

A Summary of Albatross Band Recovery Data in the Hawaii Deep and Shallowset Longline Fisheries



Project Background

This project is a summary of seabird band recovery data that has been accrued during the January 01, 2002 through December 31, 2013 period by the Hawaii longline fisheries observer program.

The National Marine Fisheries Service Pacific Island Regional Office Fisheries Observer Program has been deploying observers on board Hawaii-permitted longline fishing vessels, as part of a mandatory requirement, since February of 1994. The longline fisheries consist of both 'deep' and 'shallow' set components. The deep set fishery, which targets tuna, has been monitored at 20% coverage since 2002. The shallow set, which targets swordfish, has been monitored at 100% observer coverage since it reopened in 2004.



Seabird Bycatch and Band Recovery

Black-footed and Laysan Albatross occasionally interact with both fisheries. While deployed, observers record seabird sightings, interactions and banding data; assist with handling, and salvage; and report on compliance with mitigation measures. Seabird band recovery data is submitted to the United States Geological Survey

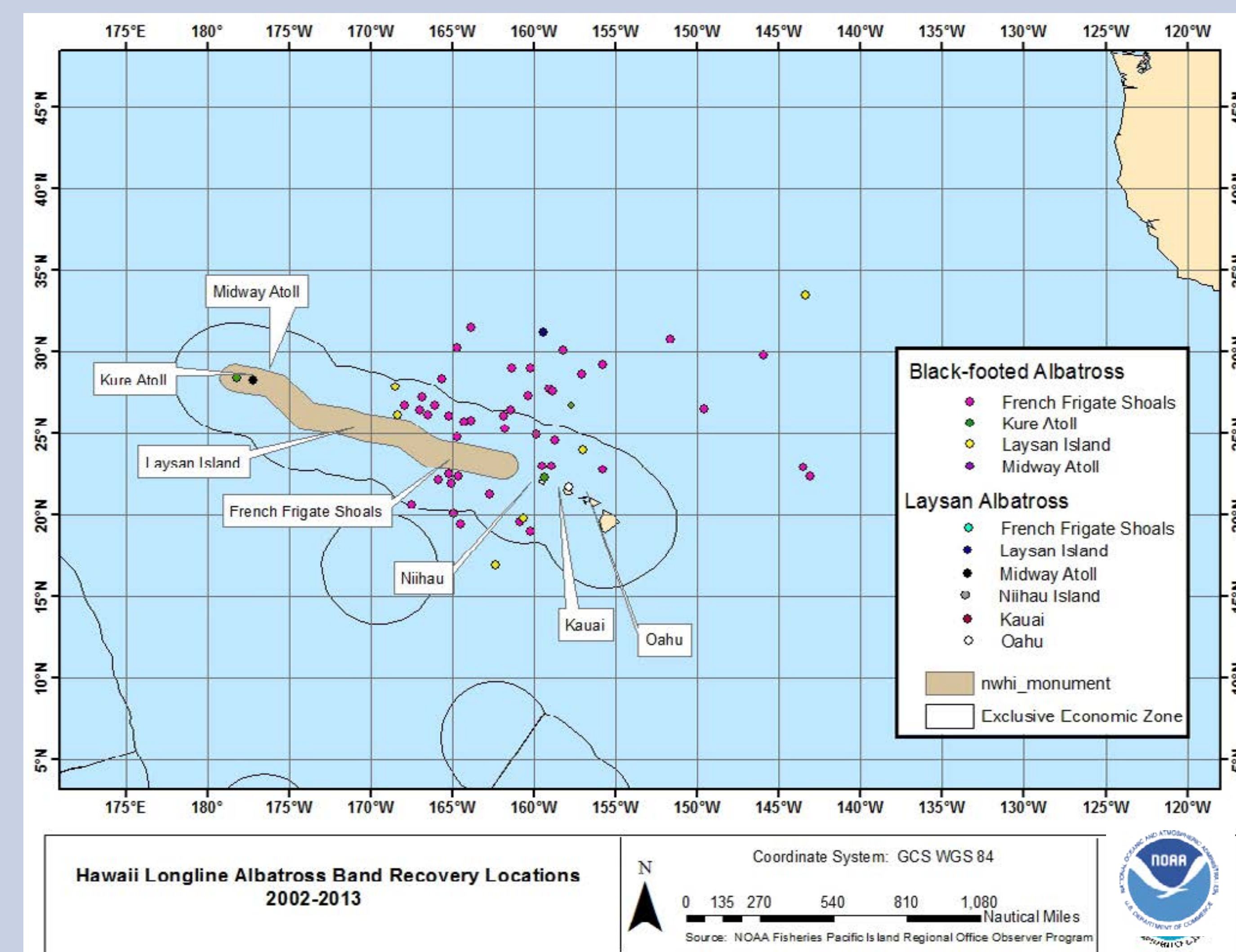
(USGS), Patuxent Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) where it is joined with existing banding data provided by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and others, into a centralized bird banding database.

The results presented here represent a cooperative effort between the NMFS, USFWS, USGS, as well as other governmental and non-governmental agencies.

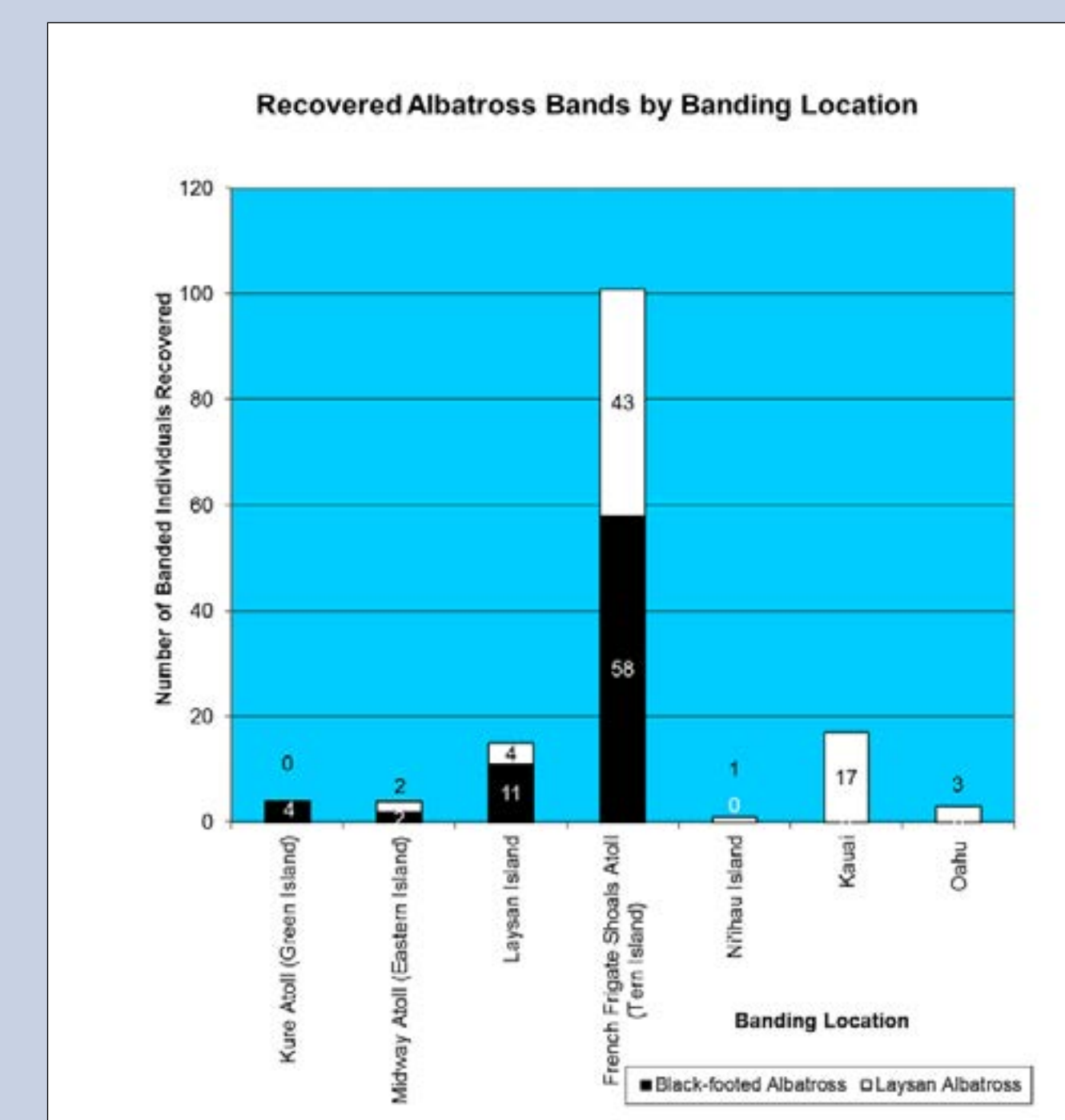


Notable Findings

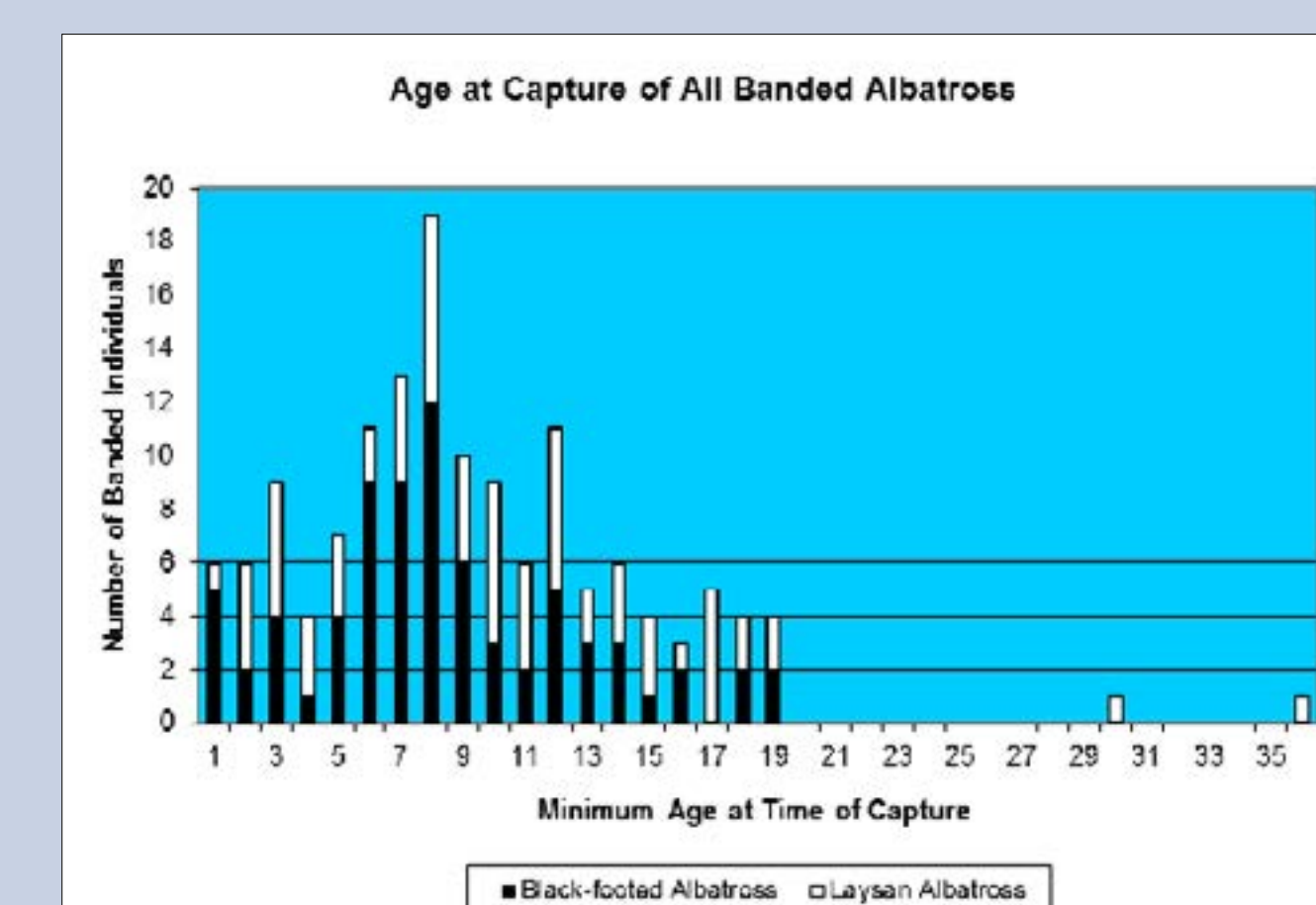
- Observers have been deployed on over 4,800 fishing trips (1994-2013)
- 85 observers have reported seabird band recoveries (2002-2013)
- 147 total banded albatross interactions were reported (1 non-fishery-related)



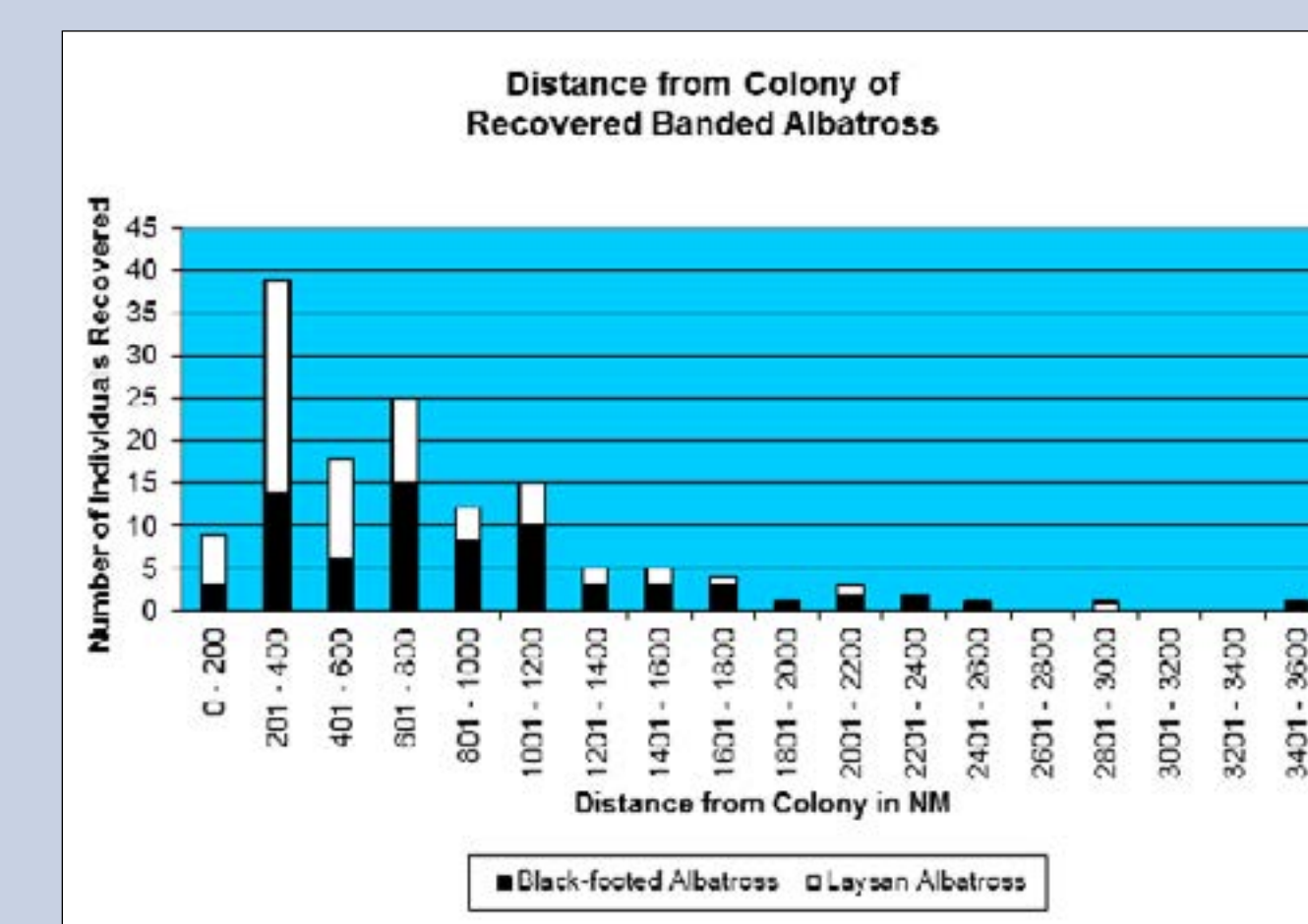
Banded albatross recovery locations by colony and species. Reported band recoveries of fisheries interactions with reported banding and recovery positions for the 2002 – 2013 recovery years.



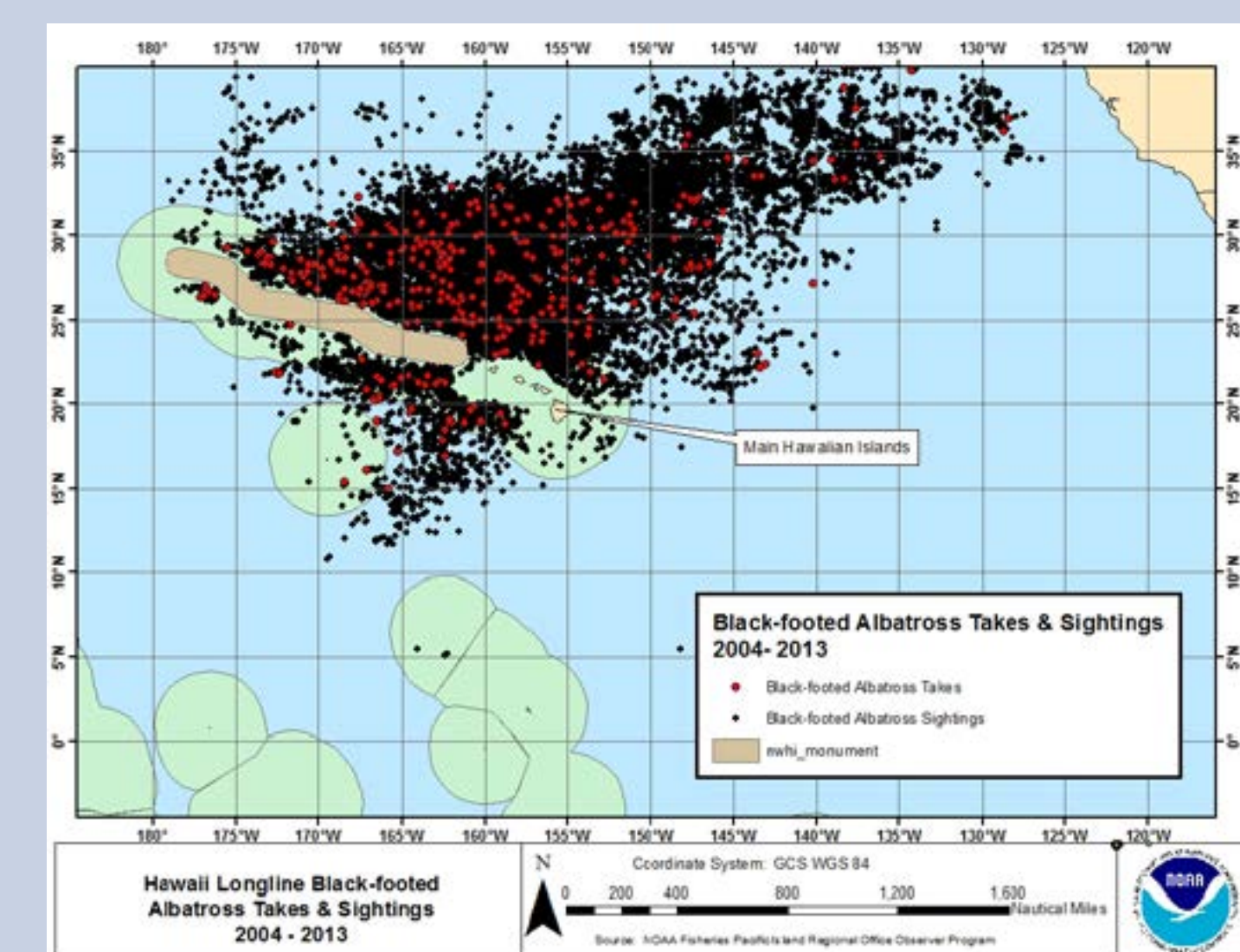
Number of banded albatross reported by location, and species (n=145).



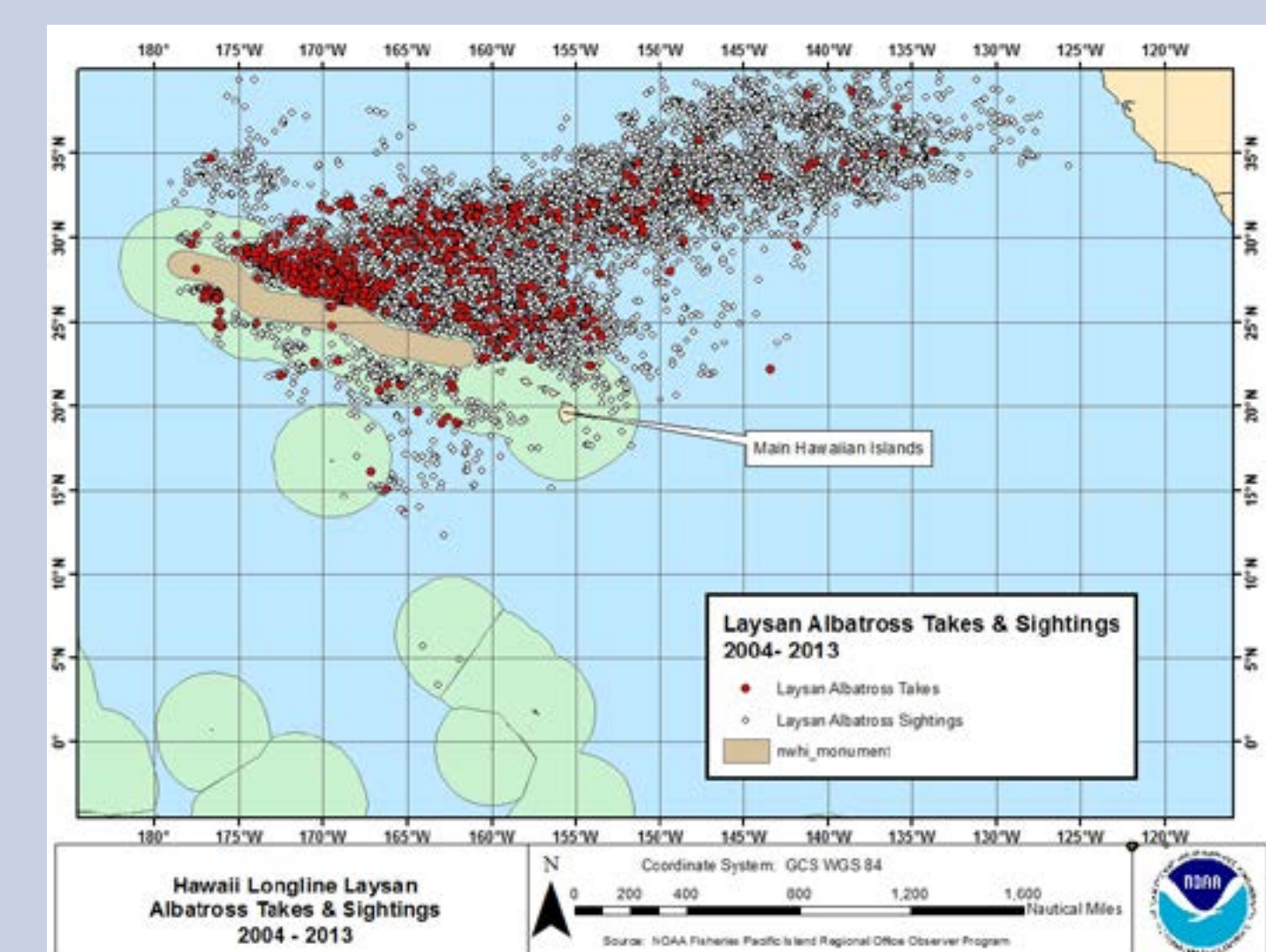
Minimum age of banded albatross at time of recovery by species. Calculated based on minimum banding age, banding date, and recovery date. (n=144)



Distance from 'parent' colony at time of capture in nautical miles (NM). (n=141)



Location of Black-footed Albatross takes (fisheries interactions), and sightings (within the first 5 minutes of start of gear setting, within 150 meters of the vessel). Data combined for all sets in both fisheries occurring in 2004 – 2013 years.



Location of Laysan Albatross takes (fisheries interactions), and sightings (occurring within the first 5 minutes of the set, within 150 meters of the vessel). Data combined for all sets in both fisheries occurring in 2004 – 2013 years.

- All banded seabirds had metal bands
- At least 127 seabirds had plastic marker bands as well
- 120 Band recoveries were from 'Dead' albatross (64 BFAL, 56 LAAL)
- 23 Band recoveries were from 'Injured' (10 BFAL, 13 LAAL)
- 5/6 albatross released 'Injured' were resighted, where complete resighting records exist
- 13.0% (145/1116) of all albatross were banded
- 17.6% (77/437) of Black-footed Albatross were banded
- 10.0% (68/679) of Laysan Albatross were banded
- 20% of Albatross caught in 2013 were banded
- The oldest band was recovered from a 36 year old Laysan Albatross that was banded in 1967
- A Laysan Albatross was recovered 3,411nm from its parent colony
- In 2014 there were an additional 13 albatross band recoveries

USGS Banding Reports

Within the Hawaiian Islands complex there are:

- Nearly 440,000 total albatross banding reports (1960-2013)
- Nearly 186,000 seabird band recovery reports (1960-2013)
- Over 70,000 albatross bandings (2002-2013)
- Over 15,000 albatross band recoveries (2002-2013)

Future Plans

The PIRO Hawaii Fisheries Observer Program will continue ongoing efforts to:

- Train observers on proper seabird identification and handling
- Record and report seabird sightings, interactions, and banding data
- Support research on seabirds that were salvaged dead
- Report on compliance with seabird mitigation measures

For more information contact:
John L. Peschon
NOAA IRC
NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office
Observer Program
1845 Wasp Blvd., Building 176
Honolulu, HI 96818
John.Peschon@noaa.gov

