

Celebrating Feathered Fathers

Suspended in the rafters at the Seymour Marine Discovery Center is a **Laysan albatross**, *Phoebastria immutabilis* (pictured to the right). Laysan albatrosses are some of the most **responsible feathery fathers** in the animal kingdom! In the following two activities, color albatross art and read how albatross fathers survive at sea and care for their chick. Next, solve an albatross-inspired word scramble.



*Hint: Keep an eye out for the **bold** vocabulary words during activity #1!*

ACTIVITY #1: ALBATROSS ART AND READING

Soar into the wonderful world of albatross parenthood, and color the beautiful coloring sheets provided by artist and author, Caren Loebel-Fried. Download three coloring sheets [on our website](#), and find more from Caren at carenloebelfried.com. Read to learn more about what is happening in each coloring sheet.

Life at sea

The **Laysan albatross** is soaring over the ocean in the coloring sheet! Laysans spend 95 percent of their lives over the open ocean.

Both males and females look similar, but males are slightly larger.



This art is from the book, A Parent's Day for an Albatross, by Caren Loebel-Fried. Published by Correll Lab Publishing Group. Art ©Caren Loebel-Fried

Breeding

Laysan albatrosses will return to the **breeding ground** where they were born once they are 3-4 years old to find a mate, but will not breed until they are 9-10 years old.

The breeding ground for more than 70 percent of the world's Laysan albatross population is in a large colony on **Midway Atoll**, a small island in the North Pacific Ocean.

The coloring page of the two albatrosses shows the elaborate dance they perform at their breeding ground to court each other. The dance is full of bows, head shakes, and beak touches. Watch a video of it [here](#).

After a pair courts each other, they will mate for life. This is known as **monogamy**.



This art is from the book, *A Perfect Day for an Albatross*, by Carey Lockel Fried. Published by Coriell Lab Publishing Group. Art © Carey Lockel Fried.

Fatherhood

A mated pair will lay a single egg each year.

Both the mother and father play an equal role in raising and feeding their chick. The mother and father take turns sitting on their egg in their nest in shifts, switching places around fivetimes a day. They do this to **incubate** the egg. Incubating keeps the egg warm so it will hatch. The egg incubates for approximately 65 days.

Once the chick hatches, both parents will take long trips to the ocean to bring back food for their chick.



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Food includes fish, **squid**, and crustaceans such as crabs and shrimp. Squid is a favorite food item, and the albatross in the coloring sheet is hunting a squid.

Special thanks to Caren Loebel-Fried who graciously agreed to have three albatross coloring sheets available for free download exclusively on the Seymour Center's website. Find more from Caren at carenloebelfried.com.

ACTIVITY #2: WORD SCRAMBLE

After coloring the albatross art and reading more about these incredible feathered fathers, use the bold vocabulary words to complete the word scramble! Answers are provided on page 4.

1. **eaucibnt** _____
2. **yimdaw tlaol** _____
3. **saylan srtabasol** _____
4. **ooymangm** _____
5. **isduq** _____
6. **dribegen drogun** _____

Answer Key:

1. Incubate
2. Midway Atoll
3. Laysan albatross
4. Monogamy
5. Squid
6. Breeding ground

Sources:

Laysan Albatross

<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/laysan-albatross>

Laysan Albatross - Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge and Battle of Midway National Memorial - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Midway_Atoll/wildlife_and_habitat/Laysan_Albatross.html

Paternal but not maternal age influences early-life performance of offspring in a long-lived seabird

Fay et al. - Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences - 2016

Coloring pages - Caren Loebel-Fried, carenloebelfried.com