Pacific Seabird Group

BULLETIN

Volume 17 Number 2 1990

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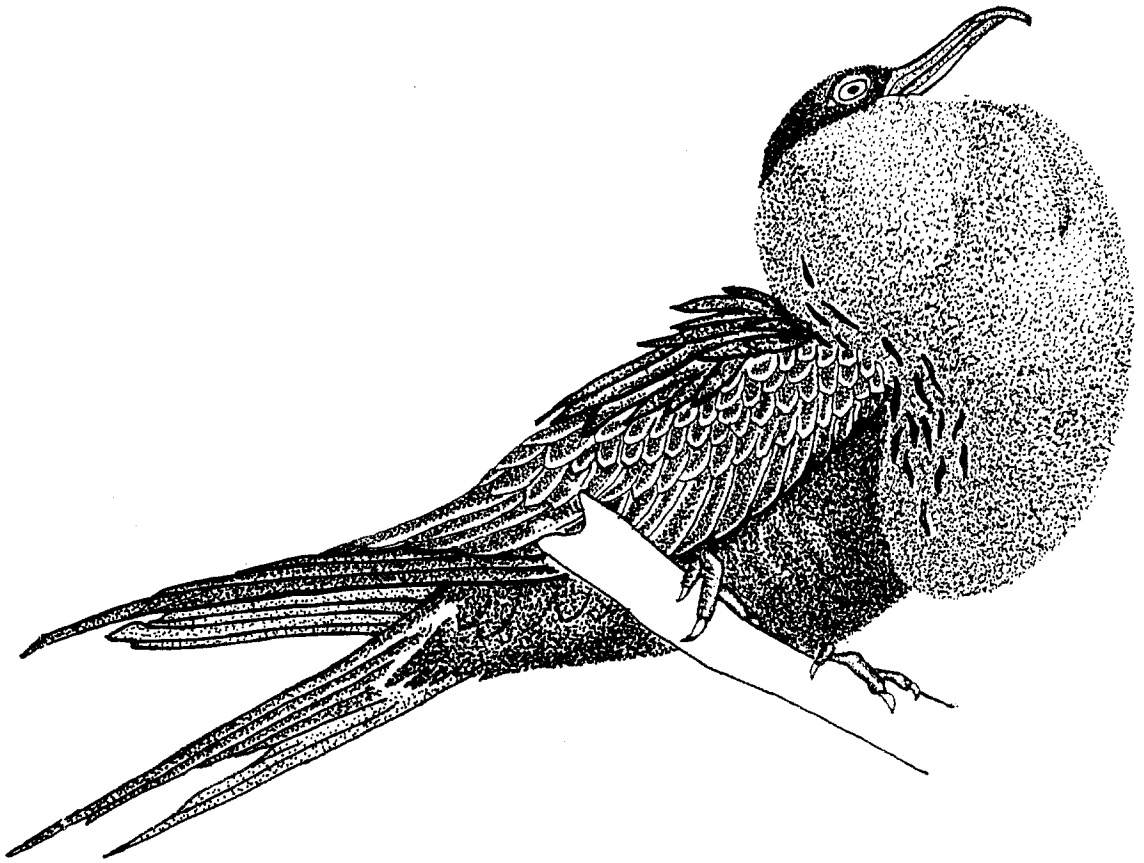


THE CHAIR'S PAGE

Greetings!

As Fall approaches, seabirds leave their breeding sites, and now it's time to reflect on how the summer went. It went fast for me, and there is much news to report as Chairman.

The number of organizations devoted to seabirds will increase by two next year. The Nederlandse Zeevogel Groep (Dutch Seabird Group will officially start 1 January 1991. This multidisciplinary group will replace several other associations including the Dutch Seawatching Club and the Dutch Beached Bird Survey and be a section of the Netherlands Ornithologists' Union. the Dutch Seabird Group will publish the existing magazine *Sula*, and organize symposia and workshops to promote public awareness and stimulate interest. The Netherlands has always been a strong center for marine bird research and it is quite fitting that there is now a single organization for seabird biologists.

The Working Group in Seabirds of the USSR Ornithological Society will reorganize to become the USSR Seabird Group. the Soviet Union has the largest coastline of any country and some of the largest seabird colonies in the world. There is a hardy band of intrepid ornithologists in the Soviet Union studying all aspects of seabird biology. Perhaps because of the vast distances and sheer numbers involved, some of the most influential studies on broad-scale distributions and colony interactions in seabirds have been by Soviet ornithologists (including L. P. Belopolskii, V. A. Shuntov, L. S. Uspenskii). the USSR Seabird Group plans to publish an Annual Bulletin son, and in the meantime will issue a yearly summary of current research. The table of contents of this first issue follows.

I am pleased to welcome these two groups and all of their members as the newest organizations concentrating on seabirds. As the impact of human activities on the marine environment increases, it is clear that more organizations concerned with the conservation and research of seabirds are needed. Our individual effectiveness is enhanced as our numbers increase.

Keeping track of all our numbers, however, is somewhat difficult. the creation of two new Seabird Groups and the increased need for communication among us means that it is time to begin work on a new Directory of Seabird Biologists. The Pacific Seabird Group was instrumental in publishing the first edition and we will discuss updating the directory at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

The Pacific Seabird Group has reached the point I think where we might benefit from sage and informed counsel on what objectives we should attain, how we go about doing them, and in what ways we can strengthen our traditional interests in conservation, education, and research. Since I am lacking in both of these attributes I have asked two of our most experienced members, Craig Harrison and Palmer Sekora, to wrestle with these issues and present some ideas on the state of PSG at our next Annual Meeting.

Another important issue for PSG to consider is the proposal to enter in joint publication of a journal with the Colonial Waterbird Society (CWBS). Last year our Executive Council discussed this proposal and directed me as Chair

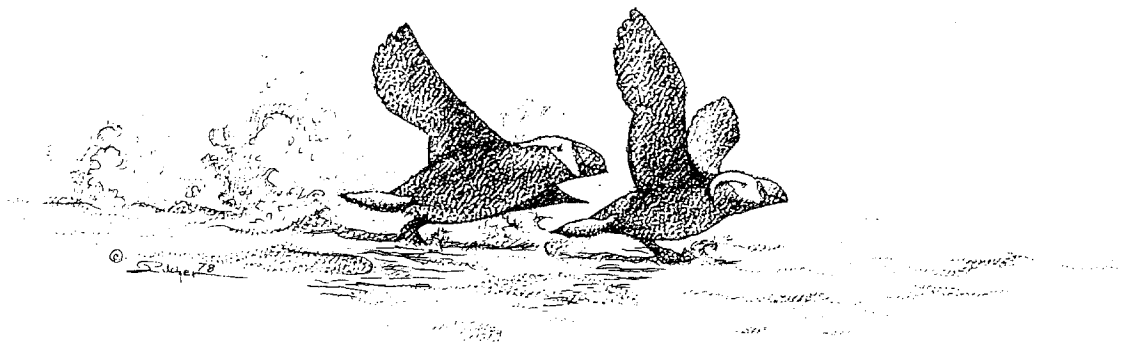
to present our views to the CWBS and explore issues of mutual concern. I did so, with the valuable assistance of C. J. Ralph, at the CWBS Annual Meeting this august. In its simplest form, what is proposed is that PSG and CWBS jointly take over publication of the scientific journal now known as Colonial Waterbirds. This is a well-respected scientific journal of international scope that encompasses research on seabirds as well as waders and shorebirds. the Executive Councils of both societies feel that the prestige and importance of this journal will only increase with joint publication. It is anticipated that this joint publication would quickly become the premier scientific journal for marine and freshwater ornithology. PSG will benefit from sponsorship of such a journal and further fulfill one of our objectives o increasing knowledge about seabirds.

As you can see from the financial summary that follows, entering into joint publication will make substantial financial demands upon the Pacific Seabird Group. a rough estimate of costs indicates that expenses related to publication will necessitate an increase in dues, probably to $25 per year, if PSG is to continue our present activities. The consequences of jointly publishing a scientific journal are both positive and negative and it is up to the membership and the Executive Council to decide our course of action.

I and the other members of the Executive Council with to know your feelings about joint publication now that we have more information. I would like each of you to fill out the straw ballot (among the green center pages) and send it on to me. Your feedback will enable the Executive Council to propose a course of action on joint publication which you will vote n at the Business Meeting at our upcoming Annual Meeting in Monterey.

Sometimes by accident and sometimes by design, over the years we have established a tradition of meeting in the Monterey areas every three years or s. Our next Annual Meeting will be held at the Monterey Conference Center and will run from January 23-26, 1991. Nancy Naslund has shouldered the burden of chairing the Local Committee and Malcolm Coulter will be in charge of the Scientific Program. Meeting announcement and a Call for Papers should be mailed out in a few weeks. I hope to see you there.

Douglas Siegel-Causey



PROPOSAL OF JOINT PUBLICATION OF A JOURNAL BETWEEN THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP AND THE COLONIAL WATERBIRD SOCIETY

The Executive Council of the Colonial Waterbird Society (CWBS) has agreed in principle to the concept of join publication of a Journal with the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG). As directed by the PSG, we presented those issues and concerns raised during our last council meeting (22-25 February, 1990), particularly those relating to: (1) the organization of an Editorial Board; (2) the nature of the financial responsibility of each organization; (3) the name of the proposed publication. After much discussion and negotiation, the CWBS agreed to the following concerning joint publication of a Journal.

A. Composition of the Editorial Board.

The Editorial Board shall consist of not more than three (3) representatives from each organization with each organization have one vote; the Editor is an *ex officio* member without vote. Each organization will devise a method to authorize its representatives to the Editorial Board. the duties of the Editorial Board are:

1. to hire and fire the Editor;
2. to prepare a budget for publication of the Journal in subsequent year(s); and
3. in consultation with the Editor, determine editorial policies.

B. Financial Responsibility

1. The Editorial Board shall assess each organization a proportional share of the budget for publication of the Journal based *pro rata* on the number mailed to the members of each society. the following exceptions would apply:

a. Members belonging to both organizations will receive only once copy of the Journal; membership in the other organization will be available to any member of either organization at a reduced rate.

b. Life members belonging to both organizations will receive only one copy of the Journal.

c. Members of either organization may elect not to receive a copy of the Journal, but will still pay full dues; journal costs of that person will not be charged to their organization.

2. Under the agreement, each organization shall be responsible for all debts incurred in publication of the Journal based on the number mailed to the members o each organization.

C. Name of the jointly published Journal.

The CWBS proposes the following six names without reservations; the PSG should choose one of these names and the name will e used for the proposed Journal. Other names would need to be approved by the CWBS. Included below are the names and the number of votes for best choice that each received in a straw vote taken at the CWBS Annual Meeting, St. John's Newfoundland.

1. Colonial Waterbirds and Seabirds (7)
2. Colonial Waterbird and Seabird Journal (9)
3. Marine and Freshwater Ornitholoy (9)
4. Marine and Colonial Waterbirds (5)
5. Journal of Marine and Freshwater Ornithology (5)
6. International Journal of Marine and Freshwater Ornithology (1)

D. Dissolution of agreement.

Should either of the organizations choose to sever the agreement to jointly publish a Journal, advance notice but be given 12 months prior to the effective date of dissolution. At the time of dissolution each organization shall be liable for all debts presently due based pro rata on the number of issues mailed to the members of the organization over the previous 12 months.

E. Surety bond.

The CWBS recommends that $5000 from each organization be placed in escrow for five years as a gesture of goodwill in the joint venture.

-- FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE JOINT VENTURE --

At present, the largest item in the PSG budget is publication of the Bulletin. The estimate of costs per member based n last year's expenses (printing + postage + other expenses) is $3800 / 400 members = $9.50 per member (see Exhibit 1). The added financial burden of joint publication ($9.50 per member) is not feasible without an increase in PSG dues. Se Exhibit w for a breakdown on costs under various situations of dues and total membership.

An increase of $5 in dues, with some cost savings in other areas, would allow us to provide a journal at about a break-even point. Raising dues $10 would provide a surplus of funds over present expenses in excess of $1000. A loss of members would not change this as expenses would be reduced roughly in proportion to loss of income for most items.

Exhibit 1. The financial consequences of joint publication of a journal with the CWBS is estimated t cost PSG an additional $9.50 per PSG member. The method used to estimate this projection are as follows.

Item	At present[1]	Joint[2]	Projected[3]
Printing	$ 7900	$ 10000	$ 12000
Postage	1000	1600	2400
Editorial Expenses	1000	1000[4]	1500
Editorial Honorarium	0	1500	1500
Subscription service	0	300	500
Newsletter[5]	200	400	400
TOTAL costs	$ 10100	$ 14800	$ 18800
Institution subscriptions	3250	6000	6000
Page charges	2550	2500	3750
Back Issues[6]	300	300	500
TOTAL income	$ 6100	$ 8800	$ 10250
Bottom Line	$ 4000	$ 6000	$ 8550
Cost per member	~$ 12.00	~$ 9.50	~$ 13.50

1. CWBS: 330 members; 550 copies @ 230 pp per year.
2. CWBS + PSG: 630 members; 950 copies @ 230 pp per year.
3. CWBS + PSG: 630 members; 950 copies @ 300 pp per year.
4. Estimated at $ 4.00 per page (230 pp @ $4.00 = ~$1000).
5. Costs of distributing newsletter (+ bulletin in joint publication) printed and sent to institutional subscribers.
6. Proceeds of sale of back issues published before joint publication remain with CWBS.

Exhibit 2. Estimated budget for PSG before and after joint publication with CWBS. The upper table assumes no drop in membership after increase in dues. the lower able assumes approx. 50 members resign for every $ 5 increase in dues.

Membership at 400

	-- DUES --		
	$15	$20	$25
Income from dues	$ 6000	$ 8000	$ 10000
Other income	1500	1500	1500
TOTAL income	$ 7500	$ 9500	$ 10500
Bulletin	3800	3800	3800
Other expenses	2500	2500	2500
Journal	0	3800	3800
TOTAL expenses	$ 6300	$ 10100	$ 10100
BALANCE	**+ $ 1200**	**- $ 600**	**+ $ 400**

Membership at 350/300

	DUES	
	$20 (350 members)	$25 (300 members)
Income from dues	$ 7000	$ 7500
Other income	1500	1500
TOTAL income	$ 8500	$ 9000
Bulletin	3300	2850
Other expenses	2500	2500
Journal	3300	2850
TOTAL expenses	$ 9100	$ 8200
BALANCE	**- $ 600**	**+ $ 800**

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

As the new chair of the elections committee, and, in fact, as the entire elections committee, I wish to thank George Divoky and Lora Leschner for preparing and mailing the ballots this year. Congratulations to the following new officers and regional representatives.

Chair-elect	Malcolm Coulter
Secretary	Beth Flint
Treasurer	Ellen Chu

Regional Representatives for 1990 through 1991

Central California	Jean Takekawa
Southern California	Donna Brewer
Great Lakes	James Ludwig
Inland	James Lovvorn
Northeast	Mark Tasker
Southeast	Roger Clapp

We are in fact almost one year behind in elections. We hope to hold the elections for the 1991 chair-elect and the regional representatives for Alaska, British Columbia/Washington, Mexico/Latin America, Northern California/Oregon, and the Pacific in December. If you are interested in one of these positions or know of someone who might wish to serve, please complete the appropriate form enclosed in this bulletin (the green center sheets).

-- Doug Forsell

1990 ANNUAL MEETING

The Pacific Seabird Group will hold its 1990 Annual Meeting at the Monterey Conference Center, Monterey, California, from January 23-26, 1991. Nancy Naslund [Long Marine Laboratory, 100 Shaffer Rd. Santa Cruz, CA 95060, phone (408) 459-2883 or 4514 (wk), (408) 335-4121 (h)] will chair the Local Committee. You should already have received additional information concerning registration, scientific program, accommodations, etc. If you have not received this, please contact Malcolm Coulter, SREL, Drawer E, Aiken, SC 29802, phone (803) 648-8365.

STATEMENT OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP REGARDING THE MARBLED MURRELET

In 1989 the Marbled Murrelet was given Category II status under the Endangered Species Act. This means that further information must be gathered before an official decision can be reached to list the species as threatened or endangered.

There is evidence of a decline in murrelet numbers along the coasts of California, Oregon and Washington. In Alaska, where 95% of the U.S. population breeds, there are data for areas in southcentral Alaska which indicates a decline there as well. There is no available data for southeast Alaska, which is believed to be the species' stronghold.

Throughout most of its range, this seabird depends on old-growth coniferous forests for nesting. Unlike most seabirds, the nesting habitat of the marbled murrelet is both accessible and commercially valuable. this small alcid is subject to additional disturbance and direct mortality in its nearshore feeding grounds from gill-net fishing and mariculture. It is extremely vulnerable to oil spills.

To date, little is known about the marbled murrelet's behavior, habitat requirements for nesting, seasonal distribution patterns or abundance. This information is necessary before a decision can be made on its status as threatened or endangered, and to eventually incorporate this knowledge into resource management decisions.

The Pacific Seabird Group, a professional organization whose members specialize in seabird research, has expressed concern for the marbled murrelet in past statements. We are pleased with the federal designation of Category II status for the marbled murrelet and with to reaffirm our position. The Pacific Seabird Group encourages the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which will be implementing the first steps of the ENdangered Species Act, to expand their research efforts and include the marbled murrelet in funding allocations for research and monitoring.

-- Lora Leschner
PSG Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee

EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS AND BACK ISSUES

PSG has an agreement to exchange publication with several other organizations around the world, primarily other seabird groups. In cooperation with Lloyd Kiff of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, these publication will now be permanently housed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. Back issues of our own Bulletin will also be stored at the museum. Altogether the museum is keeping some 400 journals in stock. Members of PSG may, at no charge, request photocopies of articles from the more obscure of these publication (you're on your own for *Auk*, *Condor*, etc.)

For photocopies, write directly to Lloyd Kiff, Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 1100 Glendon Ave., Los Angeles, California 90024.

For back issues of the *PSG Bulletin*, write to the PSG Treasurer: include $2.50 (for vols. 1-8, 1974-1981) or $5.00 (vol. 9 on) with your request.

Groups and publications with which PSG has an exchange agreement (not all have formal publications) are as follows:

Club van Zeetrekwaarnemers, Netherlands -- *Sula*
Colorado Field Ornithologist
Ecology Center, Berkeley
Group d'Interet Scientifique Oiseaux Marins, France
Group Iberico de Aves Marinas, Spain
Medmarvis (Mediterranean Marine Bird Association), France
Museo de Zoologia da UNISINOS, Brazil -- *Atoba*
Royal Naval Birdwatching Society, UK -- *The Sea Swallow*
Scandinavian Seabird Group, Sweden -- *Pelagicus*
Sri Lanka Seabird Group -- *Seabird Watch*
Germany -- *Seevogel*
Canada -- *Wildlife Veterinary Report*

-- Ellen Chu

REGIONAL REPORTS

ALASKA, JOEL HUBBARD

Following a year in which research schedules of many seabird investigators were redirected by the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound, a more typical suite of field projects is underway throughout Alaska this summer. Personnel from several units of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Research Center (AFWRC), the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (AMNWR), and the Migratory Bird Management unit (MBM), as well as the University of Alaska (UAF), University of Washington (UW), and private consulting companies.

Colony Studies

Monitoring of murre and kittiwake populations and productivity, using standardized plot counts, are continuing at Cape Thompson (Chukchi Sea), Bluff (Norton Sound) and Cape Peirce (Bristol Bay). These studies, jointly funded by the USFWS and Minerals Management Service, are being coordinated by Vivian Mendenhall (MBM) with Brian Sharp (MBM), Ed Murphy (UAF) and Lisa Haggblom (Togiak NWR) in charge of the field camps. Likewise, Art Sowls (AMNWR) set up this year's monitoring effort in the Pribilof Islands with Sue Schulmeister and Laurie Fairchild in charge of field studies on the two islands.

Vern Byrd (AMNWR) is in charge of several studies, involving numerous FWS personnel and volunteers, covering the length of the Aleutian Islands: murre and kittiwake populations and reproductive success are being monitored on Agattu, Buldir and Aiktak Islands; tufted puffin nesting density (as well as reproductive success, chick growth and food habits) is being examined on Agattu, Buldir, Adak and Aiktak Islands to determine the response of this species to decreased net mortality following cessation of drift net fisheries in the western Aleutians; following the response of seabirds to the removal of introduced arctic fox from Nizki/Alaid Island by monitoring breeding populations; and monitoring reproductive success of crested, least and whiskered auklets on Buldir Island and examining the adequacy of plankton resources in this area in comparison to other portions of the marine food web.
Dave Irons (MBM) is continuing his study of the effect of growth rates, foraging behavior, predation and siblicide on kittiwake population size and reproductive success in Prince William Sound. Scott Hatch (AFWRC), with Brian Fadely and Bay Roberts, is in the final year of a study examining kittiwake weight changes during the breeding season and winter survival of color-banded individuals on Middleton Island (Gulf of Alaska). They also are monitoring populations and food habits of cormorants gulls and murres. George Divoky (NOAA) is making his annual visit to Cooper Island (Beaufort) to continue long-term studies on black guillemots.

Coastal and Other Studies

Steve Johnson (LGL Ltd.) is establishing a monitoring protocol for Beaufort Sea waterfowl using aerial surveys; Steve also is tracking marine bird use of Kasegaluk Lagoon (Chukchi Sea) by aerial survey. Both studies are funded by MMS. John Piatt (AFWRC) is performing hydroacoustic surveys to determine

seabird prey densities in the Shumagin Islands (Alaska Peninsula); he also is monitoring populations of several species there and documenting the occurrence of ingested plastics in seabirds. John, Scott Hatch, Pat Gould, Ed Bailey and Kent Wohl (FWS) are accompanying Alexandr Kondrat'ev, Alexandr Kitaisky, Aleksy Pinchuk and Victor Zubakin of the USSR Academy of Sciences on the M/V TIGLAX to investigate seabird distribution and abundance from Unalaska Island to the Semidi Islands where they will participate in population monitoring and fox eradication efforts.

Mike Nishimoto (AMNWR) will be monitoring seabird populations in Kachemak Bay, including at-sea counts of marbled and kittlitz's murrelets, as well as looking for seabird colonies in unsurveyed portions of the north Kodiak Island area. Deborah Rudis and Andrew Grossman (FWS, Juneau) are examining marbled murrelet distribution in Gastineau Channel and attempting to detect upland use by nesting individuals. Ed Bailey (AMNWR) is continuing his intorduced fox eradication program in the Aleutians, working this summer on Carlisle Island. Kent Wohl, Pat Gould and Gerry Sanger (FWS, Anchorage) are training observers and negotiating their placement on ships to monitor seabird mortality in the high-seas squid driftnet fishery; Gerry also will be analyzing seabird stomach contents collected at several sites for plastic particles. Dave Ward and Dirk Derksen (AFWRC) will try to band as many as 8,000 black brant in Canada, Alaska and the Soviet Union; radio tags will be placed on some. Birds banded in these areas last year have been detected at Izembek Lagoon, the principal staging area for Alaskan birds. Bob Gill (AFWRC) is continuing studies of bristle-thighed curlew breeding distribution and habitat use on the Seward Peninsula. Brian MacCaffry (Yukon Delta NWR) is studying breeding biology and staging of this species on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta for the 5th season. Bob also is examining migratory chronology of bar-tailed godwits in cooperation with New Zealand investigators.

Art Sowls is working on refinements to the joint FWS/NOAA seabird colony catalog that was demonstrated at the Victoria meeting, enlarging the database and improving the program's manipulative capability. Vivian Mendenhall, Steve Klosiewski, Pat Gould and Doug Forsell are undertaking to resurrect the Alaskan pelagic seabird distribution database that had fallen into disrepair. Vivian Mendenhall and Kent Wohl are developing a seabird management plan for Alaska that identifies threats to seabird populations, such as oil spills and entanglement in fishing nets, and describes actions needed for better management such as improved basic data bases and monitoring programs. The plan probably will be released in late 1990 or 1991.

Oil Spill Related Studies

Dave Nysewander, Kent Wohl, Karen Laing and Lee Hotchkiss (FWS) are involved in a continuation of boat and aerial surveys and colony monitoring initiated last year following the Exxon Valdez spill. The surveys will span the area from Prince William Sound to Kodiak Island and Katmai National Park, and several colony areas in the sound, along the Kenai Peninsula, in the Barren Islands whose murre population probably was devastated by the spill, as well as colonies on the Alaska Peninsula and in the Semidi Islands. Lynn Denlinger (FWS) is conducting a drift experiment in an attempt to determine the track
taken by carcasses of birds oiled in the spill. Also in the sound, Kathy Kuletz (FWS) will be monitoring marbled murrelet and pigeon guillemot populations. Dee Boersma will return to monito seabird populations in the

Barren Islands. She and her crew plan to concentrate on fork-tailed storm-petrels and tufted puffins, analyzing stomach samples for hydrocarbons as when last there in 1984.

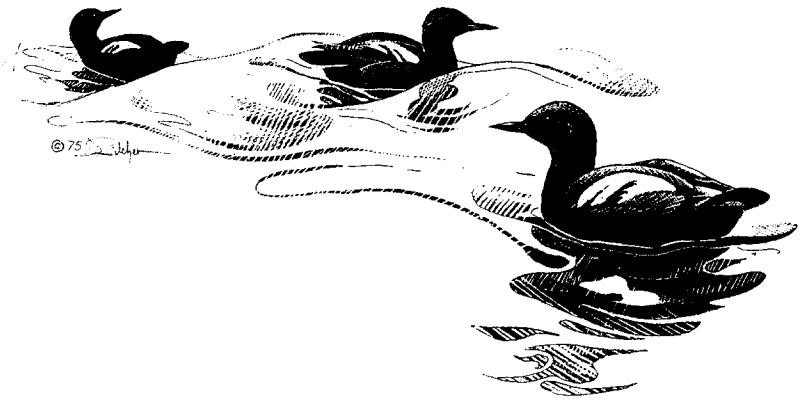
News

All those who are acquainted with Cal Lensink and his long service on behalf of Alaskan wildlife were extremely pleased to learn that he had been chosen to receive a Distinguished Service Award, the highest national honorary recognition given by the Department of Interior. Cal has always given freely of his time in order to enhance wildlife resources, most recently as an organizer of the bird and mammal receiving stations that were needed following the Exxon-Valdez spill. Fortunately, Cal has not really retired, continuing to contribute his insight and vast experience to project design and analysis of data. He deserves our sincere congratulations.

GREAT LAKES, JAMES P. LUDWIG

James Ludwig, Ecological Research Services. Long-term studies on the effects of toxic chemicals on Double-crested Cormorants, Herring Gulls and Caspian Terns will continue. Studies of the effects of these chemicals on the long-term reproductive success of these species will also continue

Ralph Morris, Brock University. Three programs will run during the summer of 1990 - two of these are graduate student thesis projects and will be conducted at our Port Colborne, Ontario study area on the north shore of Lake Erie. One is directed at sorting out the extent of investigator effect on the behavior of breeding Ring-billed Gulls. The other is a behavioral study of the feeding ecology of breeding Common Terns using radiotransmitter equipment. John Chardine and I will be continuing our long-term study of the breeding biology and behavior of Brown Noddies nesting on islands in the Culebra archipelago, east of Puerto Rico. By the end of this season, we will have close to 200 adults individually color-banded.



REPORT FROM THE MARBLED MURRELET TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Kim Nelson has volunteered to chair the Technical Committee. Kim has been an active member of the committee since its formation. She helped write the PSG Marbled Murrelet Inventory Manual, participated in the drafting of the Research Guidelines, and helped prepare position statements. She has been involved in all aspects of the committee's activities and played an important role in advising individuals and agencies on inventory techniques.

Kim's address is Oregon Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-3803, and her telephone number is (503) 754 - 4531.

Steve Speich is now employed by Dames and Moore in Tucson, Arizona. His active leadership on the committee will be missed. Steve was the driving force behind many activities including the Research Guidelines, the Bibliography, and information exchange between researchers. Steve plans to continue as a member of the Technical Committee, so PSG will continue to benefit from his many ideas.

VIDEO

A Video tape on Marbled Murrelets in flight can be purchased for $57.00 from Steve Manlow, 425 N. First St., Montesano, Washington 98563, (206) 249 - 5579 or 249 - 6330. This is an excellent training tool for people who will conduct forest inventories.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Marbled Murrelet Bibliography is available from Steve M. Speich in hard copy or on disk. If you want a copy on disk, send a 5.25" floppy and specify ASCII or Word Perfect. Steve's new address is Dames and Moore, 4400 E. Broadway, Suite 703, Tucscon, AZ 85711, and his phone is (602) 327 - 6757.

STATUS REVIEW

USFWS again published a request in the Federal Register for information on the status of the Marbled Murrelet. The comment period closed on May 31, 1990.

A group of people led by Kathy Kuletz drafted a statement for PSG encouraging the USFWS to fund research activities on this species. This statement was sent with a cover letter as PSG's comment.

REGIONAL REPORTS

Alaska - Kathy Kuletz

Biologists will attempt to confirm two possible ground nests that were found in 1989. One nest was on Perry Island and the other was on Knight Island.

The survey of Marbled Murrelets in Katchemak Bay may be continued by biologists from the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. Forest Inventories are also planned for a nearby stand of old-growth forest that is scheduled for harvest.

USFWS has determined that Marbled Murrelet numbers have declined in south central Alaska since the previous survey efforts in the 1970's. USFWS may initiate a study of Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat in this part of Alaska. The purchase of timber rights to enhance the Marbled Murrelet population is one possible use of the restoration fund from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Unfortunately, the Marbled Murrelet study was eliminated from the damage assessment studies for this oil spill. This may mean that protection of murrelet habitat may be denied.

Kathy Kuletz drafted an issue paper for Migratory bird Management, USFWS, Alaska, detailing the need for research on the Alaska population of Marbled Murrelets. Copies of this summary can be obtained from Kathy. Kathy's address is U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 E. Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99507, and her telephone number is (907) 786 - 3512.

British Columbia - Jean-Pierre Savard

CWS has five people working on Marbled Murrelets in the Queen Charlotte Islands. They are conducting fixed station forest counts in different habitats and correlating those counts with numbers of Marbled Murrelets seen during boat surveys. They are looking at changes in forest activity with changes in weather and the number of birds on the water. They are also gathering information on daily fluctuations in the number of Marbled Murrelets in one survey area.

Jean-Pierre plans a radio telemetry study of Marbled Murrelets in the Queen Charlotte Islands. They will attempt to capture birds with horizontal and vertical floating mist nets plus any other methods that might work.

Gary Kaiser is conducting boat surveys of Marbled Murrelets between the mainland and the east coast of Vancouver Island. He plans to capture some Marbled Murrelets in June for a radio telemetry study.

Washington - Lora Leschner

Washington Department of Wildlife and the U.S. Forest Service are conducting a study of habitat use by Marbled Murrelets. Fixed station surveys are planned for a variety of habitat types. Intensive surveys are also planned for areas where Marbled Murrelets have been observed in the past. Eric Cummins and Tom Hammer, WDW, are leading the survey efforts with a crew of five field people.

Lora Leschner, Eric Cummins, WDW, and Tracy Fleming, NCASI, plan a pilot radio telemetry study in Northern Puget sound in June and July.

Eric Cummins, WDW, has organized a Volunteer Survey for Marbled Murrelets. The survey will take place for three weeks in late June.

Several of the U.S. forest District biologists on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and the Olympic National Forest are planning to conduct Marbled Murrelet surveys. Phyllis Reed of the Darrington District is particularly interested in returning to a stand where she found a dead Marbled Murrelet chick in 1989. Fred Sharpe, a volunteer for NPS, continues his surveys for Marbled Murrelets in the Olympics.

Oregon - Kim Nelson

ODFW, USFS, BLM and others have funded Kim Nelson's Marbled Murrelet inventories in 1990. In 1989, Kim found that murrelets were detected most often along transects in close proximity to the coast and adjacent to stands with trees >46 cm diameter at breast height (dbh). Murrelets were absent from areas that were highly fragmented. Eighteen potential nest areas were located; murrelets were seen landing in trees or flying into the canopy in these forest stands. The potential nest areas occurred only in stands with large (>46 cm dbh) trees.

Kim plans to use an intensive ground survey technique in most of the potential nest areas identified in her 1989 field work. In addition, counts of murrelets on the ocean will continue form stations established on shore. This will be the third year of monitoring numbers of adult and juvenile murrelets at-sea along areas of the central coast.

The Siskiyou and Siuslaw National Forests, and Coos Bay BLM will be monitoring their 1991 timber sales for murrelets this summer. Since no interim management plans have been developed for these land management agencies, it is not known what will happen if they locate murrelets or find nests in these sale areas. However, the interest in determining the habitat requirements of this species appears to be increasing in Oregon, which is a positive sign.

California - Harry Carter

C.J. Ralph and associated researchers are continuing all of their work from 1989. They are counting Marbled Murrelets at-sea from shore and boat. They are continuing the forest inventories. They plan to expand their efforts to radio-tag Marbled Murrelets and find nests.

Michael Fry and Kirsten H. Dahl, University of California, Davis, have prepared a preliminary proposal entitled Genetic Variation between California and Alaska Populations of Marbled Murrelets. They have done some DNA sequence comparisons on murrelets from California and Alaska, but need a large sample.

Nancy Naslund and Steve Singer are independently continuing their intensive ground searches for nests.

Audubon and other conservation organizations petitioned the State of California to list the Marbled Murrelet as threatened. The evaluation process has bee initiated by California Fish and Game.

Harry Carter et al. in their draft report *A Survey of Seabird Colonies of Northern and Central California* in 1989 estimated that there were 1821 breeding Marbled Murrelets. This is the same range as the 1650-2000 birds that has been previously cited as the breeding population. They found that the central population appeared to be larger than the population in 1980. The northern population appears to have declined. This decline would be expected given the increase of logging of old-growth forests. The peripheral numbers between the northern and central populations appears to all but have disappeared. There is almost no old-growth in this area now.

TECHNIQUES

Tracy Fleming has offered to coordinate the exchange of information on radio telemetry techniques. Anyone with questions or ideas that they want to share with other researchers should write to Tracy at NCASI, P.O. box 458, Corvallis, Oregon 97339 or call him at (206) 752 - 8801.

Two draft papers on radio telemetry can be obtained by writing or calling Tracy:

Epoxies and gluing technique applicable to Marbled Murrelet and other seabird telemetry research. Tracy Fleming and Brian Scheuch.

Analysis and testing of radio tags suitable for Marbled Murrelet research. Tracy L. Fleming, Daniel H. Varoujean, and Steven M. Speich.

RESEARCH GUIDELINES

Steve Speich, with review and comments form the committee, completed the Research Guidelines for the Marbled Murrelet in California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia and Alaska. Copies of the complete document can be obtained from Lora Leschner, c/o Washington Department of Wildlife, 16018 Mill Creek Boulevard, Mill Creek, WA 98012.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR 1991

Supplement to, THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP'S RESEARCH GUIDELINES FOR THE MARBLED MURRELET IN CALIFORNIA, OREGON, WASHINGTON, BRITISH COLUMBIA AND ALASKA, February 1990, prepared by the Research Guidelines Committee (S. M. Speich, Research Guidelines Coordinator) of the Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee. Derived from the Pacific Seabird Group's research activities in 1988 and 1989. These research items are not in order of priority.

I. Research priorities.

A. Population size. Conduct marine censuses of the coastal waters of California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and selected areas of Alaska, to determine the numbers of Marbled Murrelets in specific regions, during the reproductive period. Censuses should be conducted in such a way as to provide a baseline for future comparisons of regional populations.

B. Identify areas of activity. Through the use of habitat inventory techniques, identify and quantify areas of Marbled Murrelet activity, in the coastal areas of Washington, selected areas of British Columbia and Alaska, and areas of California and Oregon not yet thoroughly surveyed. Determine, as best possible, the relationships between Marbled Murrelet activities and forest characteristics. For compatibility, survey should use techniques established during the 1988 and 1989 field seasons (Paton et al. 1989).

C. Intensive inventory and behavior observations. Return to the areas identified in California, Oregon, Washington and British columbia in 1988 and 1989 having Marbled Murrelet activity, focus efforts to locate and identify forest areas, by methods now being established, to determine the relationships between areas utilized by Marbled Murrelets and forest characteristics. Quantify the behavior of marbled Murrelets in these areas

and determine the relationships between behavior and identified or likely nesting areas, and use the knowledge to interpret and understand the data derived from the more general and broad scale forest inventory results of 1988 and 1989.

D. Find nests. Find and quantify as many nests, nest substrates, and surrounding habitats as possible, in forests throughout the range of the Marbled Murrelet from California to Alaska. Observe and quantify the behavior of Marbled Murrelets at individual nests, and utilize this knowledge to interpret and understand information generated from other activities (i.e., A and B above). The descriptions of nests should follow the protocol developed by Varoujean and Carter (1989).

E. Genetic Variability. Collect blood samples from all areas throughout the Marbled Murrelet breeding range to investigate, through analysis of nuclear DNA, the genetic variation between, and possible genetic isolation of, Marbled Murrelet populations.

II. Refinement of methodologies

The application of methods used to study Marbled Murrelets during the 1988 and 1989 field seasons revealed areas that need refinement and further development before their use in the 1991 field season. These include quantification of habitat structure at nest sites and of surrounding forest, recording, quantification and interpretation of behavior observations at nests and during inventories, technical aspects of radios and their attachment to Marbled Murrelets, and methods of capturing Marbled Murrelets. Individual researchers are now in the process of working on these concerns. Protocols relating to these topics are being prepared and will become available as techniques and methodologies are refined.

There is general consensus that we need to continue to develop and perfect the technical aspects and methods to capture and place radios on Marbled Murrelets specifically to locate nest sites and also to improve our understanding of Marbled Murrelet behavior. this effort should proceed concurrently with the other research activities outlined above, ultimately leasing to the development of a capture-telemetry protocol for Marbled Murrelets.

-- Lora L. Leschner
May, 1990

MARBLED MURRELET CORRESPONDENCE

May 24, 1990

Regional Director
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
1002 NE Holladay Street
Portland, Oregon 97232

Dear Director:

The status of the Marbled Murrelet is of great concern to the Pacific Seabird Group. We believe that all available information on this bird in Washington, Oregon, and California shows that the species nests in old-growth forests. Fragmentation of that forest habitat may make Marbled Murrelets more susceptible to predation. Surveys recently completed in California show a declining or at best a stable population. The species no longer occurs at sea where suitable old-growth habitat inland has been virtually eliminated.

Biologists in Alaska have evidence that the population in central Alaska has declined since surveys were conducted in the 1970's.

The Pacific Seabird Group has issued several resolutions and written many letters to agencies about the concern for Marbled Murrelets. The response from the land management agencies has been a relatively small amount of money for inventories but the harvest of habitat continues. The questions that must be answered about Marbled Murrelets will require intensive and sophisticated research. Additional funds are necessary. Protection of identified habitat in the interim is especially important.

The species should be protected until the status can be determined and management options identified. Delays in protection of nesting and foraging areas could result in the loss of important sub-populations.

A statement from the Pacific Seabird Group and a list of research priorities for 1991 are enclosed. We urge you to fund the necessary research. We believe that the species will continue to decline if important nesting and foraging areas are not protected now. You have on file several letters from the Chairman of this organization urging you to take action and to protect this unique seabird.

Sincerely,

Lora L. Leschner
Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee

June 1, 1990

Mr. Marvin Plenert
Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1002 N. E. Holladay St.
Portland, OR 97232

Dear Mr. Plenert:

The Department endorses the decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to reopen the review of the species status for the marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) listing petition.

The Washington Department of Wildlife (WDW) has concerns regarding the status of the marbled murrelet. It is a little researched species relative to other alcid species. Intensive research regarding inland nesting habitat relationships is needed to develop management guidelines for its habitat protection.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the enclosed comments. The WDW hope that the USFWS status review of the species will reinforce the immediate needs for research and incorporation of research findings into forest management planning.

Sincerely,

Curt Smitch
Director,
Washington Department of Wildlife

Enclosure:

Comments of the Washington Department of Wildlife (WDW) on the status review for the marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) listing petition:

The Washington Department of Wildlife has started preparing a status report for the marbled murrelet as per procedures in the new Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Wildlife Species Classification Rules (Washington Administrative Code 232-12-297).

Although there has not been significant new murrelet research in Washington, there have been increased survey efforts by inter-agency cooperators and volunteers during 1988, 1989, and starting now in 1990. Leschner and Cummins (1989 in press) analyzed inland records and habitat associations of sites where murrelet chicks, fledglings, and eggs have been found. A draft report to the WDW by a citizen volunteer, R. Barnes, (1990 in review) compiled data from 1988 and 1989 volunteer marbled murrelet surveys in Washington. these draft documents are attached. In 1989 two marbled murrelet eggs were found: one by USFWS personnel on Long Island, Willapa National Wildlife Refuge; the other, by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) personnel on the Darrington Ranger District, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (notes attached).

Research, surveys, and analysis of incidental discoveries of inland marbled murrelets in Washington, Oregon, and California indicate that nesting marbled murrelets are strongly associated with old growth and mature firsts. The

excellent status review by Marshall (1988) analyzes data from throughout the range of marbled murrelets and reinforces the same evaluation. Nesting murrelets in southern Alaska have been in old growth/mature forests, however, they have also been found ground nesting at timberline above a forested fjord and on the ground on marine tundra in the Barren Islands. In Washington, both the old growth/mature and alpine tundra habitat types are found within a murrelet's flight distance capability from shoreline. Preliminary surveys on the northeastern Olympic Peninsula by F. Sharpe (1990) did not detect marbled murrelets in alpine areas above forested sites where marbled murrelets were detected.

With cooperative funding by the USFS, the WDW initiated on May 1, 1990 an intensive marbled murrelet survey of a 300 square mile study area encompassing the entire drainage of a rive from its Puget Sound shoreline eastward 51 miles to its headwaters in the North Cascades. Marbled murrelets were already known to use several old growth/mature forest sites in the study area. The WDW survey is designed to sample a variety of habitat types found in the area, including clearcuts, meadows, small pole, large sawtimber, mature/old growth, riparian zones, and subalpine/alpine sites.

With the increasing empirical evidence that shows the species' association with old growth/mature forests, the WDW is concerned with the future of marbled murrelets in the state, especially in view of threats to old growth/mature forests, of which 10-15% of the original forests remains. Combined with the marbled murrelets' inland habitat needs is their vulnerability to impacts on the marine ecosystem, such as biocontamination, oil spills, and numbers of marbled murrelets in Puget Sound concentrate at a few localized marine sites, making them even more vulnerable to oil spills (Dzinbal and Leschner 1987). With estimates ranging from 1,900 - 3,500 pairs during the breeding season (Speich and Whal 1989 in press), a loss of several hundred up to several thousands could occur, thereby potentially impacting the breeding population beyond recovery in Washington. Leschner and Cummins (1989) further analyzed threats to the species in Washington.

There are essentially no quantitative data for overall population trends from historical times to present. Early naturalists have reported that the murrelet population was much greater in Puget Sound than now (Leschner and Cummins 1989).

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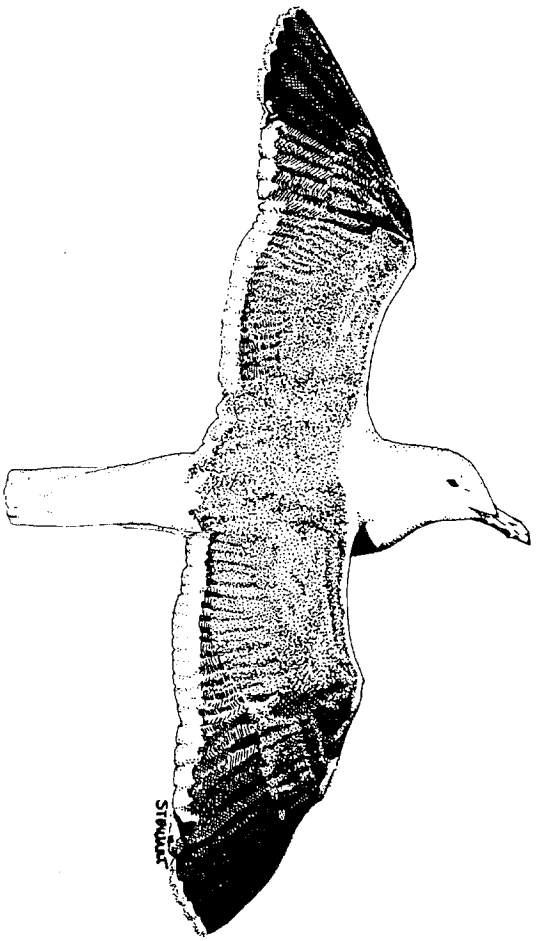


ISSUE PAPER ON THE MARBLED MURRELET

This paper: 1) Outlines a justification of concern for a seabird species; 2) Proposes the implementation of a research and monitoring effort by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska, the population center for this species; 3) Requests financial support by way of FY-91 add-on funds from the Endangered Species Act.

In 1989 the marbled murrelet (*Brachyrampus marmoratus*) became a candidate for the Threatened and Endangered Species List. No distinction was made between the populations in Washington, Oregon and California and those in Alaska, where an estimated 95% of the U.S. population breeds. As a Category II candidate, the marbled murrelet is in urgent need of studies on which to base the decision to list the species.

The marbled murrelet is a small alcid of the north Pacific which usually nests on branches of coniferous trees in old-growth forests. In southwestern and southcentral Alaska the nesting habitat includes the ground in alpine tundra. Few nests have been found and little is known about this seabird's abundance, basic biology or nesting habitat preference. An apparent decline in murrelets in the Pacific Northwest is attributed to intense logging which has removed 80% of old-growth forests in that region. The marbled murrelet is also susceptible to disturbance in its nearshore feeding grounds. High mortality from gill-net fishing has been documented. Mariculture operations require the same habitat murrelets feed in and can entrap murrelets in anti-predator nets. The murrelet's nearshore prey are vulnerable to chronic pollution and the marbled murrelet itself is extremely sensitive to oil spills.

In the 1980's resolutions and letters of inquiry regarding the marbled murrelet were sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by the International Council for Bird Preservation, Pacific Seabird Group, National Audubon Society and Wildlife Society, among other. In January, 1988, the Portland Audubon Society petitioned to list the species as threatened or endangered. South of British Columbia, there has been an urgent effort to locate tree stands used for nesting, to protect the habitat of remaining marbled murrelets. In Region 1 The USFWS provided Non-game funds to assist state agencies in these studies. In contrast, the Alaska population was perceived as robust and consequently little effort was devoted to it. However, recent analysis of survey data indicate that some areas of Alaska may be suffering a decline as well.

At the few sites with available data, preliminary results suggest that the Alaska marbled murrelet population may be undergoing a decline similar to that in the southern portion of its range. In Prince William Sound, August estimates of marbled murrelets have dropped from an estimated 104,000 in the 1970's to 41,000 in the 1980's. the south Kenai Peninsula shows a similar decline in percentage within that time period. Data fro Afognak and Kodiak Islands has not been analyzed yet. Qualitative information indicates that the highest concentration of marbled murrelets is in southeast Alaska, yet there is no data for this region. At the least, an improved data base will be required before population size and trends can be ascertained in Alaska.

The marbled murrelet has already become an issue in the national controversy over logging in the Tongass National Forest. Logging plans for Prince

William Sound, the Kenai Peninsula and the Kodiak Archipelago have the potential to impact local population centers of marbled murrelets. The Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge has control over Afognak Island waters but not the forests, which are being clear-cut. In each of these cases, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has the opportunity to monitor a sensitive species before major decimation of its numbers of habitat.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recognizes the potential management problems associated with the marbled murrelet in the Alaska Seabird Management Plan (Draft) and other official memorandum. The Service should now commit the funds to initiate a project. The Alaska region currently has the infrastructure, basic equipment and personnel for this effort. Further, because Alaska still has relatively high concentrations of this species, study attempts will be more effective than in areas where murrelets are rare and widely scattered.

The goal in Alaska should be to define the abundance and distribution of the marbled murrelet and identify important environmental pressures to aid in future management decisions. To this end, studies need to be implemented to develop census methodologies appropriate to Alaskan conditions and further, to describe the species' biology in this region. A suggested approach to these problems follows:

1. Continue basic studies begun in Kachemak Bay in 1988. Methodology, seasonal and diurnal patterns, chronology and nesting habitat can be studied in this accessible location with high murrelet concentrations and a variety of marine and terrestrial habitats. In particular, studies of nesting habitat preferences will be important in Alaska before USFWS can argue for logging guidelines and/or restrictions to benefit murrelets.

2. Assimilate available data on marbled murrelets in Alaska. Access the pelagic data base (to be completed in FY90) and extract and compile other records not included in seabird colony data bases.

3. Boat survey of Afognak Island, coordinated with AMNWR. Repeat and expand on surveys done in 1989 and 1990, to include areas on the south end, which have data available from 1980's for comparison to analyze for population trends.

4. boat survey of southeast Alaska waters. First, conduct reconnaissance of southeast in coordination with Juneau Office of Ecological Services. Second, a random selection of transects to obtain a population estimate. Finally, focus on high-use areas to identify tree stands important for marbled murrelet nesting. the latter could be a joint effort with the U.S. Forest Service, Park Service and local volunteer groups, similar to the projects done in California and Oregon.

Kathy Kuletz
MBM/USFWS, Anchorage, Alaska

CONSERVATION NEWS

THE HARCOURT'S STORM PETREL IN HAWAII

Harcourt's Storm-petrel (*Oceanodroma castro*), also called the Band-rumped, Hawaiian, and Madeiran Storm-petrel, is the rarest and smallest seabird that breeds in the Hawaiian archipelago. Although the state of Hawaii considers the population in Hawaii to be endangered, it has not yet been so listed by the federal government. Craig Harrison (former Chair of PSG) filed a petition in 1989 with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Hawaii population as endangered. In a recent paper (Elepaio 50,6) Craig Harrison, Tom Telfer and John Sincock summarize what is known about the Hawaiian population which they estimate to be about only 100 pairs. They suggest that these birds may suffer severe predation in the nesting ground by introduced animals -- rats, cats, pigs, etc. Strong action will be needed to preserve these birds.

PRO ESTEROS

San Quintin

For the last two months we have been involved in a quest for a way to protect Bahia de San Quintin from the kind of resort development that is threatening Baja's esteros. The western barrier beach is on the market, and the owners would like it to remain in its natural state but want to get a fair price for it. At the same time I learned about this, I also learned about the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, which became law in December 1989. This is matching funds legislation administered by a council through U.s. Fish and Wildlife Service, and covers the three North American countries. Almost half the funds must be spent for wetlands conservation in Mexico and Canada. We thought acquisition of the property could be achieved through the Act, and the land could be owned and managed as a reserve by our Mexican chapter (coastal land in Mexico cannot be owned by foreigners). Although time was exceedingly short (the deadline for proposals was 9 July), we wrote a proposal. However, what neither we nor FWS knew was that the Mexican Constitution prohibits the use of funds from a foreign government to buy land in Mexico. The Act is so new that all of the pieces are not yet in place, and we are hoping there will be a way around this roadblock. Raising the $1,500,000 asking price from private funds would be most difficult for a young organization like ours, but we may try if other recourses fail.

Pro Esteros Newsletter

Antonio Gomez-Pedroso Cedillo is the new Executive Director of the Mexican Chapter of Pro Esteros

Antonio Gomez-Pedroso Cedillo has recently taken the position of Executive Director of the Mexican Chapter of Pro Esteros. He has a degree in oceanology obtained in Ensanada's Faculty of Marine Science form Baja California State University. He has since worked on the research team involved in Marine Ichthyology studies in Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve through which he has been involved in the biogeography of freshwater fished in the Yucatan Peninsula. He is looking forward to the new commitment.

Pro Esteros Newsletter

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BIRD PRESERVATION

SEABIRD SPECIALIST GROUP: REPORT TO ICBP 1986-1990.

The Seabird Specialist Group, under two chairmen, has undertaken a variety of activities over the past four years, ranging from pressure campaigns, through preparation of two books and a newsletter, to the creation of a working group on egging.

The loss of Ralph Schreiber, the past chair of our group, was a major blow to seabird research and conservation, as well as to his many friends. Ralph took over the group when it was in disarray and set in motion a number of group activities, including our New Zealand workshop. Finally, when the turned over the chair to me, it was with excellent and humorous advice that has continued to be helpful.

Turning to our activities, the Group's letter-writing campaigns focused attention on two important seabird sites: Christmas Island, Indian Ocean, and Punta San Juan in southern Peru. We produced more than 50 letters from literally all over the world, urging the Australian government to increase the size of the park at Christmas Island. An Australian involved in the issue commented that "The international response was unprecedented" and apparently contributed to the eventual, favorable decision. Up to the present, we had rather less success with our second effort. Punta San Juan has major populations of Humboldt Penguin, endangered in Peru, and Peruvian Furseal. The peninsula urgently needs increased protection, as well as recognition and management as an important area for biological research and conservation, but Peru's political and economic problems have so far stymied government action.

The other promising efforts of the group have been a supplementary volume on seabird status and conservation, edited by Dr. John Croxall, and the workshop on island management, to be held in New Zealand during the ICBP meetings, on island conservation. The supplementary volume (Croxall, J. ed., *Supplement to Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds*) to update and expand on the results of the Cambridge meeting, features 14 chapters, many on areas not covered previously. John Croxall has our thanks for seeing this volume through to completion.

Drs. Joanna Burger, Michael Gochfeld and David Nettleship have been organizing the island workshop. I believe the resulting volume will be a useful one for managers of islands with seabirds. The case studies included in the workshop should also serve as guidelines for regional conservation activities by our group.

Dr. Malcolm Coulter, Maria Jose Campos de Duffy and I are in our fifth year of publishing the *Boletin de Aves Marinas Latinoamericanas*, which now has right-hand justification and other sophistications unknown to our earlier type-written issues. We receive several requests every month from Latin Americans to receive the bulletin, so seabird biology is alive and growing in Latin America.

To address the egging problem, especially in the tropics, where isolated colonies can't be protected and education may be the only answer, I have appointed a committee of Dr. Kathleen Blanchard, Ruud van Halewyn, Charles Luthin and Brent Mitchell, who represent a formidable mixture of expertise concerning the problem and its solutions. I hope we will hear positive news about what may be amongst the most serious of seabird conservation problems.

Dr. Bill Bourne has commented that perhaps the best role of the chairman of this group is similar to that of St. Paul, writing letters to keep seabird conservationists in touch with one another and to represent our interests. I have tried to do so, writing letters in support of conservation initiatives by Dr. Ruud van Halewyn who is trying to preserve the nesting island in Aruba; commenting on the clean-up plans ands assessment of damage arising from the Valdez oil spill in Alaska; supporting Dr. Craig Harrison's efforts to have the U.S. government list the Hawaiian population of Harcourt's Storm-petrel as endangered; attempting to organize funding for Mr. Mario Hurtado and Ecuadorian biologists working to protect Isla La Plata; commenting on proposed SSC criteria for endangered species; supporting the Australian Endangered Species Program; encouraging the Mexican petroleum company PEMEX to maintain protection of several seabird sites of Campeche; providing advice on funding sources for a tourist observation sit at a colony of frigatebirds on Barbuda; and providing literature to seabird biologists in Latin American without access to libraries.

On a negative note, despite expressions of interest, I haven't been able to get the group going on one key issue: planning. We need some sort of continuing planning exercise, run by a central committee, to identify focal activities that we could conduct internationally. Such planning is also critical in seeking to influence funding patterns internationally. Unfortunately it has not been possible to generate sustained interest in this effort. Perhaps it is time for seabird conservationists to reverse the ecological slogan and, instead, "think locally and act globally". By joining forces, we could examine problems and issues at scales impossible for us to take individually. Such collaboration is already routine in our census and distribution studies, but we should consider expanding to examine diets, nesting success, and dispersal.

Most of our activities as seabird biologists and conservationists are necessarily local, but concerns such as egging and oiling are global. Others such as wintering places of seabird species, overfishing, and the potential effects of global climate change on seabirds are regional, if not global. If we do not begin to think globally in our field, we are going to lose a lot of local conservation battles. We are also at a disadvantage i that most of us work and conserve seabird species, rather than seabird communities or marine ecosystems. Very few seabird species are endangered; whereas many if not most marine ecosystems ARE endangered, or have ceased to function in anything like their pristine state, because of overfishing, coastal development, or pollution. Too many seabird populations are becoming relicts in such systems. Rainforests are arguably in better shape as ecosystems than are many marine areas, but so far we have failed to make the case that intact marine ecosystems are as important as intact rainforests. Admittedly it is easier to see deforestation than to detect overfishing, but we need to 'sell' the wider conservation community on the need to conserve marine ecosystems.

Additionally, seabirds have been and should continue to be useful species for detecting overfishing, pollution, El Niño, and climate change, so we need to 'sell' such a sue of seabirds at the same time.

At the New Zealand meeting, the Specialist Group will meet to review progress in the activities described above and to hear reports from different regions on activities, conservation problems, and successful management techniques. I hope the group will also plan, or set the mechanism in place for planning, our activities over the next four years. Finally, if the group is to be successful and more active, we must increase the number of participating members, from the present, small nucleus, to a broad representation of seabird researchers throughout the world.

-- David Cameron Duffy

CALL FOR LETTERS

Dear Seabird Biologist:

I would like to ask your help in a matter that may represent a significant breakthrough in the reduction of albatross mortality by longline tuna boats. Dr. Nigel Brother and the Australian Fisheries Service have been working with Japan Tuna to reduce the scavenging of longline baits by albatrosses. Better throwing techniques and streamers can reduce albatross mortality by up to 88%, as well as increase tuna landings and profitability for the longliners because more baits survive to catch tuna.

At present, these methods are only being used by longliners in Tasmanian waters. We hope to encourage Japan Tuna to extend the use of the methods to all areas where longliners are used. I would like to ask you to write to Japan Tuna:

Federation of Japan Tuna Fisheries Co-operative Associations
3-22 Kudankita 2-Chime
Chiyoda-Ku
Tokyo 102
Japan

to congratulate them on this effort and to express the hope that longliners in other fishing areas will adopt the same methods which both reduce albatross death and increase tuna landings. Please also send them publication on seabirds, especially on albatrosses and other Southern Ocean seabirds, to demonstrate the great interest and scientific importance of these birds.

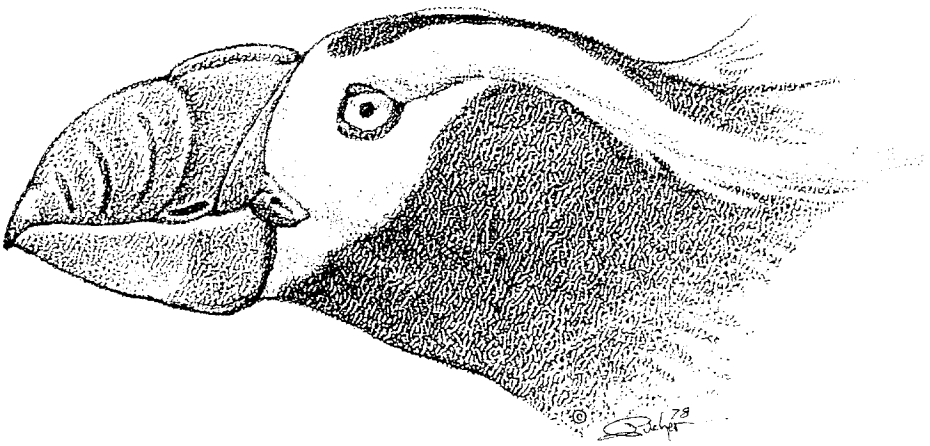
This is just the sort of effort that perhaps best justifies the existence of the ICBP Seabird Specialist Group. Positive reinforcement of the Japanese initiative needs our support and encouragement, just as we need their help in

maintaining populations of Wandering, Shy, Grey-headed and Light-mantled Sooty Albatrosses. Finally, I would appreciate it if you could send a copy of your letter to either Dr. Brothers Dept. of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage, GPO Box 44a, Hobart, Tasmania 7001, Australia or to me, to forward to Dr. Brothers.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

David Cameron Duffy
Chairman, Seabird Specialist Group
The Seatuck Foundation
P.O. Box 31
Islip, New York 11751



NEW PUBLICATIONS

CORRECTION

In William Montevecchi's review of Brian Nelson's recently published *Living with Seabirds* (PSG Bulletin 16,1), he borrowed G.G. Simpson's term "autobiology" which was mistakenly printed as "autobiography". I apologize for the mistake and encourage readers to reread the review, with the correction in mind.

-- Malcolm Coulter

SEABIRDS OF HAWAII -- text by Craig Harrison, illustrated by Mark Rauzon

Hawaii is the breeding site for many seabirds that inhabit the tropical Pacific Ocean. Unfortunately, Hawaii is special in another respect: it is the endangered species capital of the world. Many of its birds are in jeopardy of extinction. The pristine setting of the Hawaiian Island chain is described, followed by a discussion of the effects of Polynesians and Westerners on the islands' seabirds. Desecration by the new inhabitants and introduced animals have created havoc among the native fauna. The author describes in detail our current knowledge of the biology of the many seabirds found in the islands. Their conservation status is discussed with respect to preservation efforts. It is hoped that with concerted effort the situation will improve. The book is available from Cornell University Press: Paper ISBN 0-8014-9722-1 ($15.95), Cloth ISBN 0-8014-2449-6 ($29.20) from Cornell University Press, 124 Roberts Place, Ithaca, NY 14850.

-- Malcolm Coulter

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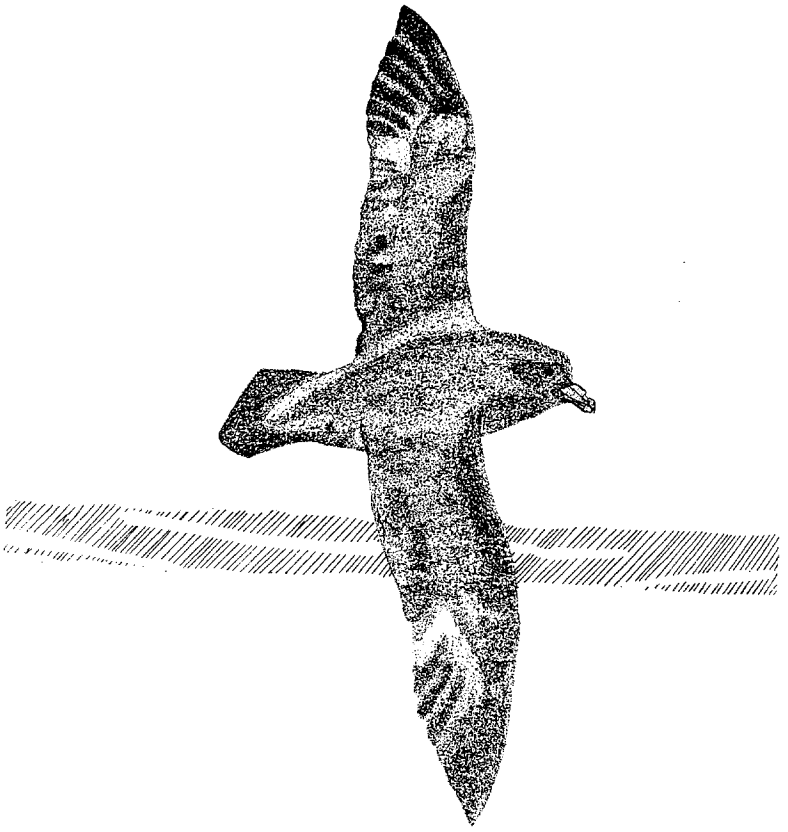
-- Doug Siegel-Causey



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