

Chatham Island Taiko and Chatham Petrel diet

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The critically endangered Chatham Island taiko (tchaik/tāiko; *Pterodroma magentae*) and the vulnerable Chatham petrel (ranguru; *Pterodroma axillaris*) are amongst the rarest seabirds in the world, with only about 100 and 1,100 individuals, respectively.

Significant efforts are being deployed yearly to support their breeding. While dedicated conservationists work hard around the nests, what happens at sea remains much more challenging to understand. In the last couple of years, GPS tracking data from Johannes Chambon have revealed some information about where they forage. Yet, little is known about their diet. Seabirds can forage hundreds of kilometres away from their nest. When they return their precious meal, it is a delicious soup to the young bird but a mystery to the scientist.

In this project, we will use genetic techniques to reveal the diet of both species. We will learn about their similarities and their differences. Importantly, we can combine this with the extensive information about breeding ecology and the GPS data to better define the threat of climate change and any potential conflict with fisheries.



Chatham petrel. Picture: Christopher Stephens ©