JOIN US IN SAVING
THE CARIBBEAN'S
RAREST SEABIRD

CONSERVING THE DIABLOTIN

International
Black-capped Petrel
Conservation
Group

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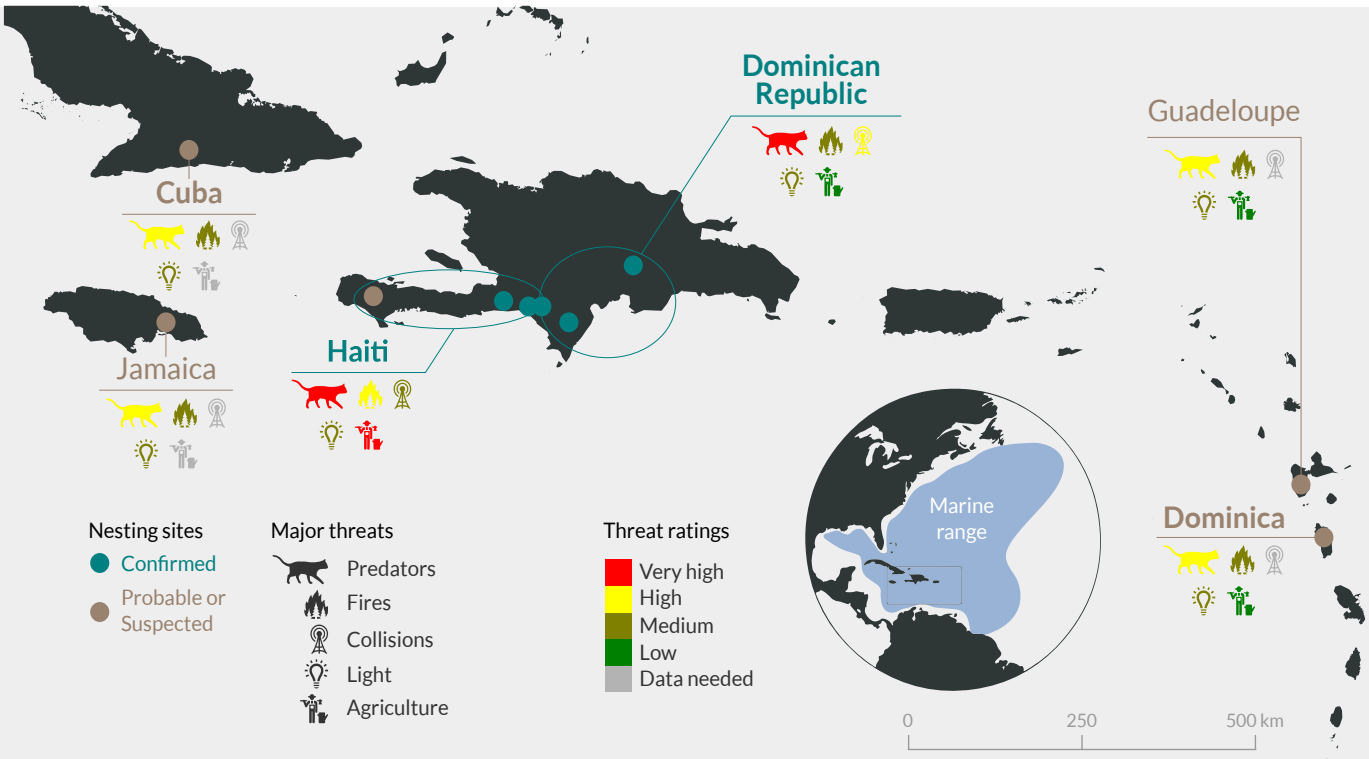
Locally known as Diablotin, the Black-Capped Petrel *Pterodroma Hasitata* breeds only in the Caribbean.

Its marine range extends into the western North Atlantic and includes the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. Once thought extinct, the species was rediscovered nesting in Haiti in 1963.

Today, there are an estimated 2,000 pairs nesting, at least, at five confirmed sites in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

To date, ~100 nests have been located, all on Hispaniola. Evidence suggests petrels may also breed on Dominica and possibly Cuba, Guadeloupe, and Jamaica.

Listed as globally endangered (IUCN), the species is facing continued decline due to threats causing direct mortality as well as loss or degradation of habitat.



The threats to Diablotin on land and at sea are driven by ecological, social, economic, and political factors. We seek partners and collaborators working in these realms to aid in implementing strategies to reduce threats and to enable conservation.

STRATEGIES

Nine strategies have been developed to enable conservation and address threats.

Six strategies apply throughout the petrel's range; three are focused on confirmed sites in Hispaniola. Our analysis suggests that no single strategy can result in a population increase but, by pursuing a number of strategies in synergy, we can achieve a positive population trajectory into the future.

Build Local Capacity. Local individuals and organizations are the backbone of Black-capped Petrel conservation. This capacity must be ensured into the future through societal awareness; secondary and graduate education opportunities; and training programs and opportunities for paid professional positions.

Locate and Characterize Nest Sites. Locating nest is a laborious but paramount process for the species' conservation. By 2025 we plan that all suspected sites on Hispaniola have received comprehensive search; at least one island (Dominica, Cuba, Jamaica, or Guadeloupe) has been explored more thoroughly; threats are characterized at all newly discovered sites.

Explore Restoration Methods. Given adequate breeding conditions, social attraction and translocation could be used to strengthen petrel populations. By 2025, we plan that a full feasibility study of restoration methods is completed, with recommendations for pilot projects; and by 2030, any necessary restoration projects have started.

Reduce Predator Pressure. Controlling predators will allow reproductive output and adult survival to increase. Eradication is impossible on Hispaniola so most effective methods will vary among locations and with predator type to achieve a reduced predator abundance around nests.

Reduce Collisions and Groundings. Man-made obstacles to flight and fatal light attraction can be reduced by government regulation, outreach to tower owners and public education about light pollution. Owners and communities made aware of the threats would likely accept low-cost or cost-saving modifications.

Support Community Development In Boukan Chat, Haiti. This community abuts a nesting site but expanding agriculture is an imminent threat. Agroecological programs are developped to foster tree crops as a long-term farming option and slow expansion into forests.

Undertake Study of Socio-Economic Drivers of Threats at La Visite, Haiti. La Visite ridge hosts the greatest density of petrels but poverty encourages the unsustainable use of natural resources by local communities. A scoping study on the specific uses of the area would inform socio-economic and environmental interventions.

Engage Dominican Government to Plan and Strengthen Oversight of Parks. All confirmed and suspected nesting sites in the Dominican Republic fall within national parks. Local partners will foster collaboration with park administrators for expertise on petrels and petrel habitat; seek public engagement to gain public backing; and showcase habitat restoration projects to park administrators.

Adress Threats At Sea Through Advocacy. Given the scope of marine threats (reduced prey availability, plastics and other pollutants, oil spills), the most effective and feasible interventions will be to advocate for the species' interest in the realm of marine policies, by highlighting Black-capped Petrel in science/policy forums, and contributing data to regulatory agencies.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Our 10- to 20-year goal: Ensure the long-term survival of a stable population of Black-capped Petrel whose conservation status has improved from Endangered to Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List.

LEARN MORE:

The International Black-capped Petrel Conservation Group is a collaborative association of organizations and individuals with a shared interest in the conservation of species across its range.

The recently released 2021 Conservation Update and Action Plan is available at

https://bit.ly/BCPE-Action-Plan

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE CARIBBEAN

EPIC

International Black-capped Petrel Conservation Group

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