



Bermuda Audubon Society

NEWSLETTER

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Trindade Petrel – New to Bermuda

Bob Flood



Photo by Kirk Zufelt

Friday 13th November was a very special day. A small group of us had participated in bird banding studies on Nonsuch Island and observed Jeremy Madeiros handle adult Cahows (Bermuda Petrel), taking key information about each one. We also saw the endemic Bermudan Skink and went on a tour of the island. This was a lifetime event for everyone. The day couldn't get better, or could it? We left Nonsuch about 2.30 pm and headed offshore a few kms to witness Bermuda Petrels gathering before returning to the colonies after dark. Several birds were hanging around and we had superb views. However, at about 3.40 pm, a quite different-looking seabird approached the Aquarium boat *Endurance*. It was slightly larger than Bermuda Petrel, more rakish, greyish-brown rather than dark grey, and the underwing pattern was different. We recognised it immediately as a Trindade Petrel *Pterodroma arminjoniana*, which only breeds on Trindade Island, off Brazil, in the South Atlantic (plus a very few in the Indian Ocean). It flew around the boat at close range for 15 minutes or so and was joined by six Bermuda Petrels. We didn't know where to look. The big-gun photographers took some superb photos, but it was local resident Lynn Thorne who secured the prize photo of both Bermuda and Trindade Petrels in the same frame! Skipper Nigel Pollard said he had never witnessed such a commotion and excitement on the deck of his boat. Quite incredibly, Kate

Sutherland was onboard wearing a t-shirt depicting a Trindade Petrel.

(Although there are a few records of distant Cookilaria sp, sightings, this is the first confirmed record for Bermuda. An increasing number of birders are coming to Bermuda to see our birds, especially the opportunity to see the Cahow during November. It is a great reward for Bob Flood who has been bringing birding groups for several years. Ed.)



*Above: Cahow in flight with Trindade Petrel
Right: Kate Sutherland in prophetic Trindade Petrel t-shirt
Photos by Lynn Thorne*

Masked Booby

Andrew Dobson

On 27th November 2015 an immature Masked Booby was picked up from Watford Bridge dock and taken into care at BAMZ. Although it took some fish it seemed to have little interest in flying and feeding itself. A vagrant from the Caribbean, there are only about 15 records in the last 25 years. Most sightings have been made in the Challenger Banks area or from the BIOS research vessel during off-shore trips. Records of birds arriving on land are usually the sign of a bird in distress. Masked Boobies breed in islands in tropical oceans around the globe except in the eastern Atlantic. It feeds on large species of shoaling fish, especially flying fish, but will also take large squid. The nearest breeding colony to Bermuda is Anguilla, about 1,500 kms to our south.



On 1st December it had regained sufficient strength to fly off from the Aquarium. It was then seen on the breakwater off the South Basin at Dockyard in the company of various gull species and Black-bellied Plovers. It takes regular feeding trips into the Great Sound and it will be interesting to see how long it remains in Bermuda.



Photos: Andrew Dobson

Bermuda bird identification cards available



The Bermuda Audubon Society is delighted to announce that we now have two bird identification cards for sale. One card features all of Bermuda's breeding birds with migratory land birds on the reverse side. The second card features Bermuda's seabirds with migratory wetland birds on the reverse. The society is very grateful for permission to use illustrations from "A Guide to the Birds of the West Indies" as well as additional illustrations from David Wingate, Andrew Dobson and the RSPB. The cards were produced with the assistance of Birds Caribbean.

There has been a demand for this sort of card for a long time and educational sets of these cards will be made available to all schools free of charge in the New Year courtesy of a grant from the Bank of Bermuda Foundation for this purpose. The cards are laminated and suitable for field trips. We also want to make these cards available to both residents and visitors. Priced at only about \$5 per card, they are available from Aberfeldy Nurseries, BAMZ gift shop, Botanical Gardens gift shop, Brighton Nurseries, the Bermuda Bookstore, BUEI shop, the Bookmart in Brown & co, Flying Colours, Robertson's Drug Store (St Georges), the Bermuda Craft Market and Hand Made Bermuda (Dockyard).

These cards will make a great little Christmas present as well as helping people to learn more about Bermuda's birds.

If you are looking for a bluebird box as a Christmas present, ready-made boxes and kits are available from Aberfeldy Nurseries while stocks last. The kits provide a great family activity, a chance to make your own box (full instructions are provided).

Society News – a lot has been happening!



Our annual bird camp took place in late October. Paul Watson set up mist nets on Paget Island and caught a variety of species. Left to right: Paul with Northern Waterthrush, Worm-eating Warbler (centre), Blackpoll Warbler (right).

Wildlife TV presenter Nigel Marven provided a fascinating lecture to a packed audience at BUEI in November - "Filming Birds: Behind the Camera with Attenborough, in Front of the Lens with Albatrosses"

The Society ran some very successful pelagic trips in November to see our national bird. Very satisfied birders from the US, Canada, UK, Sweden as well as Bermuda had great views of Cahows. Join us next year!



Somersfield Academy students made bluebird nest boxes as part of PartnerRe's "Dollars for Hours" programme. Photo shows student N'Kenge Boyles with Audubon secretary Karen Border.



Volunteers helped to clear the main trail through the society's Alfred Blackburn Smith nature reserve in November.



Season's Greetings from The Bermuda Audubon Society

*"Conserving Bermuda's special birds and their habitats
for the benefit of all"*



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P.O. Box 1328
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