

Southern Royal Albatross *Diomedea epomophora*

Species Code.: 043

(1 of 2)

Band: Female R, do not band Male



Juvenile, dorsal
Stage 1



Juvenile, ventral
Stage 1



Immature, dorsal
Stage 2



Immature, dorsal
Stage 3



Adult, dorsal,
Stage 5



Adult, ventral,
Stage 5



Adult

Status:

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

Morphometrics:

	Males	Females
Wing:	674 – 707 mm	647 – 686 mm
Tail:	211 – 224 mm	196 – 210 mm
Bill (tip to skull):	179 – 188 mm	163 – 177 mm
Bill depth at base:	65.8 – 71.2 mm	62.3 – 64.5 mm
Tarsus:	134 – 138 mm	123 – 126 mm
Middle Toe:	209.3 – 216.4 mm	185.7 – 202.1 mm
Weight:	8.200 – 9.500 kg	6.600 – 9.100 kg

Southern Royal Albatross

(2 of 2)

Ageing:

Gradually attains adult plumage and Harrison (1979, 1985) proposed five plumage stages which are detailed in HANZAB and illustrated above:

Stage 1 (see illustrations):

This plumage is attributed only to the Juvenile;

Stages 2 to 4 (see illustrations for stages 2 & 3 – stage 4 not illustrated):

The age at which these Immature plumages are attained is unknown;

Stage 5 (see illustration):

Stage 5 is Adult plumage, but age of attainment is not known.

Sexing:

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

The sexes share incubation in alternate shifts

Similar species:

Northern Royal Albatross *D. sanfordi* is smaller (see separate field data sheet);

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