

NEWS RELEASE
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World's oldest known wild bird successfully hatches another chick at Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial

Honolulu, Hawaii — Wisdom, the world's oldest known breeding bird in the wild, successfully hatched another chick at Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial within Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The chick hatched approximately two months after Wisdom, at least 66 years old, was first spotted incubating an egg at the same nesting site her and her mate, Akeakamai, use each year.

“Wisdom continues to inspire people around the world. She has returned home to Midway Atoll for over six decades and raised at least 30-35 chicks,” said Bob Peyton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Leader for Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Memorial. “Because Laysan albatross don't lay eggs every year and when they do, they raise only one chick at a time, the contribution of even one bird to the population makes a difference.”

It takes nearly seven months to incubate the egg and raise a chick to fledge. In that time, Wisdom and Akeakamai, like all albatross parents, take turn incubating the egg or caring for the chick while the other forages for food at sea.

Albatross and many other seabirds exhibit high nest site fidelity, returning to the same nesting site each year, and relying on protected nesting sites like the Refuge and Memorial to raise their young.

“Laysan albatross and other seabirds depend on the habitat protected by Midway Atoll and other Pacific remote wildlife refuges to raise their young,” said Peyton. “Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, we have been able restore the native habitat that the birds need for nesting sites, ensuring a future for these seabirds.”

Wisdom and Akeakamai are not alone in calling the Refuge and Memorial home. Midway Atoll is home to the world's largest colony of albatross. Nearly 70% of the world's Laysan albatross and almost 40% of Black-footed albatross, as well as endangered Short-tailed, all rely on the Refuge and Memorial. Albatross start to arrive to return from sea to breed in late October and by the end of November nearly every available nesting space on the atoll is claimed by a breeding pair.



For photos and video, please visit: <http://bit.ly/WisdomPhotos>

For more details and shareable social media about Wisdom: <http://bit.ly/WisdomsChick2017>

Located at the far northern end of the Hawaiian archipelago within Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. One the oldest atoll formations in the world, the atoll provides nesting habitat for over three million seabirds, and was the site of the decisive Battle of Midway, one of the most significant naval battles of World War II, and in history. To learn more about Midway Atoll, visit: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/midway_atoll/.

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Papahānaumokuākea is cooperatively managed to ensure ecological integrity and achieve strong, long-term protection and perpetuation of Northwestern Hawaiian Island ecosystems, Native Hawaiian culture, and heritage resources for current and future generations. Four co-trustees - the Department of Commerce, Department of the Interior, State of Hawai'i and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs - protect this special place. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was inscribed as the first mixed (natural and cultural) UNESCO World Heritage Site in the United States in July 2010. For more information, please visit www.papahanaumokuakea.gov.

