

# Albatrosses and petrels across the world

## procellariidae

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**Are petrels and albatrosses related?** The procellariiformes (commonly referred to as petrels) are a monophyletic group of seabirds containing about 100 species in four families: the albatrosses (Diomedidae, 13 species), the shearwaters, fulmars, prions, and gadfly petrels (Procellariidae, 65 species), the storm-petrels (Hydrobatidae, 21 species), and the ...

**Which order of seabirds includes tube-nosed birds?** Tube-nosed Seabirds: Order Procellariiformes The tube-nosed seabirds comprise several families of pelagic birds, most of which seek food from the surface layers of the sea.

**Are albatross just seagulls?** Although they look similar and are both considered seabirds, albatrosses and seagulls are not related. The albatross is a member of the family Diomedidae, the seagull belongs to Laridae. The former is a carnivore and the latter an omnivore. Albatrosses are also much bigger.

**What are petrels known for?** The Giant Petrel is one of the iconic Antarctic seabirds. These powerful, aggressive predators are also consummate scavengers, and are sometimes known as “Stinkers”! Southern Ocean whalers used to call them “Gluttons”.

**What are the relatives of the albatross?** That's the term birders and biologists use to describe albatrosses and their relatives (petrels, shearwaters, fulmars, and storm-petrels). These birds have a pair of bony tubes above or inside the bill that excrete salt—allowing these ocean-going birds to drink seawater without becoming dehydrated.

**What are the four main orders of seabirds?** 1) Sphenisciformes – penguins 2) \*Procellariiformes – albatross, fulmars, shearwaters, petrels 3) Pelecaniformes – pelicans, boobies, cormorants, frigate birds 4) \*Charadriiformes - Gulls, Terns, & Alcids \*Orders presented in this seminar In general, seabirds have life histories characterized by low productivity, ...

**What is the stomach oil of the albatross?** The Northern Pacific albatrosses produce a stomach oil made up of wax esters and triglycerides that is stored in the proventriculus. This is used both against predators and as an energy rich food source for chicks and for the adults during their long flights.

**Which bird lives up to 300 years?** Albatrosses live much longer than other birds; they delay breeding for longer and invest more effort into fewer young.

**Does an albatross sleep while flying?** Using their large wingspans as a sort of sail, and angling the feathers on each wing's end to turn, Albatross can gain lots of momentum and fly long distances without using much energy at all. And by locking their wings, they can rest and sleep in the air, meaning they can spend years without having to go to dry land.

**Why is albatross so special?** Albatrosses are known for their ability to fly without flapping their wings, and to travel thousands of kilometres in a single journey. They have been observed flying at speeds of up to 127 km/hr and can stay aloft for days or even weeks at a time.

**What is the myth of the petrel?** There are many myths and maritime stories about storm petrels. They are said to forecast bad weather and have been rumoured to be the souls of perished sailors. The old name for storm petrels was Mother Carey's chickens.

**What is the rarest petrel in the world?** The Magenta petrel is often referred to as the world's rarest seabird.

**Are petrels aggressive?** The southern giant petrel is the largest petrel species, reaching the size of a small albatross. They are aggressive and opportunistic, scavenging penguin, albatross, seal and whale carrion, and ship offal, and preying on penguin and albatross chicks and other seabirds up to the size of an adult

ALBATROSSES AND PETRELS ACROSS THE WORLD PROCELLARIIDAE

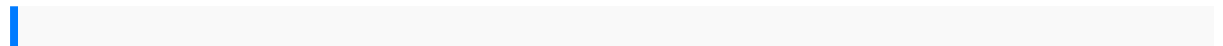
albatross.

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**What animal is similar to the albatross?** Similar Species Sooty Shearwater Sooty Shearwaters are much smaller than Black-footed Albatross, with much quicker, shallower wingbeats and a smaller and more slender bill.

**What group of birds do albatrosses belong to?** Albatrosses belong to a group of birds known as Procellariiformes, or 'tubenoses'. Tubes on their beaks allow them get rid of excess salt, so they never need to drink fresh water. Three of the world's 22 albatross species live in the North Pacific and there is a tropical species that breeds on the Galapagos Islands.

**What is the symbiotic relationship between albatrosses?** Laysan Albatrosses, like other birds, have a symbiotic relationship with feather mites, a species of highly host-specific parasites that inhabit the feathers of the birds.



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