



## **SOME LONGTAIL FACTS**

The proper name for a Longtail is White-tailed Tropicbird, *Phaethon lepturus*.

Longtails are found within the tropics in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Bermuda is their most northerly breeding location.

The Bermuda population of Longtails, estimated at 2,000 to 3,000 breeding birds, is the largest in the Atlantic, making it vitally important for the survival of the species.

Longtails are Bermuda's traditional harbingers of spring, returning to the island in late February or early March to breed.

Longtails perform an elaborate aerial courtship in the summer months with the male and female birds flying together and touching their tails.

Longtails nest in cliff holes and crevices. They lay a single egg in the spring, which hatches in early summer.

The adult birds will stay with the chick overnight, but return to sea in the afternoons to feed on squid and ocean fish, bringing back food for the baby.

The young birds are usually ready to leave the nest in August, flying out to sea.

From September through to March, outside breeding season, Bermuda's Longtails spend their time on the ocean, ranging in the Sargasso Sea.

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