

Northern Royal Albatross *Diomedea sanfordi* Species Code.: 044 Band: R



Status:

Formerly regarded as subspecies of the Royal Albatross *D. epomophora sanfordi*, but elevated to species level in 1998. Breeds NZ mainland and Chatham Is.

Morphometrics:

	Males	Females
Wing:	590 – 669 mm	593 – 639 mm
Tail:	185 – 195 mm	175 – 197 mm
Bill (tip to skull):	156 – 172 mm	151 – 170 mm
Tarsus:	112 – 120 mm	111 – 120 mm
Middle Toe:	151 – 176 mm	146 – 159 mm
Weight:	6.530 – 6.800 kg	

Ageing:

Unlike the five plumage stages described for the Southern Royal Albatross *D. epomophora* it appears that this species has only two stages – Juvenile and for older birds Immature / Adult (see illustrations above);

The age of attaining full adult plumage and the age at first breeding are unknown.

Sexing:

The measurement above suggest that some males, at least, are larger than females;

The method of sexing live birds in the field is unknown;

The sexes share incubation in alternate shifts.

Similar species:

Southern Royal Albatross *D. epomophora* is larger and has several different plumage stages (see separate field data sheet);

Wandering Albatross *D. exulans* is a smaller, but some plumage stages are similar (see separate field data sheet), but the most obvious difference, at all ages, is the colour of the tip of the upper mandible which in *D. exulans* is horn coloured and in *D. sanfordi* black;

Southern Royal x Northern Royal Albatross hybrids have been recorded at the Northern Royal Albatross colony on the Otago Peninsula – HANZAB has no illustrations or descriptions to identify hybrids but obvious hybrids should be recorded with Species Code 903 & Band R.