

The return of the Black Browed Albatross to RSPB Bempton Cliffs

Thought to be the only albatross of its kind in the Northern Hemisphere a **Black Browed Albatross** has returned to **RSPB Bempton Cliffs** almost exactly a year after it was last seen there in 2020.

This magnificent long distance traveller with a **wingspan of about 8 feet** has been domicile in the **Baltic Seas** around **Denmark** and **Germany** since 2014 after being blown off course from the South Atlantic oceans and has remained ever since, making occasional forays across the North Sea to Bempton. It was first spotted here in 2017 and was recently thought to have perished after it was set upon by a flock of Sea Eagles off the Danish coast last year. No wonder that some of the hundreds of birdwatchers that have flocked to **RSPB Bempton Cliffs** were reputedly brought to tears by this birds reappearance - and it's some entertainer; although often sat on the sea (as it was during the entire 2 - 3 hrs I was there), the bird's true glory is revealed when it takes to the air and then, well - what a bird!



Black Browed Albatross, Bempton Cliffs, 29/06/21. Tony Dixon

As you might expect with such a rarity (only around 30 records in the UK), the bird has attracted large crowds of people already and, if it sticks around, many more will want to see what is probably a 'once in a lifetime' sighting of an albatross in UK waters. Nobody really knows why this individual travels across the sea to Bempton - looking for a mate perhaps, or trying to make it back down to the southern hemisphere? Whatever the reason it's a magnificent bird and welcome on the **Yorkshire coast** anytime!



Birders waiting for the Albatross to fly, Bempton Cliffs, 29/06/21



Black Browed Albatross, Bempton Cliffs, 29/06/21. Paul Coombes

Albatrosses rarely flap their wings, relying more on their aerodynamic 'glider' like wings to carry them along with the prevailing winds. It's highly unlikely that this bird will ever make it back down to the southern oceans because of the effort it would take to fly against the prevailing winds and flap across the windless equatorial regions. Sadly our bird is almost certainly destined to remain a singleton in foreign climes, with only **Gannets** anything close to same size companions! So for now and perhaps for evermore its cruising free and single.



Black Browed Albatross, Bempton Cliffs, 29/06/21. Owen Beaumont.

Acknowledgements

Tony Dixon, Owen Beaumont and Paul Coombes - for their superb **Black Browed Albatross** images.

Find out more

[Black Browed Albatross info \(Falklands Conservation\)](#)

[RSPB Bempton Cliffs visitor information](#)

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Comments

Stuart Allford

Sunday 26th June 2022 @ 21:08

21/6/22 this morning visited Benton to try to see this magnificent but Albert had just returned from the Shetland Isles so was happy sitting on the cliff edge and was too far away to view so bit disappointed. Hopefully another time !!

Nigel Humphries

Sunday 26th June 2022 @ 21:08

I met one on Nightingale Island in 1978 with a ring and it was 38 years old. We lived on TDC for four years and had penguins in our garden.

John Harker

Thursday 4th August 2022 @ 13:20


My wife and I saw the albatross yesterday July 14th from the Staple Neuk viewing platform, along with quite a lot of others. It's been there since June 27th apparently. A Gannet seems a big bird until you see Albie up close.

June Briggs

Wednesday 20th September 2023 @ 12:55

Albie has just flown over our cruise ship! I was mesmerised with binoculars so no pic?. Amazing wonderful bird. We are currently 100 nautical miles off Yorkshire coast (14/5/23)

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