

**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 21, 2017

**CONTACT**  
Megan Nagel 503-705-6877  
[Megan\\_Nagel@fws.gov](mailto:Megan_Nagel@fws.gov)

### **World's Oldest Known Bird Returns to Midway Atoll in Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument**

Honolulu, Hawaii — Wisdom, a Laysan albatross and the world's oldest known breeding bird in the wild, has returned to [Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial](#). The approximately 67 year old Wisdom flies thousands of miles each year to return to Midway Atoll. Her arrival is overshadowed only by the news that she has also laid an egg.

Each year millions of albatross return to Midway Atoll in [Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument](#) to nest and raise their young. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge staff spotted Wisdom and her mate, Akeakamai, near their nest in late November, and on December 13 staff confirmed that Akeakamai was on the nest incubating an egg. Wisdom and her mate return to the same nest site on Midway Atoll each year. Since 2006, Wisdom has successfully raised and fledged at least nine chicks and traveled millions of miles in her lifetime.

“An albatross egg is important to the overall albatross population” explained Bob Peyton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Leader for Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial. “If you consider that albatross don't always lay an egg each year and when they do they only raise one chick at a time – each egg is tremendously important in maintaining the survival of a colony.”

Midway Atoll is home to over three million seabirds, including the largest colony of albatross in the world. Over 70% of the world's Laysan albatross population and 29 species of birds rely on the Refuge as a safe place to breed and rear their chicks.

Albatross face a myriad of threats – from involving longline commercial fishing and marine debris to invasive species and shrinking habitat. Throughout the vast expanses of ocean, remote atolls and islands like those found in the Monument are critical refuges for seabirds, like Wisdom.

**For photos and video, please visit: <https://goo.gl/ucVV7f>**

**For more details and shareable social media about Wisdom: <https://goo.gl/hZborh>**

**Read more stories about Midway Atoll and the Laysan Albatross at:**

**[My Month at Midway](#)**  
**[The Return of Midway's Albatross](#)**  
**[The Laysan Albatross: A Lovesong](#)**



Learn more about the work to address threats to the world's largest albatross colony at:

- [Removing Threats from Midway Atoll](#)
- [A Future To Count on at Midway Atoll](#)
- [Midway's Albatross: A New Threat Puts the World's Largest Colony at Risk](#)

Located on the far northern end of the Hawaiian archipelago, Midway Atoll Refuge and Memorial is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and located within the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. It is one of the oldest Atoll formations in the world, it provides nesting habitat for millions of seabirds, and it is a touchstone for one of the most significant naval battles of World War II, and in history, the Battle of Midway. To learn more about the Midway Atoll: [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/midway\\_Atoll/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/midway_Atoll/)

*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](http://www.papahanaumokuakea.gov).*

###

