Sooty Shearwater
*Puffinus griseus*

**Conservation Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G Rank: G5</td>
<td>USFWS/NOAA:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Rank: S5N</td>
<td>SOA:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Rank**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status:</td>
<td>-20 to 20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological:</td>
<td>-50 to 50</td>
<td>-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
<td>-40 to 40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Higher numerical scores denote greater concern**

**Status** - variables measure the trend in a taxon’s population status or distribution. Higher status scores denote taxa with known declining trends. Status scores range from -20 (increasing) to 20 (decreasing).

**Population Trend (-10 to 10)**

Sooty Shearwaters have shown signs of a recent decline in other places, such as a 37% decrease in the number of burrows on the Northeast Island of the Snare Island group in New Zealand, a decrease on the New Zealand mainland, with some smaller colonies becoming extinct, and a 90% decline in abundance during pelagic surveys off the coast of California (USFWS 2006a).

**Distribution Trend (-10 to 10)**

Unknown.

**Biological** - variables measure aspects of a taxon’s distribution, abundance and life history. Higher biological scores suggest greater vulnerability to extirpation. Biological scores range from -50 (least vulnerable) to 50 (most vulnerable).

**Population Size (-10 to 10)**

Population size unknown, but abundant.

**Range Size (-10 to 10)**

Nonbreeding resident in Alaska during the summer primarily over the continental shelf of the Gulf of Alaska, and to a lesser extent over the outer shelf of the Bering Sea (USFWS 2006a). >400,000 square kilometers.

**Population Concentration (-10 to 10)**

Reproductive Potential

**Age of First Reproduction (-5 to 5)**

Age of first reproduction 6 years (Richdale 1963).

**Number of Young (-5 to 5)**

Clutch size 1 egg (NatureServe 2007b).
Ecological Specialization

**Dietary (-5 to 5)**

Feed on fishes, squids, crustaceans, and offal thrown overboard from ships (NatureServe 2007b).

**Habitat (-5 to 5)**

In Alaska, Sooty Shearwaters concentrate primarily over the continental shelf of the Gulf of Alaska and to a lesser extent over the outer shelf of the Bering Sea (USFWS 2006a).

Biomarker Total: -5

**Action** - variables measure current state of knowledge or extent of conservation efforts directed toward a given taxon. Higher action scores denote greater information needs due to lack of knowledge or conservation action. Action scores range from -40 (lower needs) to 40 (greater needs).

**Management Needs (-10 to 10)**

Protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA 1918).

Score: 2

**Monitoring Needs (-10 to 10)**

One of the recommended management actions of USFWS (2006a) is to monitor population trends.

Score: 10

**Research Needs (-10 to 10)**

Sooty Shearwaters move large distances throughout the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, making them vulnerable to incidental bycatch by fisheries. This species is slow to mature and only produces 1 chick per year, so bycatch can easily cause a decline if mortality from it exceeds the rate of reproduction. In Alaska, between 1993-2003, 445 shearwaters (Sooty and Short-tailed) were taken annually in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands demersal groundfish longline fisheries. In the Gulf of Alaska, an estimated 21 shearwaters were taken annually. Trawl fisheries comprise a large portion of the total shearwater bycatch, between <100-1,169 annually. Continued research and development of mitigation measures to prevent fisheries bycatch is needed. Climate change is also likely impacting Sooty Shearwaters, as their population has declined while sea water temperatures have risen. On breeding grounds, harvest of chicks and predation are known sources of mortality (USFWS 2006a).

Score: -10

**Survey Needs (-10 to 10)**

Distribution known from boat based surveys and occurrences from North Pacific pelagic seabird database (USFWS 2006a). Several Sooty Shearwaters were tracked during their migration to non-breeding areas, including Alaska (Shaffer et al. 2006).

Score: 2

Action Total: 4

Supplemental Information - variables do not receive numerical scores. Instead, they are used to sort taxa to answer specific biological or managerial questions.

- **Harvest:** None or Prohibited
- **Seasonal Occurrence:** Nonbreeding
- **Taxonomic Significance:** Monotypic species
- **% Global Range in Alaska:** <10%
- **% Global Population in Alaska:** <25%
- **Peripheral:** No

Range Map

No range map available
References


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