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The status of Cook's Petrel on Great Barrier Island

Only four burrows of Cook's Petrel (*Pterodroma cookii*) were found in the Mount Hobson area on Great Barrier Island during the 1987-88 and 1988-89 breeding seasons. I searched widely for burrows, especially in areas over 300 m asl, finding no Cook's Petrel burrows above 400 m and no evidence of successful breeding. I found the remains of 16 cat-killed Cook's Petrels between 200 m and the summit on major tracks, but none were fledglings. Birds of unknown breeding status actively display and call over much of the island between October and March.

The past status of Cook's Petrels on Great Barrier Island is uncertain. Imber (1979) found a cat-killed fledgling near a burrow at about 300 m asl. This is the best evidence that the species successfully breeds on Great Barrier Island. Hutton (1868) first reported Cook's Petrels as very common on Great Barrier but did not mention breeding. Other records summarised by Bartle (1967) and Bell (1976) are only of cat-killed birds and of birds calling overhead. However, Harper (*in* Bell 1976) reported seven juveniles on the summit (621 m) in April 1974, which he thought had emerged from nearby burrows. Considering other recent sightings, it is questionable whether these birds were aged correctly. Overall, the level of activity on the island seems unchanged since 1966 (Bartle 1967).

I thank Graeme Taylor, Alan Tennyson and Barrie Heather for help in preparing this note.

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