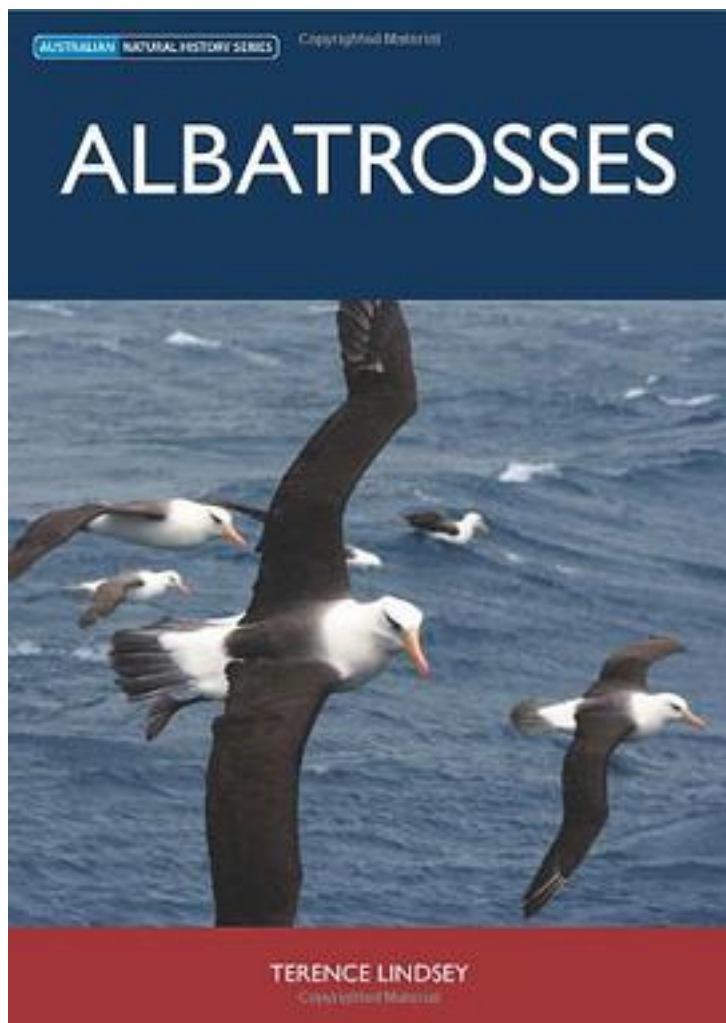


Albatrosses



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- Illustrated and accessible guide to this unique aviatorDespite their iconic cultural

status, real albatrosses are largely confined to the region referred to by early mariners as the "Roaring Forties" and the "Furious Fifties," otherwise known as the Southern Ocean. The single most distinctive characteristic of these birds is that they ride storms. Aside from a few close relatives among the petrels and shearwaters, they are the only animals (of any kind) that do this. They don't evade storms, or flee them, they climb aboard and ride them. The meteorology of the Southern Ocean is so extreme that the region might reasonably be viewed as essentially one enormous, endless storm. For any non-aquatic animal, this characteristic makes the Southern Ocean nearly as inhospitable as the polar wastes or the most extreme of deserts. To all but the albatross, that is. This work outlines the life histories of these spectacular birds, and explores some of the main strategies and tactics that have evolved to enable them to achieve mastery of one of the most hostile regions on the planet.

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