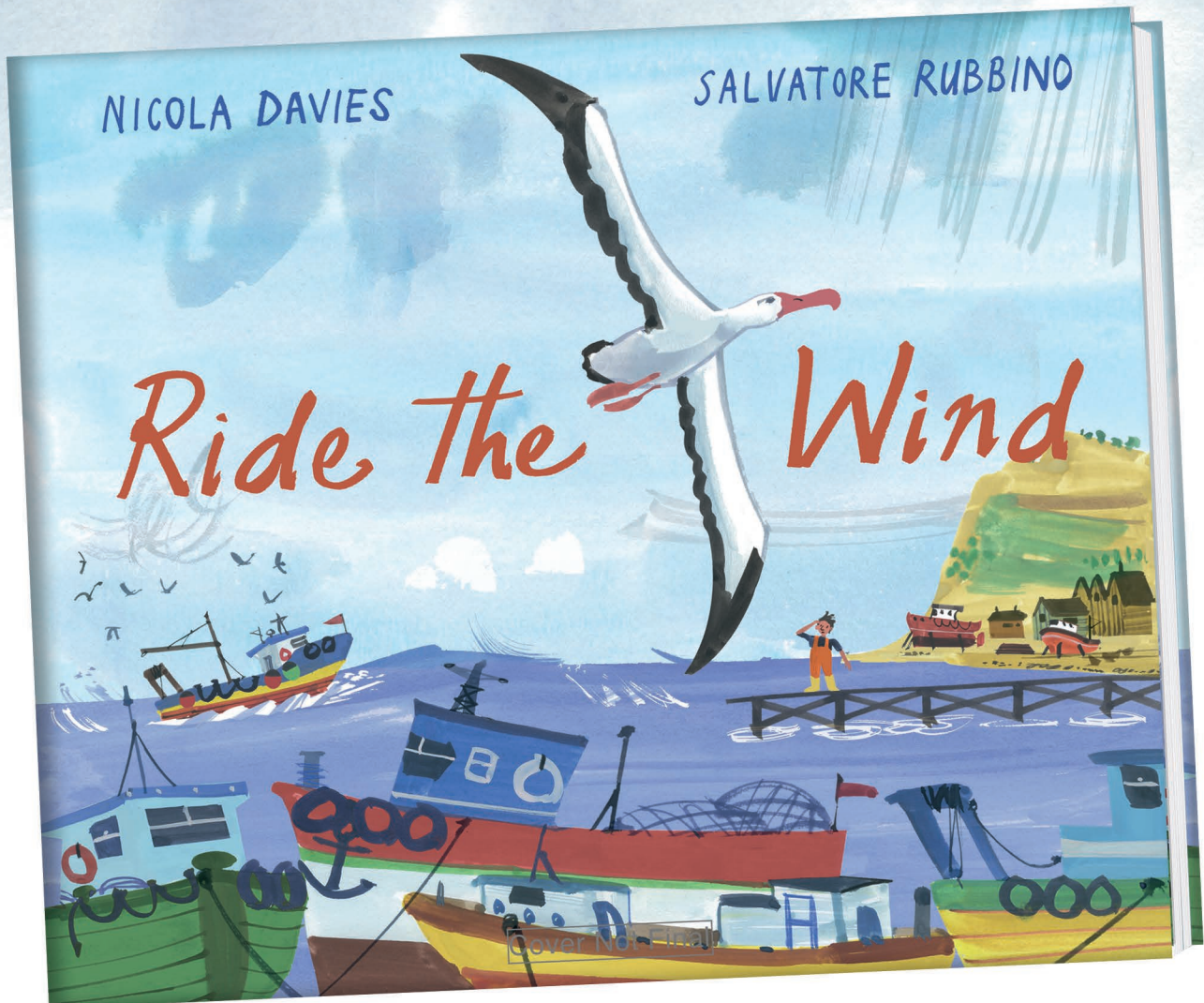


TEACHERS' NOTES



ISBN: 9781406379556 • Hardback • £12.99 • Age 5+

ABOUT THE BOOK

A heartfelt story from the author of *King of the Sky* and *The Promise*, with an important point to make about male mental-health.

Javier has a secret. On one of his father's fishing-trips, he finds an albatross caught on the hooks – alive, if only barely. Against his father's orders, Javier smuggles the bird to safety and begins nursing it back to health. Every day the albatross accepts a little more food, but she shows no sign of wanting to use her wings. And if Javier's new friend refuses to fly, how will she ever find her way home?

With words by award-winning author Nicola Davies and dramatic watercolours by Salvatore Rubbino, this is a beautiful story about the power of empathy.



Ride the Wind

NICOLA DAVIES

illustrated by
SALVATORE RUBBINO



COVER

Talk for thought

- Without reading the blurb, consider why the title of this book is *Ride the Wind*?
- Where do you think this story might be set?
- Who do you think will be the main character?
- What are the bird's most notable features?

Illustration conversation

- How does the illustrator, Salvatore Rubbino, suggest different types of weather?



BLURB

Talk for thought

- What extra information have you gleaned from the blurb?
- If you were to map the story out, how would you predict its development?
- What does the word, "empathy" mean? How do you think it can be powerful?
- The blurb says that the story "will touch and inspire readers of all ages." Can you think of any books that target a certain age group? Discuss whether you think age is an important factor, for:
 - the writer of books
 - the reader.



END PAPERS

- How would you describe the bird's expression on the left?
- What might both birds be thinking?

Quick burst writing

- Add thought bubbles.



TITLE PAGE

Talk for thought

- How would you describe the weather?
- How has the artist conveyed this?

Art challenge

- Divide a piece of paper into four and depict four different scenes showing weather at sea, trying out different techniques and different media, such as wax and pencil crayons, pastels, charcoal, paint, ink, felt pens, collage or a mixture.



THE MAGDALENA ...

Illustration conversation

- What are the people on the *Magdalena* doing?
- What sort of gear are they using?
- What do you think the different jobs are on the boat?

Talk for thought

- What have we found out about Javier?
- Why do you think Javier's father is so critical of his son?
- How do you feel when you are criticised?
- Do you think criticism affects your behaviour? If so, how?
- What's the difference between positive and negative criticism?

Writing challenge

- Write about an occasion when you were criticised. Detail your feelings and the physical effect they had on you.
- Did you secretly think the criticism was fair, or were you hurt or outraged because you felt it was unjustified?
- What did you do in response?
- How might the situation have been handled differently?

Research and presentation challenge

- Divide into three groups to find out more about one of the three different types of sea bird mentioned on this page of the story: gulls, petrels and albatrosses.
- Each person can become an expert on a different bird within your chosen family, so that you can deliver a short talk on their features and habits.
- Think about size, distinguishing features, habitat, diet, breeding, conservation status, further interesting facts.
- Think about the best way in which to present your information, e.g. a talk, film, drama, interactive display, quiz, or a combination of these.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/>



BUT WHEN HE ...

Talk for thought

- What is Javier's response to seeing the hooked bird?
- Why do you think Uncle Felipe "flung the bird across the deck"?
- What can you infer about Uncle Felipe's character?
- What do you think you would do, if you found yourself in Javier's position?

Short burst writing

- Create thought bubbles for each character.



BY THE TIME ...

Talk for thought

- Why do you think Tomos and Uncle Felipe had forgotten about the albatross?
- Why do you think Javier wrapped the albatross in a tarpaulin?
- What is the “hold”?
- Why did Javier have to hide the bird?

Rapid research and physical challenge

- Find out how much a wandering albatross weighs.
- Create a rough cut-out shape from cardboard about the size of a wandering albatross and attach the correct amount of weight carefully.
- In groups of three, take the roles of Tomos, Uncle Felipe and Javier:
 - Javier, using a cover of some description, has to wrap the bird and carry it without making any noise to a designated spot. If Tomos and Uncle Felipe hear anything, they turn and Javier has to freeze.



THE SUN WAS ...

Illustration conversation

- What sort of village do they live in?
- How would you describe it?
- What do you notice about the names of the boats?
- Why do boats sometimes have numbers on them?
- What is the wooden construction projecting into the sea called?

Talk for thought

- How do you think Javier feels about going out to sea?
- Why do you think a boy of his age is working with his family at sea?
- How do you think most people make a living here?
- What do you think life is like for the people in this village?

Art challenge

- Create a class collage of a fishing village, all contributing a building and/or a boat.
- Think about how you can use different textures for the sandy shore and the sea and sky.
- Think about the names you can give your boats.



WHEN TOMOS AND FELIPE ...

Talk for thought

- Predict what might happen next?
- How would you go about keeping an albatross a secret? Where would you hide one?
- How do you think Javier feels about his mother?
- Why do you think his mother had gone to the city, and what do you think may have happened?

Illustration conversation

- What do you notice most about the bird?



AFTER A FISHING ...

Talk for thought

- Why do you think Tomos spends most of his time on land sleeping?
- What are the two different names you could call the shop where Señora Araya works?
- Do you think Señora Araya, Señor Ortis and Señorita Vidal know why Javier needs the different items?
- Do you think Señora Araya, Señor Ortis and Señorita Vidal will keep Javier's secret?
- What kind of people do you think they are, and how have you arrived at that opinion?

Quick burst writing

- Create thought bubbles for these three adults.

Art challenge

- Add a pharmacy and fish stall to your collage of the village.



SOON THE BIRD ...

Illustration conversation

- Judging from the expression on Javier's face, how do you think he feels about the albatross?
- How do you think the albatross feels towards Javier?

Talk for thought

- Why do you think Javier feels that the bird is a female?
- From what you have researched on albatrosses, why might her mate be waiting for her somewhere far away?



KEEPING A SECRET ...

Illustration conversation

- What indications are there in the illustration that there has been a row?
- What do you think the final illustration on this spread tells you about the family?

Talk for thought

- Why do you think keeping a secret in the village was impossible?
- Were your earlier predictions correct?
- Why do people have secrets?
- Are secrets generally a good or a bad thing?
- Do you think you should expect people to keep secrets?
- How do you think your parents/carers would feel if you hid a wounded animal?
- How is Felipe different from Tomos?
- Predict what will happen in two weeks.
- Where do you think Javier's mother is now?

Drama challenge

- In threes, improvise a short scene with Tomos, Felipe and Javier, when Tomos confronts his son about the albatross. Remember to use tone of voice and body language to indicate feelings.



EVERY DAY, THE ...

Illustration conversation

- What has Javier done to encourage the bird to be more independent?

Talk for thought

- Why do you think the albatross doesn't seem to want to use her wings?
- What simile does Nicola Davies use to describe the albatross and why is it so effective?
- Why won't people be going out to sea if there's a big wind?
- What idea do you think Javier has had?

Play time

- Stand up and act out the albatross shuffling her feathers!



BUT WHEN HE ...

Talk for thought

- Were you expecting this to happen?
- Why do you think Javier is behaving differently?
- How would you describe Javier's behaviour towards his father before this incident?
- What words could you use to describe Tomos's response to Javier?
- Why do you think a fairground would want an albatross?
- Do you think there is ever a just reason for people keeping wild animals in captivity?
- Why do you think Tomos sold her?
- Where do you think Javier is running to?



THERE WAS ONLY ...

Illustration conversation

- What clues are there in the picture about the type of weather?

Talk for thought

- Do you think the type of weather affects the way people act?
- What do you think of Javier's behaviour?
- Is there any other course of action he could have taken?
- Do you think animals behave differently in captivity?
- Do you think animals forget who they are and how to behave when kept in captivity?

Drama challenge

- Conscience alley
 - Explore whether Javier should break into the car.
Form two lines facing each other. One person takes the role of Javier and walks between the lines as each member of the group speaks their advice supported by reasons – whether to break into the car or take alternative action. It can be organised so that those on one side give opposing advice to those on the other. When Javier reaches the end of the alley, he makes his decision, giving his reasons.

Writing challenge

- What is it that you need, to remind you of who you are and of what you need to be? Discuss it with a partner, jotting down your ideas and thinking about them. Then organize them into order and write, using detailed descriptions to help the reader understand your feelings.



THE FLASHING LIGHTS

Talk for thought

- How is the tension increased in both words and pictures?
- What lesson has Tomos learned?
- Why do you think he hadn't realized how Javier was feeling before?
- What do you think might happen?

Drama challenge

- Can you think of a time when you have been so wrapped up in your own feelings that you haven't considered how other people are feeling, or have you noticed this happening with someone else?
- Why is it important to consider other people's point-of-view?
- In pairs, depict either a real or imaginary situation where it is important to see beyond your own feelings. You might want to create a plan and improvise, or write the dialogue in detail.
- Practise and perform.



JAVIER AND THE ...

Illustration conversation

- What sort of weather is being shown in the illustration?
- Why do you think the illustrator decided to emphasise this?

Talk for thought

- Why do you think the bird's wings "snapped open"?

What sorts of words and phrases could you use to describe the way Javier felt when he told the albatross to "Go home!"?



TOMOS FOUND THE ...

Illustration conversation

- What do you notice in the picture?

Talk for thought

- How is the ending of the story symbolic?
- Look at the author's use of repetition. Why is it effective at this point in the story?



FAR OUT OVER ...

Just imagine creative challenge

- Watch films of albatrosses in flight.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKTfcs6LL6A>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMX2wCJga8g>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_zshk7uNr8

- Listen to Fleetwood Mac's instrumental piece, *Albatross*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXeKi6ZkbOw>
- Listen to Anthony Ritchie's orchestral piece, '*inspired by the sight of an albatross gliding in strong currents on a summer's evening.*' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ss61ZYBE-mQA>
- Think about how it feels to fly like an albatross.
- Using a piece of string, measure out the length of a wandering albatross's wingspan. Go outside and, in threes, with one person in the middle (the body of the bird) and one at each end of the string stretched taut (the wingtips), undertake a land-based version of dynamic soaring round a field or playground, imagining huge seas just beneath you.
- Collect a hoard of words and phrases to describe the sights, sounds and sensations of an albatross in flight. Use a thesaurus to help you, think about the rhythm of the words, alliteration, assonance and imagery.
- Create a poem or descriptive narrative. Perhaps your title could be *Ride the Wind*.
- Add music/sound accompaniment to enhance your writing when you read it aloud.



FINAL SPREAD

Illustration conversation

- What does this final spread suggest to you?
- Watch a film of albatrosses reuniting
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IEtH8O-iPo>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvpHBALOCAl>
- Find out what sky calling is.

Physical challenge

- With a partner, devise a short mirrored albatross dance. You may want to make masks with long beaks.
- You could use percussion instruments, such as claves and/or castanets to add to the atmosphere!
- Enjoy, practise and perform!

Final thoughts

- Watch this National Geographic short and informative film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwwVnUekpeE>
- Look at the information on the *National Geographic*, *Birdlife International* and *British Antarctic Survey* websites and jot down the main points in note form:
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds/group/albatrosses/>
<https://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/how-were-saving-kings-ocean?>
<https://www.bas.ac.uk/about/antarctica/wildlife/albatross/>

Talk for thought

- What new facts have you learned?
- Undertake the fact challenge, reading the different cards and organising them into groups:
 - factors that are a threat to the survival of the albatross
 - factors that are to the advantage of the albatross
 - other factors that you have discovered

- What are your thoughts about how best to protect the albatross?

Art and design challenge

- Create a scaled down streamer line or tori line for a model boat, to deter albatrosses.
<https://www.montereyfish.com/finfish-techniques>
 - There should be at least 15 clip-on streamers per streamer line.
 - A mix of long and short streamers should be used – long streamers should be long enough to reach the sea surface in calm conditions, so think about the height at which the weighted line will be fastened to the boat and the angle at which it will make contact with the water.

ADVANCED FURTHER READING AND LISTENING

- A very famous long poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, written by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1798, tells a dark tale about the killing of an albatross. Its impact led people to believe that you would be cursed if you killed an albatross, and the metaphor of having an albatross hanging around your neck meant that you were carrying a huge burden of guilt.

These are different recorded versions of the poem:

Mixed artists: <https://www.ancientmarinerbigread.com/readings>

Richard Burton: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=519uMc2eaSo>

Ian McKellan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1raSUYAr0s0>

Gustav Doré woodcut illustrations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZET9Q2RhONw>

Writing challenge

- Folklore tells of the belief that the albatross carries the souls of dead mariners. Sailors out at sea believed that sighting an albatross flying overhead was a sign of good luck, as the soul the albatross carried had come to protect them from harm or to bring winds to fill the ship's sails on its voyage. Work in pairs to create a short story that incorporates this element of folklore into your tale. Use your knowledge of the bird to enhance your descriptions.

Advanced writing challenge:

- Read the following old rhyme:

I saw a Peacock, with a fiery tail,
I saw a blazing Comet, drop down hail,
I saw a Cloud, with Ivy circled round,
I saw a sturdy Oak, creep on the ground,
I saw a Pismire, swallow up a whale,
I saw a raging Sea, brim full of ale,
I saw a Venice Glass, Sixteen foot deep,
I saw a Well, full of men's tears that weep,
I saw their Eyes, all in a flame of fire,
I saw a House, as big as the moon and higher,
I saw the Sun, even in the midst of night,
I saw the Man, that saw this wondrous sight.

- What sort of images are created in your mind?
- Looking carefully at the text, work out the two ways in which you could read this poem.
- Find out how many beats there are in each line.
- Think about all you have learned and understood about birds, families, the ocean and conservation and create a vivid rhyming couplet with the correct number of beats:

e.g. *I saw the boats trailing lines with bait
I saw the silver hooks that seal their fate*

- Swap the two parts of each line around:

*trailing lines with bait
I saw the boats that seal their fate
I saw the silver hooks*

- Working in groups, collect everyone's lines together and work out how best to join them into one poem. This can be quite tricky and the results may be quite surreal. Remember that you want to end with a strong line.

*I saw the full moon dancing in oceans cold
I saw a dolphin painting the waters gold
I saw the sun resting on barnacled rock
I saw a seal coming into dock
I saw a tanker of complex plastic trash
I saw a raft delight in wild waves splash
I saw a young child trailing lines with bait
I saw the fishing boats that seal their fate
I saw the silver hooks stranded on dry sand
I saw a starfish approaching a new land
I saw refugees riding the cresting wave
I saw an albatross which we need to save
I saw this blue planet soaring sky-high blue
I saw white gulls in synchrony true
I saw a silver shoal drilling the green deep
I saw a gannet with promises to keep
I saw mankind with promises of light
I saw the dark horizon in shimmering night.*

Biology and biomimicry

- Find out how tubenose birds manage to stay at sea for long periods at a time, with no freshwater to drink.
<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-and-wildlife-guides/ask-an-expert/previous/seabirdsandwater.aspx>
<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/why-can-some-birds-drink-salty-seawater/>
- Scientists, engineers and designers learn a lot from observing nature. What do you think they might have learnt from observing the albatross? Watch this film again: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMX2wCJga8g>
- What advantages do you think there are in preserving the flora and fauna that make up our natural world?

Conservation and creative thinking challenge

- Find out about the threat posed to albatrosses from plastic pollution:
<https://ocean.si.edu/ocean-life/seabirds/laysan-albatrosses-plastic-problem>
- How can we ensure that our own personal behaviour does not have an adverse effect on the natural world?
- Create a publicity campaign to show the effects of plastic pollution. You could make an eye-catching collage with a life-size outline of an albatross chick and show the plastic contents likely to be found in its stomach.
- Extend this further by collaborating to devise a plan to support The Albatross Task Force, involving your whole community by raising awareness of the plight of the albatross and how they can help, even in small ways.

Further website suggestions:

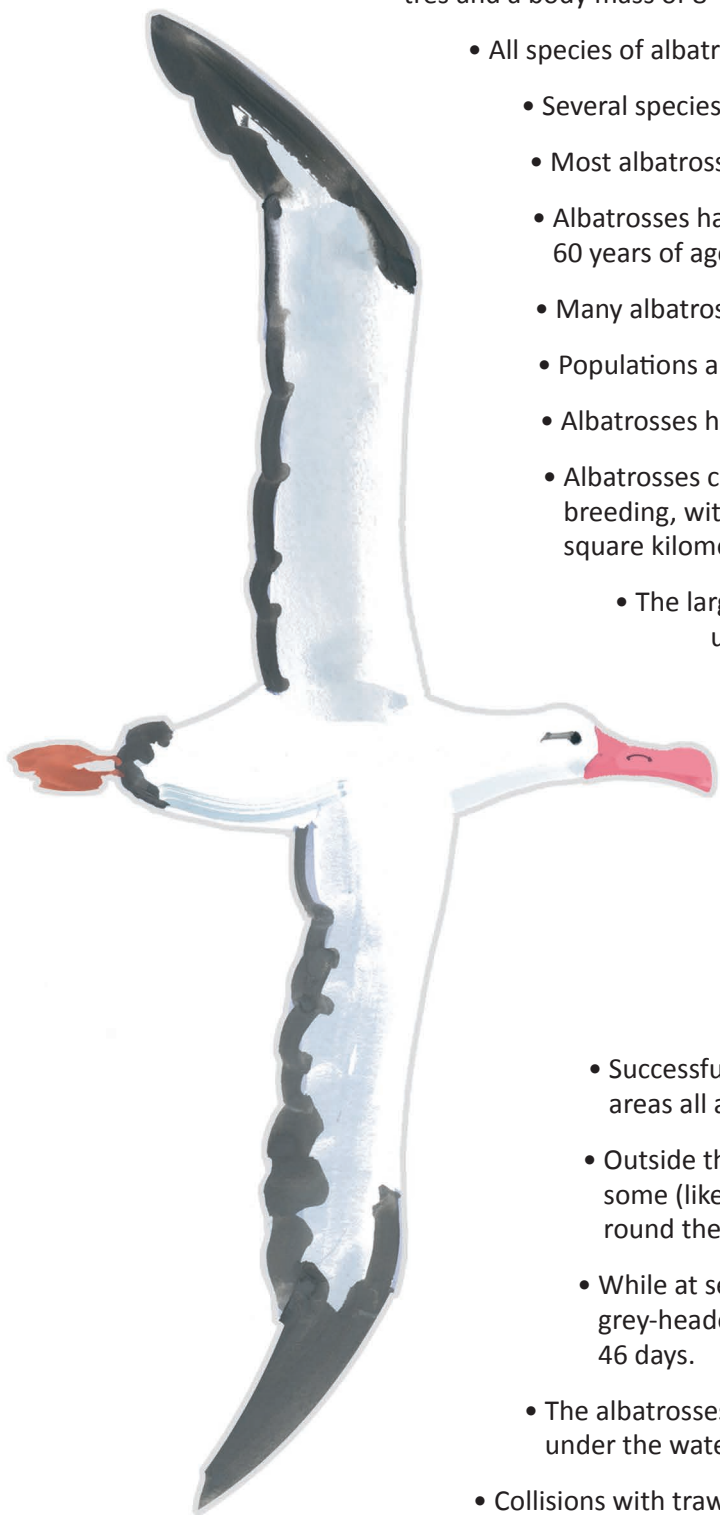
David Attenborough: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHCQYIX6Mf4>

www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/why-were-celebrating-first-ever-world-albatross-day

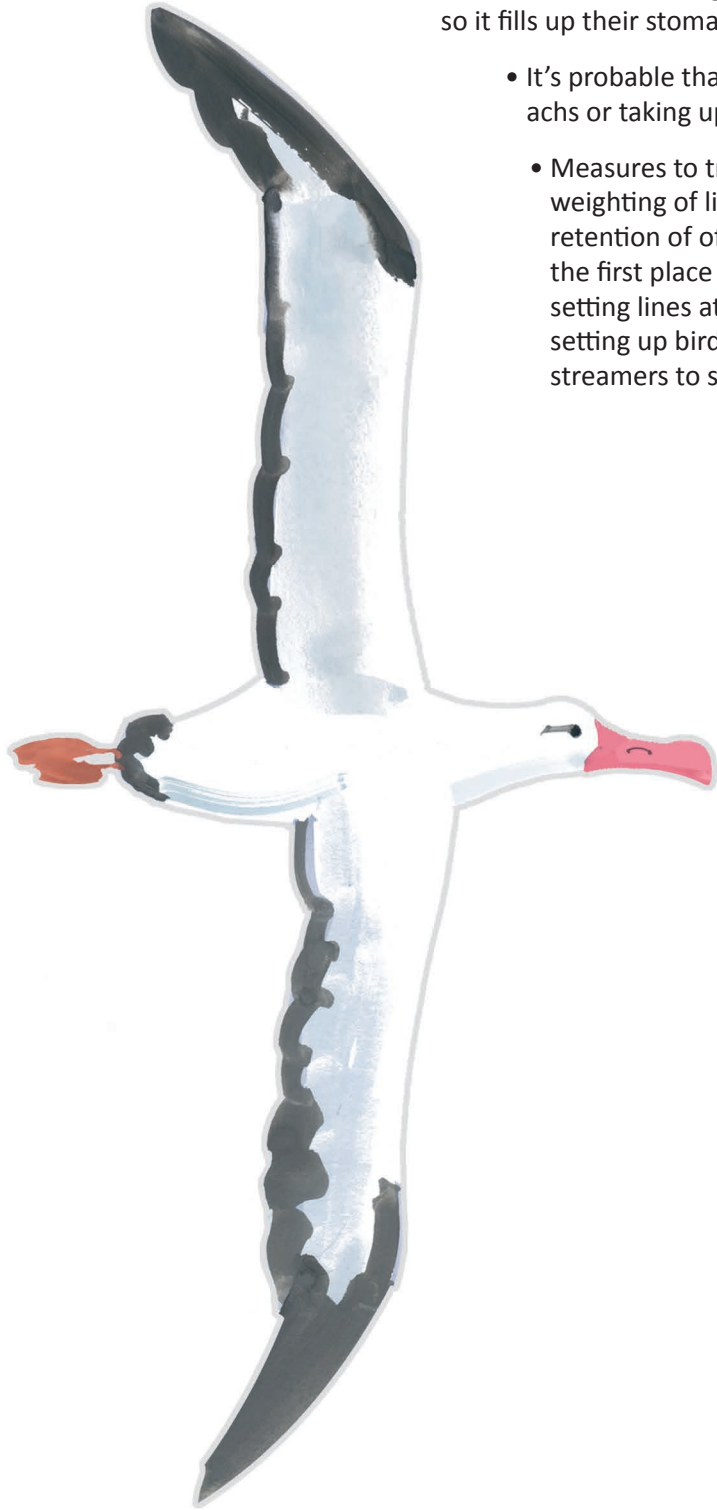
ALBATROSS FACTS

HEADING FOR EXTINCTION

- Fishing fleets, catching swordfish and tuna, are killing more than 100,000 albatrosses every year.
- The wandering albatross is the largest of seabirds, with a wing span reaching three metres and a body mass of 8–12kg.
- All species of albatross lay a single egg.
 - Several species breed only every second year.
 - Most albatrosses cannot breed until they are 10 years old.
 - Albatrosses have very long lifespans, with some individuals living to over 60 years of age.
 - Many albatrosses are now being killed off before they are 30 years old.
 - Populations are in rapid decline.
 - Albatrosses have one of the lowest reproductive rates of any bird.
 - Albatrosses cover huge distances when foraging for food, even during breeding, with the foraging ranges of most species covering thousands of square kilometres of ocean.
- The largest of albatrosses, the wandering albatross (*Diomedea exulans*), ranges from sub-tropical to Antarctic waters on trips covering up to 10,000km in 10–20 days.
- The wandering albatross arrives on land in November to breed in loose colonies on flat grasslands, giving plenty of room for spectacular mating displays.
- The wandering albatross lays eggs in December.
- Wandering albatross chicks hatch in April and are reared throughout the winter (on a diet of fish and squid and carrion) fledging in November and December.
- Successful parent albatrosses take a year off, migrating to feeding areas all around the Southern Ocean.
- Outside the breeding season, most species migrate long distances, some (like wandering and grey-headed albatrosses) travelling right round the Southern Ocean.
- While at sea, birds can travel 1,000km in a single day, with one grey-headed albatross recorded as circumnavigating Antarctica in just 46 days.
- The albatrosses try to eat the bait set by tuna long-liners and get dragged under the water and are drowned.
- Collisions with trawl net cables are an additional, and potentially worse, cause of mortality for the albatross.
- Much of the damage is caused by illegal fishing, which accounts for many thousands of albatross deaths each year.



- The division of the sea is purely political, and only through international cooperation can we achieve success in albatross conservation.
- Many birds accidentally eat plastic and other marine debris floating in the ocean, mistaking it for food.
- Albatrosses catch fish, squid and other seafood by skimming the surface of the water with their beak. Along the way, they accidentally pick up a lot of floating plastic, which they then feed to their chicks.
- Adult albatrosses can regurgitate plastic they've swallowed, but chicks are unable to, so it fills up their stomachs.
- It's probable that plastic injures or kills the birds by cutting their stomachs or taking up space, making them feel "full" when they are starving.
- Measures to try and reduce the number of albatross deaths include:
 - weighting of lines so they sink quickly
 - retention of offal on board so that birds are not enticed to the vessel in the first place
 - setting lines at night
 - setting up bird-scaring or 'tori' lines — made up of brightly-coloured streamers to startle seabirds



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