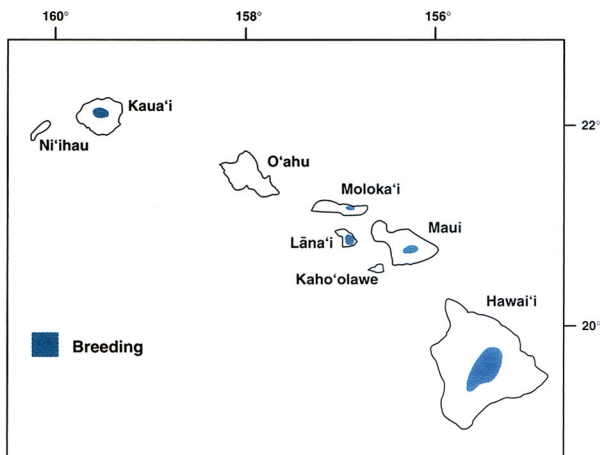


Figure 1.

Breeding distribution of the Dark-rumped Petrel in the Hawaiian Islands, based on active nests on Maui I. and Hawai'i I., calling birds during the breeding season on Moloka'i I., and Lāna'i I., and occasional grounded fledglings on Kaua'i I.