

PACIFIC SEABIRDS



A Publication of the Pacific Seabird Group

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PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP

Dedicated to the Study and Conservation of Pacific Seabirds and Their Environment

The Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) is a society of professional seabird researchers and managers dedicated to the study and conservation of seabirds. PSG was formed in 1972 out of a need for increased communication among academic and government seabird researchers. The principal goals of PSG are to (1) increase the quality and quantity of seabird research through facilitating exchange of information; (2) identify and assess the importance of threats to seabird populations; and (3) provide government agencies and others with expert advice on managing populations of seabirds. PSG is headed by an Executive Council composed of members volunteering their time. Members include biologists, wildlife managers, students, and conservationists from the United States, Mexico, Canada, Japan and 12 other countries. PSG annual meetings and publications provide forums where members can share their findings on all research topics relating to Pacific seabirds and discuss local and large scale conservation issues. Abstracts for meetings are published on our website. PSG publishes the on-line bulletin Pacific Seabirds (formerly the PSG Bulletin; www.pacificseabirdgroup.org) and the journal Marine Ornithology (www.marineornithology.org). Other publications include symposium volumes and technical reports; these are listed near the back of this issue. PSG is a member of the Ornithological Council and the American Bird Conservancy. Annual dues for membership are \$40 (individual); \$30 (student, undergraduate and graduate); and \$1,200 (Life Membership, payable in five \$240 installments). Dues are payable to the Treasurer; see the PSG website or the Membership Information at the back of this issue.

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Pacific Seabirds

This on-line bulletin reports on the work and committee activities of the Pacific Seabird Group, conservation news, and other items of importance to conservation of seabirds in the Pacific Ocean. The bulletin is a twice-yearly on-line news bulletin and archive of PSG activities. This issue summarizes the proceedings of the annual PSG Conference and reports on the work committees have completed or have in progress in the previous year. Back issues of the PSG Bulletin and Pacific Seabirds are posted on the group's web site.

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Marine Ornithology

Marine Ornithology is published by the Pacific Seabird Group on behalf of a consortium of seabird groups: African, Australasian, Dutch, Japanese, Pacific, and UK. The journal is published two times a year and publishes contributed papers, forum articles, and book, website and software reviews, on all aspects of marine ornithology worldwide. For details on submitting to the journal, please go to marineornithology.org.

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Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Enriqueta Velarde, by J.A. Sandy Bartle and Daniel W. Anderson 4

Harry R. Carter, by Gerry McChesney, Spencer Sealy, Percy Hébert, Mike Parker, Kim Nelson, Phil Capitolo,
Bill McIver, Rick Golightly, and Darrell Whitworth 8

Special Achievement Award

Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz , by Federico Méndez-Sánchez, Mark Rauzon, Annie Little, Jennifer Boyce, and
Mariam Latofski-Robles 12

Student Presentation Awards 15

Reports of PSG Officers for 2017

Chair's Report 17

Chair-elect's Report 18

Past Chair's Report 19

Vice-Chair for Conservation's Report 19

Secretary's Report for 2017 21

Reports to PSG Executive Council for 2017

Northeast Asia Seabird Conservation Committee 23

Kittlitz's Murrelet Technical Committee..... 24

Scripps's Murrelet and Guadalupe Murrelet Technical Committee 24

Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee 26

Aleutian Tern Technical Committee 26

Seabird Monitoring Committee 27

Tufted Puffin Technical Committee 28

Craig S. Harrison Conservation Fund Committee..... 29

Elections Committee 29

Communications Committee..... 31

Website Report..... 32

Facebook Report..... 33

Twitter Report 33

Instagram Report 34

Listserv Report 34

Pacific Seabirds Report..... 34

Marine Ornithology Report 35

Student Representative Report 36

Membership Report 37

Corresponding Membership Committee 38

World Seabird Union 38

Ornithological Council..... 39

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) 41

PSG News..... 43

Meeting News 44

Summary of Executive Council Meeting Minutes..... 46

General Information

Information on the Pacific Seabird GroupInside Front Cover

Publications of the Pacific Seabird Group..... 48

PSG Committee Coordinators 50

PSG Life Members and Recipients of Awards 52

Membership Information 53

PSG Executive Council for 2015.....Inside Back Cover

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Pacific Seabird Group occasionally honors major contributors to seabird science and conservation with Lifetime Achievement or Special Achievement awards. The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes individuals whose outstanding work for seabirds influenced the course of research, conservation, and/or education throughout the world.

DR. ENRIQUETA VELARDE

By J. A. (Sandy) Bartle and Daniel W. Anderson

Dr. Enriqueta Velarde is the first Latin American biologist to be honoured by the Pacific Seabird Group with our highest award for outstanding work in research, conservation and education. She was presented with this award at the 45th Annual Meeting of PSG at La Paz, México on February 23rd, 2018 in recognition of her being a pioneer seabird ecologist in México and an inspirational model for conservation biologists everywhere.

Beginnings

Enriqueta was born in México City and always had an interest in animals, plants and nature conservation. Her parents were intellectuals. Her father, Emilio Velarde Dondé, was a high-ranking actuary who analysed demographic data statistically to establish insurance systems and programs for both government and private institutions in Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica and other countries. He also taught at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) for many years, until his retirement c.1970. The UNAM, founded in 1551, is the oldest university in America and the largest in Latin America. Enriqueta's mother, Enriqueta González Baz, was of independent character, the first woman in México to receive a degree in mathematics. She taught at UNAM mainly in physics, mathematics and Actuarial Studies, until retirement in 1969. The significance of Enriqueta's parents' orientation and professions meant that Enriqueta learned the importance of keeping accurate records, especially of population parameters, and the power of statistical analysis to



LAA presentation to Enriqueta at the 45th PSG Conference at La Paz by Sandy Bartle and Dan Anderson. Photo credit: Anaidalia Esquivel

determine trends at an early age. It was a logical leap from this to modelling populations which was later to become such an important part of her life work.

Enriqueta's undergraduate biology studies were undertaken at UNAM and at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she gained her Bachelor's degree. For her Master's she worked on the behaviour and ecology of baboons (*Papio papio*) in the Knoxville Zoo and on howler monkeys (*Alouatta palliata*) and spider monkeys (*Ateles geoffroyi*) both in the wild and in captivity at Veracruz and Chiapas in México.

From 1979, Enriqueta's Ph.D., later research work, and teaching was undertaken at the prestigious Instituto de Biología (UNAM) under the direction and encouragement of the late Bernardo Villa-Ramírez. She completed her Ph.D. degree on the near-endemic Heermann's Gull (*Larus heermanni*) on Isla Rasa. Enriqueta's external supervisor was

Dan Anderson. Much of this work was later published in *Auk* (116: 513-519).

Villa-Ramírez had been active with Mexican and US biologists and agencies in conservation and research in the Gulf of California for many years and became a PSG member, publishing a note on conservation issues on Isla Rasa in *Pacific Seabirds* (6, No. 2: 32). Earlier, due to the influence of prominent US individuals and agencies and noted Mexican conservationists, Isla Rasa was proclaimed a Migratory Seabird Sanctuary by Federal Decree in 1964¹, the second such Mexican island to be protected (Isla Tiburon was the first, in 1963).

However, Villa-Ramírez remained concerned about both egg-harvesting and ecotourism activities on this small (c.56 ha) low (33 m) island and was keen to have a biologist caretaker stationed there during the birds' breeding season. So when Enriqueta enrolled at UNAM

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD • Dr. Enriqueta Velarde

to study under Villa-Ramirez in 1979, her course was set. In that first year she and Bernardo visited the island together and she stayed on to conduct research and to dissuade human harvesting of eggs and disturbance. Most of her next 39 summers were to be spent doing fieldwork on Isla Rasa, sometimes staying in a local volcanic rock hut built there in 1964, often alone. After her PhD was awarded, she was appointed Associate Researcher at UNAM and continued to teach there until 1992 plus undertaking research at Isla Rasa and elsewhere.

people visited the Midriff islands for at least 13,000 years and both large- and small-scale exploitation of seabird eggs continued until recently. Today up to 300 tourists/year visit these islands, and they need supervision. Students also continue to add biological knowledge and insight to the island's unique systems. For example, plant diversity and ecology was been described in detail by Enriqueta and collaborators in 2014 (*Botanical Sciences* 92: 1-13). The depauperate xerophytic vegetation contains only 14 vascular plants. Enriqueta also initiated an educational

Isla Rasa by Enriqueta in 1995 and carried out by the late Jesus Ramirez.

Once rats and mice were removed, other seabirds recolonised. First to be identified from the mtDNA of an eggshell remnant was Craveri's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus craveri*) in 2010 (*Marine Ornithology* 39: 271-275). Later the same year the Black-vented Shearwater (*Puffinus opisthomelas*) was also discovered (*Marine Ornithology* 43: 249-254). This was the first recent breeding record of this endangered shearwater in the Gulf of California.

Then, after previous biological surveys by an extensive network of scientists working on the Gulf of California Islands, Enriqueta's co-publications became a major force in helping get all 244 islands declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1995. In 2002, the Mexican government recognised her long achievement in island conservation by an Environmental Merit Award from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT).

In an ambitious 2017 paper with Mexican and US colleagues (*Auk* 134: 308-316), mtDNA sequences within 286 individual Heermann's Gulls from two different Midriff populations were compared to measure the degree of haplotype diversity and estimate cytochrome β nucleotide diversity. The authors found highly conserved sequences, with most birds being of a single haplotype, and others separated by only 1-3 mutations, suggesting that the populations were of single recent origin but had expanded rapidly since about 120,000 years BP and further again since about 90,000 years BP. The mtDNA sequences also suggested that numbers had been relatively constant (i.e. large) for 25,000 years. Estimated expansion times were compared with molecular markers in other animals and in particular fish from the Gulf of California and the Pacific. Agreement with Pacific sardine (*Sardinops sagax*) and northern anchovy (*Engraulis mordax*) was especially close.

Although they don't specifically assert it in this paper, the results of Enriqueta



Isla Rasa colonies of Elegant Terns surrounded by Heermann's Gulls. Photo credit: Fulvio Eccardi

Protecting the biodiversity of the Midriff islands

From 1984 on, Enriqueta co-authored a series of major publications on the biodiversity of the Midriff islands. Working mostly through the Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, with support from the Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, National Geographic, Lindblad Expeditions, Packard Foundation, and the Walton Family Foundation, Enriqueta (with support from many others, including PSG) pressed for several Marine Reserves in the Gulf of California, and these were established.

Isla Rasa is not pristine; indigenous

exchange with the indigenous Comcaac people, as well as local citizens in places such as Bahía de los Ángeles and other local ports, training them in science and conservation and learning from them. A list of traditional Comcaac bird names was assembled by one of her students, Thor Morales, together with songs, fables and traditional stories about the birds².

Isla Rasa was heavily mined for guano from at least the 1870s until after 1912. It has been estimated that 70,000 tons were removed, and it was likely during this period that black rats (*Rattus rattus*) and house mice (*Mus musculus*) were accidentally introduced. These predators had significant effects until their removal by an intensive poisoning campaign, promoted at

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD • Dr. Enriqueta Velarde

and co-workers suggest that the Gulf of California marine systems, although subject to powerful climatic events and human impacts, nevertheless represent, up to recently, a resilient post-glacial ecosystem of great richness that is well worth preserving, particularly now that overfishing of forage fish is perhaps the only major threat that this ecosystem is facing.



Enriqueta surveys Isla San Pedro Martir, 1986. Photo credit: Fulvio Eccardi

Enriqueta's vision

Right from the start, Enriqueta's approach to seabird biology was holistic. This thread runs through all her papers - even the first - on predation of Heermann's Gull chicks by Yellow-footed Gulls (*Larus livens*, Colonial Waterbirds 15: 8-13) - and how this is reduced by breeding habitat and density. She concluded that large gull predation was one reason for the exceptional density of Heermann's nests - up to 110 per 100 m² - and for the synchronicity of their laying and hatching. Without her initial research strategy to look at both habitat and synchronicity, she couldn't have reached this early conclusion. We cannot review all of Enriqueta's outstanding research accomplishments here but instead list specific publications that illustrate the depth

and breadth of her scientific work and conservation-related accomplishments.

Enriqueta found that most seabirds which bred on the Midriff Islands, especially the 240,000 Heermann's Gulls and the 45,000 Elegant Terns (*Thalasseus elegans*), had coupled their constant breeding season with the availability of small pelagic fish, especially Pacific sardine and northern anchovy in their

breeding area (CalCOFI Reports 35:137-143). Mist-netting these birds on arrival after dark caused them to regurgitate their prey. The relative proportions of different fishes in these regurgitations were analysed. Between 32 and 207 birds/year were sampled during the decade after 1983 and compared with commercial landings of small pelagic fish. Consumption of sardines, the preferred food of these seabirds, tracked such landings, except after 1989, when anchovies began to replace sardines in their diet (CalCOFI Reports 35:137-143).

During the next nine years, more intensive work on diet, weight, clutch-size and productivity of known-age Heermann's Gulls and diet of Elegant Terns was compared with more detailed fishery, SST and Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) data

(Ecological Applications 14: 607-615). A predictive model linking the seabird and fishery data was developed (ibid.).

Links between seabird survival and productivity with abundance of small pelagic fish generate fishery interest in seabird research

In an important series of papers during the two decades after 1994, Enriqueta and co-workers demonstrated that frequency in the birds' diet closely tracked sardine and anchovy landings. By 2004 they had developed two sophisticated models integrating total commercial catches and CPUE, percent sardines in the diet, reproductive success of Heermann's Gull, spring SSTs, and SOI values (ibid.). CPUE was predicted with an accuracy of 73% by the proportion of sardines in the diet of Elegant Terns and the accuracy of the predictive model rose to 96% once all the above factors were included. This meant that Enriqueta could advise the fishery five months in advance of what their optimum fishing effort should be. Nowhere else had such a predictive model been developed based on seabird data.

Enriqueta and co-workers also showed that, in the decade after 1989, catch and effort were unrelated. Up to 5,200 boat-days were wasted in poor sardine years. Heermann's Gulls also wasted effort in trying to breed during severe El Niño years³. Enriqueta transferred from UNAM to the Institute of Marine Sciences and Fisheries at the University of Veracruz on México's Atlantic coast in 2000, where she became a full Professor. Improved resources to study oceanography and fisheries were available compared with the more terrestrial focus of the Institute of Biology at UNAM. Promotion also enabled her to undertake full-time sabbatical years at the Department of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology at UC Davis with Dan Anderson; then, at the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias, San Diego Natural History Museum; and at the Institute for Mexico and the United States, UC Riverside. Mexican ecologist and long-

term collaborator Exequiel Ezcurra (2002 onwards) was based at the latter.

By 2013 this seabird diet/fishery work was extended also to pelicans. It was found that pelicans feed on the same adult fish taken by the fleet – so are less accurate for advance predictions, but useful for same-year predictions – whereas Heermann's Gulls and Elegant Terns take mostly juvenile fish³. Across seabird species – and in the fishery – the proportions of sardine and anchovy vary inversely, with sardines preferred by both birds and humans.

Small pelagic fish now make up 20 - 40% of fishery landings in México. Of these, and before they were overfished, sardines used to make up 70%. The sardine fishery in the Gulf of California began in 1969/70 with 11,000 tons, but by 1980/81 reached almost 100,000 tons. It expanded to 300,000 tons in 1988/89; collapsing by 98% to around 7,000 tons after the 1991/92 El Niño. After further El Niño-related fluctuations, the catch rose to almost 530,000 tons in 2008/09 before again collapsing. Enriqueta's analysis³ showed that above 300,000 tons, the catch remained independent of effort, an indication of over-fishing. Increasing fishing effort in the Gulf of California has led to seabird breeding declines. In 2009, only 30% of the normal number of elegant terns returned to Rasa, and all abandoned their eggs. Only 60% of Heermann's Gulls returned, with clutch-size barely half the average. Most chicks died because their parents were forced to abandon them.

The population dynamics of Heermann's Gull varies according to ENSO events. Under normal conditions, colony productivity is the main factor in maintaining the population; but during El Niño adult survival is key. A simulation showed that the population can withstand just one El Niño event every 4 years, but not more than that. With global warming or sardine overfishing all Midriff seabird populations are at risk³.

Warm oceanographic anomalies and fishing pressure drive Elegant Terns north to California

Very few Elegant Terns were recorded breeding on Isla Rasa until 1951. From then until 2013 the population on Rasa continued growing rapidly, especially after rodent eradication in 1995. However, since 1991, three new colonies in southern California have grown twice as fast as Rasa, with peaks coinciding with locally high SST years south in the Gulf. In 1998, 2003 and 2009, 2010, and 2014 no Elegant Terns bred on Rasa, but numbers peaked in California. All years when terns abandoned Rasa were also preceded by seasons of exceptionally high (1.5x normal) fishing effort in the Gulf (Science Advances 1 (5): 1-7 (2015))

to come, as will all the seabirds of Isla Rasa and the Midriff Islands. And will another talented and dedicated Mexican come forward to carry on this vital research? We certainly hope so.

¹Case, T. J., M. L. Cody, and E. Ezcurra. 2002. A New Island Biogeography of the Sea of Cortés. Oxford, New York

²Morales Vera T., E. Velarde González. 2014. Las aves y cantos tradicionales de los Comcaac de Sonora, México. Pp. 285-298 In: Vásquez-Dávila, M.A. (ed.) Aves, personas y culturas. Estudios de Etno-ornitología 1. CONACYT/ITVO/Carteles Editores/UTCH. Oaxaca, México. <https://xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/17088170/198727459/name/Aves+culturas+y+personas+Vol+1.pdf>



Enriqueta frees Elegant Tern from mistnet on Isla Rasa, 1986. Photo credit: Fulvio Eccardi

As we write (May 2018), Enriqueta is back on Isla Rasa and reports that Elegant Terns have returned to breed in high numbers. Hopefully, most of their chicks will fledge and next year the sardine fleet will have an adequate catch. La Niña conditions still prevail. If the fishermen catch 300,000 tonnes, Enriqueta believes that they will have embraced sustainability; if they instead catch over that amount of Pacific sardines in the Gulf of California; they will have instead embraced greed and can expect hardship in the years

³Velarde, E., Ezcurra, E., Anderson, D. W. 2014. Seabirds and pelagic fish abundance in the Midriff Island Region. In: Wehncke, E. V., Lara-Lara, J. R., Álvarez-Borrego, S., Ezcurra, E. (eds.) Conservation Science in Mexico's Northwest: Ecosystem Status and Trends in the Gulf of California. University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States, Riverside.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HARRY R. CARTER

By Gerry McChesney, Spencer Sealy, Percy Hébert, Mike Parker, Kim Nelson, Phil Capitolo, Bill McIver, Rick Golightly, and Darrell Whitworth



Harry Carter (right) with Keith Hobson, Spencer Sealy and Percy Hébert (right to left) at the Pacific Seabird Group annual meeting in Portland, Oregon, 22 January 2005. Photo credit: Gerry McChesney

In February 2018 in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico, the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) honored Harry Carter with a Lifetime Achievement Award. He was presented with the award in April 2017, just before his death.

Harry dedicated his career of more than 40 years to furthering our knowledge of seabirds and enhancing their conservation around the North Pacific and beyond. A passion for seabirds took Harry to many places, from Alaska to Baja California on the Pacific Coast of North America, to Japan, Korea, and the Cook Islands. He was an expert on the breeding seabirds of California, British Columbia, and Japan, most notably the *Brachyramphus* and *Synthliboramphus* murrelets, Ashy Storm-Petrels (*Oceanodroma homochroa*), and Common Murres (*Uria aalge*), and effectively addressed many conservation issues such as the impacts of oil spills, gill-net fisheries, organochlorine contamination, logging and other human-caused disturbances.

Harry's superb writing skills and dedication to preserving and interpreting data yielded a large and diverse publication record on these and other topics. Just as importantly, his strong sense of camaraderie and encouragement had a deep influence on the many researchers with whom he collaborated and the many biologists he mentored.

Harry's passion for seabirds began in the mid-1970s while an undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia, fostered initially by Ian McTaggart Cowan. He took a summer internship at the British Columbia Provincial Museum (now Royal British Columbia Museum) with a team of biologists led by Charles Guiguet and Wayne Campbell, initiating the first comprehensive survey of seabird colonies in British Columbia. Harry, along with his father Harry Sr., purchased the vessel (Ted Mac MV) that was used to visit the islands and coast of B.C. This is where Harry began to develop what became remarkable

skills as a boat driver (especially inflatables), a talent that benefitted many seabird projects throughout his career.

In August 1976, Harry enrolled in a course on seabird ecology offered at the Bamfield Marine Station, instructed by Dr. Spencer Sealy. Harry's interests in seabirds were now sealed. After completing his BSc degree in 1978, Harry was accepted into the graduate lab of Dr. Sealy at the University of Manitoba. Stemming from his interests in seabirds of British Columbia and Dr. Sealy's interest in the Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*), Harry conducted his MSc thesis research on Marbled Murrelets in Barkley Sound, British Columbia. His thesis (1984), titled "At-sea biology of the Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*)," was one of the first detailed studies of the species and resulted in several publications on topics such as fish-holding behaviour, foraging behaviour, and gill-net mortality. The latter paper was one of the first studies on the impact of gill-nets on seabird mortality. This work started a life-long passion for Marbled Murrelets and awareness of the potential impacts of humans (especially logging) on seabird populations and the need for more information on the species. Harry's MSc research was a catalyst for many research and conservation efforts to come.

In 1983, while completing his MSc thesis, Harry took a seabird biologist position with Point Reyes Bird Observatory (now Point Blue Conservation Science), spending 4-6 months on Southeast Farallon Island each year during 1983-1986. It was here that Harry began developing his expertise on the breeding seabirds of California. While there, a dramatic decline in Common Murres breeding on the Farallones was noted. Harry, along with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD • Harry R. Carter

(USFWS) biologist Jean Takekawa, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and others discovered the decline was due largely to murre being killed in a gill net fishery. This spurred efforts to regulate the fishery that over time helped halt the murre decline. In winter 1986, Harry, Gary Page, Glenn Ford, and others led efforts to document seabird mortality from the Apex Houston oil spill along the California coast, before any coordinated efforts for oil spill response existed. They helped show that murre mortality from the spill exacerbated declines caused by the gill-net fishery and resulted in the extirpation of a murre colony on Devil's Slide Rock. Later, Harry served as the expert witness in litigation against the oil company for damages to natural resources. Harry worked with Steve Kress (National Audubon Society), Mike Parker (USFWS) and others to design a plan to restore breeding murre to the extirpated colony using social attraction. When the restoration project finally began in 1996, Harry was a crucial part of the team that implemented the first successful social attraction restoration project anywhere for Common Murres and the first for any species in the Pacific. Today, the colony at Devil's Slide Rock is considered restored.

In 1989, Harry was hired by Humboldt State University (HSU) in cooperation with USFWS to conduct a comprehensive survey of California seabird colonies. Harry trained and worked with Gerry McChesney, Craig Strong, Deborah Jaques, Mike Parker, Darrell Whitworth, Dave Lewis and others to complete the daunting three year survey, an effort that has not been repeated since. The resulting 1992 update of the catalog of California seabird colonies remains an indispensable source of information on the state's breeding seabird species. Harry was associated full time with HSU until 2003, working in collaboration with Dr. Rick Golightly and with the U.S. Geological Survey-Biological Resources Division's Dixon Field Station. During and following the statewide seabird survey, Harry began working on other

projects in California and abroad. In 1992-1994, Harry, Gerry McChesney, Tracy Miner Ames and others worked with the U.S. Navy's Tom Keeney to look at the potential impacts of Navy activities on the seabirds nesting on San Nicolas Island. Documentation of extensive disturbance led to area closures to protect seabirds and helped the island's Brandt's Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) colony grow to be one of the world's largest.

While juggling these myriad projects, Harry's interest in Marbled Murrelets never waned. Concerned about the demise of their forest breeding habitat,

Harry helped catalyze efforts to begin assessing the biology, status, and threats of this (then) almost unknown seabird. Part of that effort was co-founding the PSG Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee, enlisting government agencies to fund baseline surveys, encouraging young seabird biologists such as Kim Nelson, Nancy Naslund and Beck Becker to conduct those surveys, and co-editing (along with Mike Morrison) the first comprehensive assessment of the species, Status and Conservation of the Marbled Murrelet in North America, published by the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology. This led to the recognition that Marbled Murrelets truly were imperiled as a species mostly due to logging of their old-growth breeding habitat and subsequent filing for protections under the Endangered Species Act.

Over the years, Harry has continued working for the conservation of Marbled Murrelets. During the Clinton



Harry Carter during his undergraduate days surveying Cassin's Auklets on Byers Island, British Columbia, in 1976. Photo credit: R. Wayne Campbell.

administration, Harry's expertise was tapped to help protect Marbled Murrelet habitat in the Northwest Forest Plan as well as to protect the now famous Headwaters Forest in northern California. This 30 km² area was the largest remaining grove of privately owned old-growth redwood forest and was slated for logging. Harry continued to be an active member on the PSG Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee and collaborated on several studies with researchers such as Kim Nelson and Rick Golightly.

Harry also aimed to develop a long-term monitoring program for Common Murres, Brandt's Cormorants and Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) in coastal California using aerial photographic surveys. He worked with Paul Kelly at CDFW, Tom Keeney at the U.S. Navy, Jean Takekawa at USFWS, and others to help fund surveys in the mid-1990s. Aerial photographic surveys have



Harry and friends during the 2010 Pacific Seabird Group conference in Victoria, British Columbia. From left: Barbara Del Mastro, Darrell Whitworth, Laurie Harvey, Harry Carter, Phil Capitolo, Frank Gress, Kim Nelson, Kyra Mills, Bill McIver, Sarah Thompson, and Gerry McChesney. Photo credit: Emma Carter.

continued, led by others such as Phil Capitolo, Gerry McChesney, and Mike Parker, with Harry's involvement and encouragement. Published results have helped show the importance of California to Common Murres and Brandt's Cormorants, the decline and partial recovery of murres in central California, and the status and distribution of Double-crested Cormorants on the west coast of North America. In 2001, Harry led publication of a comprehensive summary of murre breeding population trends in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California through 1995. Harry was also a co-principal investigator and coordinated with Gerry McChesney, John Mason, Bill McIver and others on a three-year aerial at-sea survey of California seabirds in southern California, published in *Studies in Avian Biology*.

In 1994, Harry, and others initiated efforts in the California Channel Islands to examine the status and distribution of the rare and secretive Ashy Storm-Petrel, which resulted in discovery of the important colonies in sea caves at Santa Cruz Island. Harry then facilitated funding for and development of a nest monitoring program at Santa Cruz Island and participated in a collaborative restoration project for

the species. Working with Bill McIver, Laurie Harvey, David Mazurkiewicz and others, his mentorship helped this monitoring work to continue nearly uninterrupted for 23 years; it is one of only two long-term studies of Ashy Storm-Petrels. Harry's efforts also demonstrated the potential long-term impacts of organochlorine pollution on storm-petrels, demonstrating that these chemicals were still present in storm-petrel eggs.

Also in the mid-1990s, Harry spearheaded efforts to examine the status and distribution of another rare crevice-nesting seabird in the Channel Islands, Xantus's Murrelet (now split into Scripps's -*Synthliboramphus scrippsi*- and Guadalupe murrelets -*Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*). Harry and colleagues Darrell Whitworth, Tom Hamer and others explored better murrelet survey methods which led to the development of the spotlight survey technique to count murrelets in nocturnal at-sea congregations near breeding colonies, the use of spotlights for nocturnal at-sea capture of murrelets, and radar for examining colony visitation. These techniques are now widely used for studying murrelets throughout the Pacific. These initial surveys set the foundation for long-term

studies of Scripps's Murrelets in the Channel Islands, including documenting the recovery of breeding murrelets at Anacapa Island following the eradication of black rats in 2003 and the status of the species at San Miguel, San Clemente and Santa Catalina islands. Radio tracking studies conducted with Darrell Whitworth, Christine Hamilton, John Takekawa and Rick Golightly described Scripps's Murrelet foraging ecology. Harry was also a co-founder of the PSG Xantus's Murrelet Technical Committee (now called the Scripps's and Guadalupe Murrelet Technical Committee) and served as co-chair in 2009-2016.

Motivated by his intense passion and concern for murrelets, Harry turned his attentions to the rare Japanese (Crested) Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus wumizusume*). Harry contacted Japanese researchers such as Koji Ono Kuniko Otsuki, and others from the Wild Bird Society of Japan and the Japan Alcid Society (now Japan Seabird Group) to seek potential collaborations and learn about existing studies and conservation efforts. In 1993, Harry made the first of what would be many trips to Japan to conduct surveys and assist with conservation efforts. Over the years, Harry worked with a number of researchers from Japan, South Korea, and North America to study this rare seabird, including John Fries, John Piatt, Yutaka Nakamura, Leigh Ochikubo, Masayoshi Takeishi, Changuk Park, Darrell Whitworth, and Nina Karnovsky. Harry's interests in Japan were not limited to Japanese Murrelets. In 1993, he and Kim Nelson organized the first inland surveys of Long-billed Murrelets (*Brachyramphus perdix*) on Hokkaido. In 1995, Harry co-founded the PSG Japan Seabird Conservation Committee and served as co-chair with Kuniko Otsuki until 2015. Harry was invited to Japan in winter 1997 along with Scott Newman and Roger Helm to assess the impacts of the large Nakhodka oil spill on seabirds in northwest Honshu.

In 2003, Harry returned home to British Columbia to be with his future wife, Emma, and started Carter Biological Consulting. While continuing

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD • Harry R. Carter

with many of his previous studies, Harry expanded his geographic scope to the west coast of Baja California, Mexico. Working with Darrell Whitworth, Frank Gress, Eduardo Palacios, and others, he conducted the most comprehensive surveys of *Synthliboramphus murrelets* and Ashy Storm-Petrels in the region to date. These surveys discovered Craveri's Murrelets (*Synthliboramphus craveri*) breeding at 4 islands off western Baja and Scripps's Murrelets colonies thought to have been extirpated by introduced predators. Genetic studies led to recognition of Scripps's and Guadalupe murrelets (former subspecies of the Xantus's Murrelet) as separate species. Ashy Storm-Petrels were found breeding as far south as the Todos Santos Islands, extending their known breeding range.

Following on his early experience at the Royal British Columbia Museum and during his master's work, Harry recognized the value of museum collections, particularly bird and egg specimens and field notes of early naturalists and researchers, to further our understanding of molt patterns, seabird distribution, and changes in populations over time. Harry's delving into museum collections resulted in the discovery of otherwise unknown nesting locations for the Ashy Storm-Petrel, clarifying the earliest nesting records for Marbled Murrelets, and historical compilations on the distribution of other seabirds including Ancient Murrelets. In at least one case, Harry visited sites with early egg records of Ashy Storm-Petrels and discovered the species still nesting there, over 130 km north of their previously known range. Working largely with Spencer Sealy, Harry published a vast array of his findings on early seabird records in British Columbia and other Pacific Coast locations. While a master's student, Harry joined Sealy in a long-term series of compilations and analyses of records of vagrancy, characterized by movements of alcids into the interior of North America and beyond. These analyses have focused on the Long-billed Murrelet, Kittlitz's Murrelet (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*), and Dovekie (*Alle alle*), but the most

comprehensive analyses focused on the post-breeding movements of family groups and the inland records of Ancient Murrelets (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*); a final paper remains to be completed. Harry also spent a good deal of his "free" time over several summers re-surveying seabird colonies around Vancouver Island, focusing attention on populations of Double-crested, Brandt's and Pelagic cormorants (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus*).

Harry left a body of more than 100 (and growing) published articles covering a multitude of species and topics, including breeding biology, distribution and abundance, status and trends, gill-net impacts, oil spill impacts, human disturbance impacts, molt, at-sea biology, techniques, and conservation. He was a passionate field biologist and tireless conservationist. His efforts were recognized by numerous awards throughout his career, including a Recognition from USFWS for Contributions to the Conservation of the Common Murre in California, Oregon and Washington, Recognition for Service on the President's Ecosystem Management Assessment Team, Special Achievement Award from the USFWS San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex for Contributions to the Restoration of the Devil's Slide Rock Common Murre colony, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Lifetime Achievement Award, and

the National Park Service Regional Director's Award for Partnerships.

But perhaps Harry's most lasting professional legacy will be the powerful influence he had on the many people with whom he collaborated and the inspiration he provided to those he mentored around the world. He was especially passionate about assisting early career biologists to further their experience with the natural world as well as to develop their formal education. To many he suggested potential thesis ideas and often worked behind the scenes to facilitate their connections with academia and consequently to better their lives. His knowledge of seabirds, tenacity for collecting seabird data, never-ending passion for the conservation of seabirds, ability to collaborate, and unique and keen ability to celebrate the little things in life will surely be missed by those who were fortunate enough to have worked with him. He is most deserving of this award and the PSG thanks him for his 40+ years of innumerable, distinguished contributions to seabird biology and conservation.



Harry Carter receiving a Special Achievement Award from the USFWS San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 2003. From left: Dan Welsh, Harry Carter, Jen Boyce, Kyra Mills, Mike Parker, and Rick Golightly. Photo credit: Gerry McChesney.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

PSG's Special Achievement Award recognizes an individual who has performed outstanding, long-term service for the Pacific Seabird Group, or who has achieved an outstanding and significant exemplary accomplishment for the betterment of seabird research, education, and/or conservation, or both.

DR. ALFONSO AGUIRRE-MUÑOZ

By Federico Méndez-Sánchez, Mark Rauzon, Annie Little,
Jennifer Boyce, and Mariam Latofski-Robles

During its 45th Annual Meeting held in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico in February 2018, the Pacific Seabird Group awarded Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz with a Special Achievement Award. This was done in recognition of Alfonso's efforts to preserve seabird biodiversity on Mexico's islands, including the eradication of 60 populations of invasive mammals from 39 Mexican islands and the protection of over 200 threatened seabird nesting colonies. Beyond his significant contributions to the conservation of seabirds, Alfonso has also fostered and inspired many young professionals who will continue his important work for preserving seabird populations and the islands they depend upon. In summary, Alfonso's dedication, strategic vision, and leadership have made him a champion for seabird conservation, and a model for us all.

For the past four decades, Alfonso has tirelessly worked for the conservation of Mexico's coasts, oceans, islands and the biodiversity they harbor. Alfonso initially studied as an Oceanographer at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC). Afterwards, he attended a graduate course in Aquaculture at Kagoshima University, Japan, where he met his wife Joana Bielschowsky-Gottlieb, with whom he has been married for 38 years and has two daughters, Ikerne and Julene. He holds a Ph.D. in Regional Studies and Sustainable Development from El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF), where he graduated with the highest honors (Suma cum laude).

Early in his career, Alfonso served as the Northwest Regional Manager for the Mexican Government Fisheries

Bank (Banpesca), where he pioneered Mexico's aquaculture in harmony with coastal conservation. He founded "Agromarinos", a flourishing family business in San Quintin Bay dedicated to oyster aquaculture and artisanal seaweed harvesting, a sustainable model that has been replicated and generates hundreds of jobs in the region. He also served as consultant to the Mexican Government, private companies and international agencies.

For 15 years (2002 to 2017), Alfonso was the Executive Director of "Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A.C. (GECI)", a successful science-based Mexican non-profit organization. GECI's goal is to ensure that the restoration, use, and conservation of the Mexican islands are done in an effective way, attending priorities, and using the best science, always in collaboration with local communities, government agencies, international organizations, and academic institutions. The organization supports field work, having restored nearly 60 thousand hectares of island surface within Mexico. During his time as Executive Director, Alfonso fostered significant milestones on island conservation for Mexico and the world. Tangible results are the eradication of 60 populations of invasive mammals from



Alfonso on Bancho Chinchorro (Mexican Caribbean) during the black rat eradication in 2015. Photo credit: GECI Archive / J.A. Soriano.

39 Mexican islands, thus protecting more than 200 highly threatened seabird nesting colonies. Furthermore, his work on public policies provided the foundation for the creation of two significant protected areas by Mexico's Federal Government: Guadalupe Island Biosphere Reserve and the Baja California Pacific Islands Biosphere Reserve. Thanks to his tenacity, all Mexican islands are now protected since December 2016. Moreover, he led the formulation and implementation of Mexico's National Island Strategy—a first of its kind worldwide—that defines management and conservation actions with a long term vision. He had also

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD • Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz

coordinated the successful nomination and integration of the Archipiélago de Revillagigedo as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Since 2008, Alfonso and his team have been leading what is probably the most important and ambitious Seabird Restoration Program both in Mexico and Latin America. This comprehensive program includes monitoring the natural recovery of seabird populations following invasive mammal eradications; implementing social attraction techniques to induce recolonization of extirpated populations; the removal of introduced vegetation for habitat enhancement; interdisciplinary research; environmental education and outreach; and island biosecurity to prevent reinvasion. Thanks to these restoration efforts, 12 extirpated seabird populations have returned to breed to their historic sites; several diminished populations have increased their numbers; and there have also been new nesting records, with colonies being formed on several islands. Some relevant examples are: (1) the return of the Cassin's Auklet (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*) to all its historic breeding sites within Mexico; and (2) the exponential population increase of the Laysan Albatross (*Phoebastria immutabilis*) on Guadalupe Island as a result of the feral cat control and the installation of an exclusion fence to protect the colony

from predation.

For Alfonso, the social sciences have also been important. Early on, he understood that for GECI's valuable restoration actions to endure, the local communities had to be a part of the transformation. The development of a National Program on Island Biosecurity, in collaboration with local communities, has been key to maintain the conservation gains. Alfonso is also a very cultured man, who truly loves the arts. Therefore, he sought to bond environmental learning through art and culture, thus providing opportunities for children from isolated communities to express themselves through music, painting and story-telling, with beautiful results.

His strategic vision and abilities to form strong ties with government agencies, universities, research institutes, fishing cooperatives and a wide donor network, have been vital for all the achievements in his trajectory. He has built solid collaborations with international partners from New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Philippines, Belize, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Ecuador, Brazil, Canada, United States, Germany, and France.

Alfonso's publications include interdisciplinary approaches on natural resources and conservation. He has written and coauthored over 60 research papers, books, book chapters and

other publications dealing with island conservation. He has been a mentor for more than 100 young professionals he has inspired and those concerned with island and seabird conservation.

In 2016, Alfonso became the first Mexican to receive the prestigious MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity, presented by the AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity from the United Nations. The award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the conservation of biodiversity. He has also received other distinctions, such as the Recognition from the Society of the Ancient California and Ensenada's Municipality (2015), and the Love to the Planet Award for Environmental Conservation from the Volkswagen Foundation (2014).

His legacy will continue in the team he so wisely formed, trained, consolidated and now counsels as a member of the board. He has inspired GECI's staff to dream big and work hard towards significant conservation outcomes. Alfonso's trajectory has not only made a difference for the biodiversity on Mexico's islands to thrive, he has also touched the lives of the people on island communities, as well as of those who had the opportunity to collaborate with him.

By awarding Alfonso PSG's Special Achievement Award, we are recognizing



Alfonso receiving the award at the PSG award dinner in La Paz surrounded by friends and colleagues.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD • Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz

the successes of a dedicated conservationist and of a remarkable human being, whose example and leadership has strengthened the conservation and restoration of seabird islands worldwide. We also recognize the young professionals he fostered and inspired in this field who will continue building his legacy for the future of the seabirds and the islands they depend upon.

Alfonso positively affects lives of all kinds, including animal and plant life. We have no doubt that if cypresses, pines, albatrosses, petrels and all other island life forms could talk, they would say “Thank you. Thank you for saving us!”

Alfonso’s words during that memorable dinner award in La Paz surrounded by friends and colleagues:

“I do believe that we all have to thank the marine birds for taking us to beautiful, remote and pristine regions, territories of freedom, so scarce nowadays; for introducing us to valuable working colleagues, that become partners, that become friends, that become best and lasting friends; for bringing distant and close nations, and diverse peoples together, beyond walls and artificial frontiers and barriers; for giving us motive and chances to collaborate; for allowing us to have an outstanding job to raise our families while they raise their chicks; and for giving us hope.”



Left to right: Mark Rauzon, Annie Little, Jennifer Boyce, Alfonso (with award in hand), and Federico Méndez-Sánchez at the Award Ceremony in La Paz. Photo credit: Kyra Mills

STUDENT PRESENTATION AWARDS

Student presentation awards are given out at each year at the Annual Meeting. Oral and poster presentations are judged separately according to guidelines that include originality, presentation style, graphics, format and research data. The award guidelines and judging forms can be found in the PSG Handbook.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Best Student Paper Award - Doctorate: Miriam Lerma (University of Kiel)

Foraging Behavior of Masked Boobies in the World's Largest Oceanic Desert

Honorable Mention - Doctorate: Morgan Gilmour (University of California, Santa Cruz)

Contaminants, Foraging Ecology, and Breeding Hormones in Two Sympatrically Breeding Southern Ocean Seabirds

Honorable Mention - Doctorate.: Miho Sakao (Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute)

Are Streaked Shearwaters Faithful to Their Partners?

Best Student Paper Award - Masters: Julia Gulka (University of Manitoba)

Impacts of Prey Availability on the Foraging Behavior and Diet of Two Alcids in Northeastern Newfoundland

Honorable Mention - Masters: Edward Jenkins (University of Manitoba)

Varying Prey Availability Influences the Dietary Niche Dynamics of the Seabird Assemblage on the Northeastern Newfoundland Coast

Best Student Paper Award - Undergraduate: Gabriela De La Cruz-Pino (Universidad Veracruzana)

Diversity of Seabirds in the Southern Gulf of Mexico

Honorable Mention - Undergraduate: Javier Alcalá-Santoyo (CONACYT-UABCS)

Population Estimate of Black-Vented Shearwater (*Puffinus opisthomelas*) on Natividad Island, Mexico: 2016 & 2017 Breeding Seasons



Student Travel Award winners at the closing banquet in La Paz. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver

STUDENT PRESENTATION AWARDS • POSTER PRESENTATIONS

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Best Student Paper Award - Doctorate.: Caitlin Kroeger (University of California, Santa Cruz)
Corticosterone as a Behavioral Driver and Nutrient Response in Two Sympatric Albatrosses

Honorable Mention - Doctorate: Morgan Gilmour (University of California, Santa Cruz)
First Observations of Magnificent Frigatebird Chick-Rearing Movements in Mexico

Best Student Paper Award - Masters: Vivian Pattison (University of Victoria)
Estimating Population Abundance of Ancient Murrelets on East Limestone Island, BC, Using N-Mixture Models

Honorable Mention - Masters: Olivia Townsend (San Jose University)
Foraging Movements and Oceanic Habitat Use of Red-Tailed Tropicbirds Breeding on Oahu, Hawaii

Best Student Paper Award - Undergraduate: Ana Paula Medina Roman (Oregon State University)
Prey Size and Delivery Rate of Common Murres (*Uria aalge*) in Central Oregon

Honorable Mention - Undergraduate: Tyler Sym (University of Massachusetts-Amherst)
Evaluating the Relationships Between Weather and Nanotagged Terns Using R-Shiny



Poster reception at Centro Cultural La Paz. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver

REPORTS OF PSG OFFICERS

CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2017

Kyra Mills

The year 2017 has gone by in a flash! As I write this, the Local Committee, along with PSG's Executive Council, are in the final preparations for the 45th Annual Meeting in La Paz, Mexico. As we prepare for this meeting, it is a good time to reflect at the year gone by and what we have accomplished, and look ahead to 2018 with a sense of what steps need to be taken to further support and grow the Pacific Seabird Group.

As current Chair, it has been an honor to serve in this capacity and to work alongside such an inspiring and dedicated group of capable people. As I compile the reports for 2017, I am amazed at the tremendous efforts of the various members of the Executive Council (EXCO), the different technical committees, and the PSG representatives. We live in an uncertain political climate, so the invaluable work that PSG members do on a daily basis to protect seabirds and their environment is all the more critical.

As Chair, my primary role this past year has been to keep track of and assist in the ongoing decisions and action items in between EXCO calls and to serve as facilitator for discussions and voting on motions during those calls. I have served on the awards committees for both the Lifetime and Special Achievement awards and the travel awards for students and non-U.S. and Canadian scientists. I was able to participate in several letters for seabird conservation. Along with the rest of the EXCO and the local committee, I helped to ensure a successful meeting in La Paz, including writing a proposal to the Packard Foundation, which resulted in a sizable donation for the meeting. I worked with Yuri Albores (Local Committee chair) to identify interpretation services at the upcoming meeting, in an effort to increase PSG's Latin American reach (which also included a reduced registration rate).

This year we had a very successful

election with multiple candidates on the ballot and high voter participation (59%). We elected 6 new members of EXCO.

A total of 11 conservation letters were written and submitted on critical conservation issues. The Craig Harrison Conservation Fund awarded two grants in 2017 to support seabird research.

The 5 species-specific PSG Technical Committees were all active and our delegates to various organizations represented Pacific Seabird Group very well.

Two big accomplishments in 2017 were to finalize the listserv terms and conditions (which is now on the PSG website), and to draft the Code of Conduct, that is now shared with the rest of the PSG members for comment. Two additional 2017 accomplishments were the finalization of the PSG membership policy and a PSG diversity statement (now on the website).

PSG continues to be active on various social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), with related increases in exposure in 2017. The PSG listserv currently has 774 subscribers, a 10% increase from 2016. PSG's publications are active and up to date, with a bi-yearly publication schedule for Pacific Seabirds (summer and fall/winter), and Marine Ornithology.

The vibrant participation of PSG's student members and Early Career Scientists (ECSs) is a testament to the health of PSG and the importance that PSG, as an organization, places on supporting students and early career scientists. In addition to focused efforts for student mentorship and involvement in the annual meeting, the silent auction continues to raise funds that are important for supporting student travel to the meeting. With a new proposal on the table for research grants exclusively for students, PSG continues to foster the next generation of seabird biologists. 35% of all the presentations at the 2018

La Paz meeting will be by students.

Despite all the growth during the past year, there is always room for improvement and challenges to be met head-on, including:

1. Creative ways to increase PSG membership. There has been a decline in members over the last several years and the time is ripe for a re-envisioning of our efforts for maintaining our current members and recruiting new ones. I have high hopes that in 2018 the new Membership Committee will be able to tackle this challenge.

2. Recruitment of more volunteers. There are many ways to contribute to PSG, and much work to be done to lead this organization into the future. However, most of the work falls on a few people, so increasing the share of the work load will be important in moving forward effectively.

It is exciting that the location of the 2019 annual meeting has already been decided! The next meeting is going to be in Kaua'i, Hawai'i.

It has been an honor to serve as Chair and I look forward to a productive meeting in La Paz.

CHAIR-ELECT'S REPORT FOR 2017

Adrian Gall

Chair Elect Duties for 2018 Scientific Program (21-24 Feb. 2018, La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico):

- Created theme of the meeting: Seabirds without borders/Aves Marinas sin fronteras
- Call for Special Paper sessions, symposia, and workshops sent out via the list serve, Facebook, and Twitter 11 June 2017; second call 1 August 2017.
- Transitioned registration and abstract submission process from RegOnline to Cvent in August 2017
- Transitioned membership database and management from RegOnline to Cvent in August 2017
- Worked with Communications Committee to design the new conference website hosted by Cvent and linked to registration
- Call for abstracts open 21 August – 15 Dec 2017
- Abstracts accepted 17 December 2017, with a couple more trickling in after the deadline for a total of 213 abstracts submitted, before withdrawals
- Invited plenary speakers on 22 August 2017; 5 plenary speakers confirmed
- Participated in Lifetime and Special Achievement award decisions in late August
- Participated in Travel Awards decisions in mid-December
- Organized Session Chairs
- Organized the Scientific Program of 3 concurrent sessions with assistance from Juliet Lamb

Lessons learned

Cvent's Abstract Management tool was not ready for prime time. It re-ordered co-authors; reviewers had difficulty accessing the abstracts that they were assigned for review; it allowed deletion of all the travel awards essays with no

warning; and the session scheduling function didn't work during the time that we needed to schedule the sessions (Dec-Jan). We defaulted to using a GoogleSheet to schedule the sessions, which allowed for a collaborative approach with version records. I am still working with Cvent to address the issues, but we will need to see plenty of evidence from them that these issues have been resolved before going down this road for the next meeting. Cvent refunded the annual fee for the tool in full.

Cvent registration and event website worked seamlessly. The Communications Committee was critical in setting up the event website, but it has been a challenge to keep information consistent and up-to-date between the Cvent event website and the PSG website. I recommend phasing out use of the PSG website for delivering information to the membership about the meeting and simply placing a link for the Cvent website.

Registration and the program were especially challenged this year because many travel requests from US government employees were denied by their agencies. Fortunately, the generous \$50,000 grant from the Packard Foundation allowed us to compensate for some loss in US participation by facilitating travel and participation by researchers from Latin America and Asia. We were also able to offer more assistance to students coming from worldwide.

Scientific Program

156 oral presentations and 42 posters

Five Plenary speakers:

1. Dr. Michael Brooke (University of Cambridge)
2. Dr. Juan Esteban Martinez Gomez (Inecol)
3. Dr. Robert Pitman (NOAA Fisheries-Southwest Science Center)

4. Dr. Enriqueta Velarde (Universidad Veracruzana)
5. Dr. Stephen Votier (University of Exeter)

Special Paper Sessions

1. Seabird Restoration, convened by Yuliana Bedoya (Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A. C.): 8 talks, 2 posters
2. Impact of Purse-Seine Fisheries on Seabird Bycatch: In Search of Mitigation Measures and Industry Involvement, convened by Enriqueta Velarde (Universidad Veracruzana), Cristian Suazo (BirdLife International), and Dan Anderson (UC Davis): 10 talks
3. Harry Carter's Legacy, convened by Trudy Chatwin (Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations), Nina Karnovsky (Pomona College) and Kuniko Otsuki (Marine Bird Restoration Group): 8 talks, 1 poster

Symposia

1. Conservation and Research of the Sternula Terns in the Pacific, convened by Thomas Ryan (Ryan Ecological Consulting): 14 talks, 2 posters
2. Conservation Needs in Northwestern Mexico, convened by Yuri Albores (UABCS) and Gustavo Danemann (Pronatura Noroeste): 8 talks

Workshops

1. Using Drones or UAVs to Study and Conserve Seabirds and Other Birds, offered by David Bird and Émile Brisson-Curadeau (McGill University)
2. Passive Acoustic Monitoring Workshop, offered by Ali Donargo and Nicole Wright (Wildlife Acoustics)
3. Hot Topics Round Table, offered by Jen Zamon (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), moderated by Adrian Gall

PAST-CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2017

Nina Karnovsky

Summary of Past Chair Tasks for 2017-2018:

Based on the PSG Handbook of primary responsibilities for the Past Chair, I report the following:

Assist the Chair with PSG operations: Kyra Mills-Parker, PSG Chair, has been a pleasure to work with. I have tried to be of assistance when needed. Towards this task I've participated in EXCO meetings, provided input on monthly decisions and on letters drafted by the Conservation Chair, and held follow-up teleconferences on various issues as needed.

As Awards Committee Chair: The Lifetime Achievement Award (LAA) went to two recipients this year. One award was given early in April, 2017 to Harry Carter. He was able to receive this honor before he passed away in April, 2017. Dr. Enriqueta Velarde will be awarded a LAA in La Paz. The Special Achievement Award (SAA) will go to Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz. Assisting in the selection of LAA and SAA were the Chair Elect and Chair. I solicited nominations during the 2017 PSG annual meeting and via postings on the

PSG listserv. The committee submitted their selections to the EXCO for a vote at the September 2017 EXCO meeting, with all approved. I have submitted text for the trophies and am working on planning the awards dinner.

As Travel Awards Chair: In 2018 we were able to offer travel awards to 10 times the number of people than last year. This was largely due to a generous grant from the Packard Foundation, a challenge grant, and donations from EXCO and other members. A new category of grant specifically for Early Career Scientists was established. We offered 7 of these grants. The number of travel grants to non-US/Canadian scientists went up from 4 to 18. All but one has been able to accept the grant. Travel grants to students went up from 8 in 2017 to 36 in 2018. Currently all but one student has accepted the award

Organize student paper judging: After the 2017 meeting I sent all of the students the comments they received on their presentations and posters. In the weeks leading up to the 2018 meeting I will be coordinating the judging of student papers and posters. We have

record numbers of students this year.

Assist Chair Elect and Local Committee Chair in preparation for the annual meeting: Whenever possible I have tried to be of assistance to the remarkable Chair Elect, Adrian Gall and the very capable Local Chair, Yuri Albores.

Begin the selection and confirmation of future meeting sites: After the 2017 meeting I solicited applications for new local committees and the 2019 meeting will be in Kauai. The EXCO approved this location during the December 2017 meeting. The local committee chair is Jessica Hallman Behnke and she has put together a capable and enthusiastic local committee that also includes Andre Raine who is currently an EXCO member.

Recommendations for the future: I am gratified by the increase in participation of students in PSG. I think that the new initiatives for Early Career Scientists are wonderful and think it is these types of activities that increase mentoring and build community amongst members will keep Pacific Seabird Group strong in these challenging times.

VICE-CHAIR FOR CONSERVATION'S REPORT FOR 2017

Mark Rauzon

We've had a pretty good year for the Conservation Committee, given the political climate. The Conservation Committee doesn't really exist; it's whoever feels the need to raise an issue and bring it to our attention. So far, we've been reactive in responding to issues.

I'd like us to remember that in 1995, PSG received a grant under the auspices

of NAFTA to bring three eradication practitioners from New Zealand and 30 participants from Mexico to meet just across the U.S. border in Ensenada. The meeting produced one giant spreadsheet of all the islands in Mexico where eradications could occur. From this spreadsheet, Island Conservation, GIESE and CICESE took ownership,

and look where we are now – hearing about the tremendous conservation successes in Mexico. PSG was the group that brought these people together to make it happen.

We've been advocating for seabird conservation through the Vice Chair for Conservation for at least 23 years. There are now several legislative acts

REPORTS OF PSG OFFICERS

under assault in the U.S.: the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Endangered Species Act, etc. PSG has strategically weighed in on local, regional and national issues, including being part of over 300 environmental organizations who signed on to the National Audubon Society's letter to protest gutting the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Here are our 2017 letters (11 total):

1. To the US Dept. of Interior, re: evaluation of Marine National Monuments in the Pacific
2. To USFWS, removal of "no net conservation gain" in mitigation planning under ESA
3. To USFWS, re: the proposal to rescind the Kodiak Road Closure to Hunting regulation
4. To BirdLife International – to upgrade the listing status of the Aleutian Tern
5. To WA House Committee sponsoring HB2300, re: marbled murrelets
6. To ODFW, to review the status of the marbled murrelet
7. To USFWS, to review the status of the marbled murrelet
8. To ODFW, to uplist the marbled murrelet from OR Threatened to OR Endangered
9. To USWS, to disallow harvest within marbled murrelet habitat after 2 years of surveys
10. To WADNR, to amend the draft environmental impact statement on marbled murrelet
11. To UNESCO, supporting the creation of the Japanese Kaminoseki World Heritage Site

There are a few conservation losses this year: Izembek Lagoon/Izembek National Wildlife Refuge land swap in Cold Bay – the access road was approved. There are several lawsuits pending. We'll have to see what happens to the MBTA. The environment and many social norms are all under assault during the Trump Administration. I encourage all of you to put your energy/anger into the PSG Conservation Committee

this year. Make your voice heard with your time and your pocketbook. These contributions help PSG respond.

I want to close by saying as a long-time PSG member, over the last 7 years I've witnessed some extraordinary female leaders take this organization to the next level. PSG is reflecting larger societal changes, including fostering and promoting scientists of all backgrounds and nationalities to the highest levels of the organization. PSG is a leader in this capacity – just look at some of the many long-term female members in this room.

OPEN FORUM FOR MEMBERS:

Mexico Fisheries: At this meeting, the unsustainability of purse seine fisheries in Mexico, for instance, and limiting take is a key issue we can respond to. Most of the fish the purse seine fishery in Mexico is catching is being converted to fish meal – a waste of fish protein, especially when the world is starving. The next conservation steps for PSG should come from the meeting.

Communication Processes: PSG should do more to put out press releases. The local media is incredibly hungry for stories. Indeed, the local press in La Paz just interviewed Yuri Albores, the conference coordinator. If there was a press release person in PSG, then there would be a way to integrate and summarize the key information at the meetings. PSG needs to promote ideas worth spreading – a big picture idea – global warming, ocean acidification, over-fishing, plastics. Fossil fuel use is going to take us into the 6th extinction -that seabird populations have fallen 70% in the last 50 years. There is good reason for PSG to promote the collective, "this is what seabird biologists think." We need to be more in the public eye.

Internal communications are also important, for example, alerting graduate students, especially if this is their first meeting – what are the recurring themes? One is plastic and we're planning to have plastics as the theme for PSG 2019 in Hawaii. How do members hear about conservation issues

PSG is working on, before the annual meeting? Answer: via the PSG website, Facebook, Twitter and the listserve, with a message about where people can find the best information on the subject. These issues should be posted to the listserve, otherwise they are not reaching most of the membership. It is not on PSG communications committee or the Conservation Committee to update the membership about all conservation issues. It is the membership's responsibility to post these things for one another. Some people find it hard to send out things to the listserve because of unfiltered responses received. The moment you hit send the message arrives in 744 inboxes.

PSG does not need to track large-scale policy issues – American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and Audubon already do that. The regional representatives should sign up for the Audubon and ABC listserves and put relevant issues on the listserve. PSG is committed to focused campaigns, which is why PSG doesn't sign on to Change.org, for instance. This, of course, doesn't stop individual members from signing on to these campaigns, as a way to become more involved.

Each time PSG sends out a letter, the Vice Chair for Conservation should put that on the listserve. The volume of letters received when something is up for public comment is really important. PSG could submit a letter, but also request letters from each of us. Individual members can get their facts from PSG's policy letter. Letters written by small conservation organizations don't always fail. Small organizations in Alaska have convinced the EPA to retain toxic waste dumping regulations from mines.

Trap-neuter-release (TNR): Speaking of communications, it's recommended that PSG take a stance on TNR, to inform the public of our position. For example, the New York mayor has specifically come out to support the TNR effort. On Lanai there is a giant TNR colony, and people come to see the cats. What is even more troubling is that people love cats more than the love native wildlife.

REPORTS OF PSG OFFICERS

They would rather see that than native wildlife.

The TNR issue is more than a state, or national problem: it's a worldwide problem, an issue at so many levels. The USFWS ought to have a policy on TNR, but it doesn't, and won't have one in the near future. There is a bill (Hawaii HB 2593) making its way through the Hawaii legislature to ban cat colonies, and the Governor (David Ige) promised to sign it when it if it reaches his desk. There is specific language banning people from abandoning or feeding animals on state property. If we had written a letter about this effort in Hawaii, it could have helped. It was something members should have brought to PSG.

Thus PSG is forming a working group on TNR and cats but it needs a policy to deal with the resulting public outcry from pro-cat supporters. How will the Vice Chair for Conservation respond? Once the PSG position statement was available it would help other organizations to apply for funds to assist with control programs. It would be something others (individuals, organizations) could cite in proposals.

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatross and Petrels (ACAP):

There is a bill being introduced in the US House (Alan Lowenthal) to get the US to be a signatory on ACAP. Audubon and ABC are trying to get the public behind this bill to get it introduced again this year. Either individually, or as a group, PSG should support this bill. The ABC has written a letter - Lisa Murkowski is involved with this bill. ABC shared this draft letter with PSG. It would be good for PSG to come up with a strong statement to agencies or government representatives for joining ACAP. It should be not U.S. centric, instead ocean-wide. The U.S., Mexico, and Canada are all "range states" - non members of ACAP who send delegates as observers.

ACAP really embraced Mexico attending the meeting. They really want Mexico to join. We have sent a letter to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in Mexico about this. Within Foreign Affairs in Mexico, there is a Commission with a program on birds. Talks are ongoing in Mexico, but it appears to be moving forward. People from Foreign Affairs in Mexico will come to the next ACAP meeting in South Africa.

Cormorants: A lot of us may have missed the word from Washington D.C.

- the Aquaculture Resource Depredation Order - ARDO (1998) and Public Resource Depredation Order - PRDO (2003), which does away with the NEPA process - the U.S. Government has ruled to reinstate those two orders and resume lethal control of Double-crested Cormorants. The ARDO was set up to protect catfish farms in the deep south. The PRDO comes up for renewal every 5 years. That was taken to court by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). The judge abolished the two orders two years ago. Now they have been reinstated summarily, with no judicial review. The Depredation permit issued by USFWS allows for up to 11,000 cormorants to be killed at the mouth of the Columbia River, by Wildlife Services (WS). WS killed 5,000 cormorants in 2017 before the colony abandoned. In 2018, there may be no more killing because the colony is gone. We'll have to wait to see if the corms re-establish on East Sand Island. The result of this disturbance is probably a net increase of birds eating salmon.

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2017

Jane Dolliver

Motions passed by the 2017-2018 PSG Executive Council

March 2017

1. Approve PSG Diversity Statement
2. Create PSG Coloring Book with Advance Wildlife Education

April 2017

1. Approve the nomination of Harry Carter for the PSG Lifetime Achievement Award

May 2017

1. Approve the PSG 2018 Annual Meeting budget
2. Approve the fiscal year 2017 budget

July 2017

1. Approve Cvent registration, membership and abstract management 5-year contract
2. Establish EXCO permanent contributions to PSG travel awards fund - \$50/EXCO member
3. Require PSG Regional

Representatives to contact lapsed members

August 2017

1. Approve Luana Events Client Agreement
2. Create Local Committee bank account in Mexico, US \$5,000

September 2017

1. Approve PSG 2018 Registration rates
2. Approve PSG listserv terms and conditions document

REPORTS OF PSG OFFICERS

3. Approve PSG 2018 disabilities statement

October 2017

1. Approve transfer of \$10,000 to Mexico for PSG 2018
2. Approve the PSG Lifetime and Special Achievement award recommendations
3. Sponsor WSTC#4 conference

November 2017

1. Print nametags in different colors of cardstock to identify members
2. Approve a new, Early Career Scientist Travel Award
3. Review the Children's Book, "The Blue Footies"

December 2017

1. Approve PSG 2019 meeting location
2. Approve PSG membership policy

Secretary Milestones in 2017-2018

In addition to serving on the PSG Communications Committee, Elections Committee, and Ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee and Ad-hoc

Policies and Procedures Committee, the Secretary played a vital role in:

1. Finding two website coordinator replacements
2. Building the Cvent event website and updating content via a multitude of sources
3. Organizing the first, Ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee meeting
4. Getting candidates to run, organizing the PSG 2017 Elections via SurveyMonkey, and sending ballot reminders to members.
5. Creating reports and getting ExCo approval on four successful motions 1) PSG coloring book, 2) PSG disability statement, 3) Early-career scientist award, 4) PSG membership policy

Projects and needs in 2018-2019

In the following year, the PSG Secretary has a big lift – to finish an MS thesis and:

1. (leftover from 2017): Create a

PSG core values and sustainability document: mission, vision, and at a minimum a:

- fundraising plan with fundraising goals
 - membership plan with membership goals
2. (leftover from 2017) Finish edits and publish the 2018 version of the PSG Handbook.
 3. Assist the Elections Committee in nominating two candidates to run for the Secretary position, 2019-2021. This will be my last year as Secretary (first term 2015-2017, re-elected 2017-2019). I agree to mentor my replacement during their first year, 2019-2020, as recommended by the PSG Handbook.
 4. Create a tracking sheet for all PSG volunteers, including ExCo Committees, Technical Committees, Local Committee, etc. Make this a monthly report for ExCo meetings.



Sunset in La Paz. Photo credit: Kyra Mills.

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

PSG's committees support research, work on conservation, maintain communications, and support members throughout the Pacific. Their reports contain information on field work, current issues, and committee participation. Contact information for committee coordinators (i.e. chairs) can be found near the back of this issue.

NORTHEAST ASIA SEABIRD CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

**Daisuke Ochi and Gregg Howald,
Coordinators**

The NE Asia Seabird Conservation Committee meets annually, typically at the PSG meetings in North America.

The group is encouraging information sharing and creating opportunity for relationship building between conservationists on both sides of the Pacific.

Below, we summarize NEASCC (changed from JSCC) activities in 2017 as shared by committee members:

MEETINGS

We met at the 2017 PSG meeting in Tacoma, WA to discuss recent and future research in Korea, China and Japan. We had 22 participants to discuss conservation of Japanese Murrelet, Chinese Crested Tern and Ancient Murrelet.

SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

Simba Chan (BirdLife International (BLI) Asia Division) reports that the National Institute of Ecology (NIE) of Korea has been conducting surveys of seabirds in southwestern islands of the country since 2014. On 26 April 2016 our surveyors first discovered one breeding pair of Chinese Crested Terns (*Thalasseus bernsteini*) incubating eggs in a colony of Black-tailed Gulls (*Larus crassirostris*). At the end of the season, two pairs of Chinese Crested Terns were found but only one pair had breeding success (a single chick). This discovery was significant because Chinese Crested Terns were highly social breeders but it was previously assumed they could only nest within colonies of their own species or very closely related species, the Great

Crested Tern (*T. bergii*). This breeding behavior had been observed at all known breeding colonies until this unique discovery in Korea. Breeding of Chinese Crested Tern was confirmed again at the same site in Korea in 2017, when six birds visited the same island and two breeding pairs formed. One chick successfully fledged. The NIE Korea is considering deploying social attraction devices to the island in 2018.

Yutaka Watanuki (Hokkaido University, Japan) and his colleagues continued seabird monitoring work at Teuri Island, Hokkaido Japan. In 2017, a few fledgling Rhinoceros Auklets (*Cerorhinca monocerata*; RHAU) were found, slightly better than the last two years when shortages of Japanese Anchovy (*Engraulis japonicas*) and Pacific Sand Lance (*Ammodytes hexapterus*) occurred, presumably affecting reproduction. Other monitoring activities that took place over the season included Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*) and Japanese Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax capillatus*) surveys. Black-tailed Gulls established a new breeding area, while breeding locations of cormorants remained unchanged. The Ministry of the Environment has been protecting seabird breeding area at Teuri Island and cats are being controlled through removals. Akiko Shoji has been continuing a study of biotransport by RHAU and Kentaro Kazama has been developing protocols for evaluating windmill effects on Black-tailed Gulls at Rishiri Island and Esashi-cho, Hokkaido. Bungo Nishizawa has completed boat surveys of seabirds in the Arctic Ocean-Bering Sea. Akinori Takahashi (National Institute of Polar Research), collaborating with Yasuaki Niizuma (Meijo University, Japan) and Sasha Kitaysky (University of Alaska, Fairbanks), has been continuing a project

on physiological carry-over effects using RHAU.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIA

On 18-19 March 2017, the 2017 Japanese Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus wumizusume*) symposium was held in Kadogawa-cho Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan. The Marine Bird Restoration Group (MBRG) assisted as supervisors. PSG members Kuniko Otsuki (MBRG), John Piatt (U.S. Geological Surveys), Darrell Whitworth (California Institute Environmental Studies), Nina Karnovsky (Pomona University), and Kim Nelson (Oregon State University) were invited and gave talks. Harry Carter (Carter Biological Consulting) was in Japan on 14-26 March to participate in the symposium, but he decided to stay in Fukuoka Prefecture due to health reasons. The symposium was very successful. For the scientific session (18 March), there were a total of 154 participants and speakers representing four countries: Japan, United States, Canada, and South Korea. The general public session (on the 19th) had 116 participants. In the public session people learned what the Japanese Murrelet is, where they go after the breeding season, the threats that they face, why we need to monitor them, and how to monitor.

In the technical meeting, part of the symposium, scientists discussed development of a standardized protocol for one monitoring method, the spotlight survey. Unfortunately, we were unable to settle on a single basic method for the spotlight survey. However, we at least agreed on the necessity of establishing a common survey protocol that can be used by all Japanese Murrelet research groups, which would allow us to compare population estimates at different colonies from the results of spotlight surveys. We thank the Kadogawa government for

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

supporting the symposium.

Kuniko Otsuki and Harry Carter were co-coordinators of the booklet project sponsored by Lush Japan Charity Bank. The booklet titled “Status and Monitoring of Rare and Threatened Japanese Crested Murrelet” is published on 4 October 2017. This booklet provides a summary of the conclusions reached at the 2017 Japanese Murrelet symposium, including the status of the Japanese Murrelet, and our plans for future tasks. We include only one observation from the Kaminoseki area (Yamaguchi Prefecture), where the murrelets are facing a nuclear power plant issue. The booklet will be useful for both scientists and the public who are seeking more information about the Japanese Murrelet. We dedicate this booklet to the late Harry Carter (17 January 1956 – 30 April 2017), who loved Japanese Murrelets and Japan very much. His 23-year old dream “to hold a meeting for the conservation of Japanese Murrelets” finally came true. Furthermore, we will continue to work for many years on important tasks for protecting this rare species. Harry’s legacy will continue to be handed down from now into the future.

KITTLITZ’S MURRELET TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

**Sara Schoen and John Piatt,
Coordinators**

The Kittlitz’s Murrelet Technical Committee (KMTC) was formed in 2008 out of growing public and government concerns related to the status and conservation of this rare seabird. In 2004, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) included the Kittlitz’s Murrelet (KIMU) as a new candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The KIMU remained on the candidate list until 2013, when the USFWS announced a 12-month finding that listing the KIMU was not warranted at that time. The purpose of the KMTC is to: (1) act as a technical authority on the status, distribution, and life history

of the KIMU; (2) identify, encourage, and facilitate research; (3) address conservation problems related to the KIMU; and (4) act as a liaison between research and management.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, ISSUES, UPDATES

(1) The KMTC last met on 22 February 2017 in conjunction with the Pacific Seabird Group meeting in Tacoma, Washington. Eight members participated.

(2) Meeting highlights: Jonathan Felis gave an overview of a paper he was lead author on which described a KIMU nest database and nest habitat mapping, Katie Stoner described KIMU nesting ecology and satellite tagging work on Kodiak Island, Leah Kenney provided updates on KIMU nest searching on Adak Island, and Kelly Nesvacil summarized survey work in Yakutat and Icy bays.

(3) Issues: This committee has not been very active in recent years. With a lack of designated funding for KIMU research, and the “not warranted” listing decision of the USFWS, it has been difficult to prioritize KMTC work.

At the next KMTC meeting in La Paz, Mexico, we will meet to (1) identify and summarize KIMU research projects currently underway, (2) discuss the future role of the KMTC, and (3) consider writing a letter to the USFWS on KIMU, discussing: renewed threats with extreme warming events, and raising the level of “special concern” from a 2 to a 1. We appreciate the opportunity to coordinate this committee on behalf of the Pacific Seabird Group.

SCRIPPS’S MURRELET AND GUADALUPE MURRELET TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

**Yuliana Bedolla and David
Mazurkiewicz,
Coordinators**

In 2012, the American Ornithologists’ Union split Xantus’s Murrelet into Scripps’s Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus scrippsi*) and Guadalupe Murrelet (*S. hypoleucus*), based on genetic separation. Both species are being considered for listing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see below). The mandate of the Scripps’s Murrelet and Guadalupe Murrelet Technical Committee (SMGMTC; formerly the Xantus’s Murrelet Technical Committee) is to “monitor the federal listing petition, state status, research, and conservation issues; provide information to interested parties; and coordinate research and conservation in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada.” The Scripps’s Murrelet occurs at sea along western Baja California, California, Oregon, Washington, and south-central British Columbia; it breeds on islands off southern California and northwestern Baja California. The Guadalupe Murrelet also occurs at sea along western Baja California, California, Oregon, Washington, and south-central British Columbia; but it breeds mainly at Guadalupe Island, with smaller numbers at the San Benito Islands and a few at some other islands as far north as Santa Barbara Island. Below, we summarize SMGMTC activities in 2017:

MEETINGS

The SMGMTC met at the February 2017 PSG Annual Meeting in Tacoma, WA. Committee members provided updates on ongoing monitoring, research, restoration, and conservation activities, and discussed the status of the management and restoration plan.

MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN

In 2015, the SMGMTC updated part of the Murrelet Management and Restoration Plan that will help guide government and private efforts to protect and restore Scripps’s and Guadalupe murrelets at breeding islands in southern California and northwestern Baja California. The draft plan was completed in 2011. While partly revised,

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

a completely revised draft is still not done. No progress occurred in 2017 due to time needed for conservation efforts for other seabirds (especially the Ashy Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma homochroa*). Our goal is to finish the revised draft in 2018 and circulate to all committee members and management agencies for comments.

LISTING STATUS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service declined to list Scripps's Murrelet and Guadalupe Murrelet under the U.S. Endangered Species Act in a decision issued on 21 September 2016. Certain members of the committee assisted the Service in 2014–2016 with needed information. The Service's finding stated, "we find that the stressors impacting the species have either been eliminated or reduced to the point where they are not of sufficient imminence, intensity, or magnitude, either singularly or cumulatively, to indicate that the Guadalupe [and Scripps's] murrelet is currently in danger of extinction (an endangered species), or likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future (a threatened species) throughout all or a significant portion of its range."

The State of California officially listed the Xantus's Murrelet as Threatened in December 2004. However, there is still no recovery plan or implementation schedule. Xantus's Murrelets are listed as Endangered in Mexico; the species is not listed in Canada. None of these designations have been changed since Xantus's Murrelet was officially split into Scripps's Murrelet and Guadalupe Murrelet.

NEST MONITORING AND SURVEYS

Santa Barbara Island: Nest monitoring of Scripps's Murrelets to measure hatching success, timing of breeding, and changes in population size was continued by the California Institute of Environmental Studies (CIES) and Channel Islands National Park (CINP: Mazurkiewicz), with funding from the Montrose Settlements Trustee Council

(MSTC). Scripps's Murrelets nested in restoration plots in both artificial and natural nest sites, and active nest sites have been increasing in these locations since 2014.

San Clemente Island: The California Institute of Environmental Studies (CIES; Carter, Parker, and Whitworth) produced a long-term population monitoring plan for *Synthliboramphus* murrelets at San Clemente Island, California, and conducted limited nest monitoring in their 6th year of ongoing studies at the island.

Santa Catalina Island: CIES (Whitworth) collaborated with the Catalina Island Conservancy (Dvorak and King) to conduct the 6th year of Scripps's Murrelet spotlight surveys and nest monitoring at Santa Catalina Island, California.

Prince Island – Scorpion Rocks, Santa Barbara Island and San Clemente Island: Acoustic data on Scripps's and Guadalupe murrelets were gathered with songmeters by the U.S. Geological Survey (Adams), CINP and Conservation Metrics (McKown). They are investigating whether or not acoustic monitoring can be used for monitoring murrelets and storm-petrels, with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Guadalupe, Coronado, Todos Santos, San Martín, San Jerónimo and San Benito Islands: Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A.C. (GECI) continued monitoring activities for Scripps's and/or Guadalupe murrelets, including nest censuses, spotlight surveys, evaluation of reproductive performance, banding, and collecting biological samples (feathers and blood) with funding from the Luckenbach Trustee Council, MSTC, and NFWF.

RESTORATION

Santa Barbara and Anacapa Islands: Active plant restoration efforts by CINP and CIES on Santa Barbara Island were reduced to maintenance of existing restoration sites in 2017. Active habitat restoration is currently underway on East Anacapa Island for a second year

in 2017 due to continued access issues at Santa Barbara Island with loss of the dock. Black rats (*Rattus rattus*) were eradicated at Anacapa in 2002 and the murrelet population doubled in size by 2014 (CIES: Whitworth & Carter). Murrelets do not currently nest on the top of East Anacapa (where plant restoration is occurring) but occur in close proximity in cliff area near restoration sites. Nesting has been documented in sea caves, steep slopes and cliffs since 1994. This work is funded by MSTC. A small grant was submitted and received by CIES from the Sonoran Joint Venture for increased SCMU monitoring at Anacapa in 2018 to help inform restoration efforts.

Guadalupe, Coronado, Todos Santos, San Martín, San Jerónimo and San Benito Islands: In 2017, GECI continued restoration activities through implementing social attraction techniques for murrelets using artificial burrows and acoustic playbacks, and through environmental education and outreach, with funding from the Luckenbach Trustee Council, MSTC, and NFWF.

CONSERVATION ISSUES

Introduced Mammals: GECI initiated feral cat eradication (4-year project) on Guadalupe Island in the last spring with funding from NFWF, and continues working with local fishing communities to enforce measures to prevent re-introduction of non-native species on nesting islands in Baja California. CINP and the USN are discussing biosecurity efforts that could be taken to prevent movements of introduced black rats from San Miguel Island (SMI) to Prince Island. A proposal was submitted to NFWF in 2017 to look at feasibility of rat eradication at SMI. At San Clemente Island, the Institute for Wildlife Studies has been protecting murrelet breeding areas from black rats using poison, and cats are being controlled through removals, with funding from the USN.

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

MARBLED MURRELET TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

**Kim Nelson and Peter Harrison,
Coordinators**

The Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee (MMTC) was created in 1986. It has been a longstanding committee of the Pacific Seabird Group. Its roles are to: (1) act as a technical authority about the status, distribution, and life history of the Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*); (2) encourage, facilitate, and identify research needs; (3) address conservation problems related to the Marbled Murrelet; and (4) act as a liaison between research and management.

MMTC ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2017

The MMTC met at the 2017 Annual Pacific Seabird Group Meeting in Tacoma, Washington on 22 February 2017. Kim Nelson, Oregon State University (OSU) and Peter Harrison, Washington Department of Natural Resources are co-chairs of this committee. The MMTC Inland Survey Protocol Subcommittee (ISP) made little progress on revisions to the 2003 survey protocol this year. Challenges preventing the ISP subcommittee from moving forward with protocol revisions included the lack of a complete charter and a detailed decision-making process. The PSG Executive Council has been briefed on the issues and has graciously provided funding for the ISP subcommittee to hire a professional facilitator. The facilitator will help the ISP subcommittee develop a charter that describes the committee's purpose, roles for members, a structured decision-making process, and clear expectations for ongoing communication and deliverables. Once the charter and decision-making process is completed, the ISP subcommittee will use these tools to address a myriad of unresolved technical issues. The desired goal for 2018 is to publish a revised protocol in time for implementation into the 2018

survey season. It is extremely likely that the statistical analysis of the probability of detecting murrelet occupancy as a function of the survey effort will take an additional year of review and analysis and will not be available until 2019.

The Marine Subcommittee, led by Matt Reed (Hamer Environmental L.P.) is continuing their work on technical reports for the first four Marbled Murrelet marine priorities: (1) bycatch in fisheries; (2) identification of important marine areas; (3) prey resources; and (4) oil mortality. Additional Groups 5-8 have been identified but not started. They include: (5) chemical contaminants, (6) wind/wave farms, (7) marine aquaculture and (8) marine construction.

Due to the work schedules of many of the subcommittee members, the subcommittee was unable to meet in 2017 (other than meeting at PSG 2017). We are hoping that 2018 will be more productive for the subcommittee.

We welcomed 5 new subcommittee members in 2017. They include Jenna Cragg from B.C. Provincial Government, Patrick O'Hara with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Jim Rivers of OSU, Stephanie James of Turnstone Environmental, and Jonathan Felis of U.S. Geological Service (USGS). If anyone else is interested in joining the subcommittee, contact Matt Reed of Hamer Environmental.

ALEUTIAN TERN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

**Susan Oehlers and Mike Goldstein,
Coordinators**

During the 2016 PSG Annual meeting, the Aleutian Tern (*Onychoprion aleuticus*, ALTE) Working Group was formalized as a PSG Technical Committee, with co-coordinators Susan Oehlers (U.S. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Yakutat Ranger District) and Mike Goldstein (U.S. Forest Service, Alaska Region). This group includes members from multiple government organizations (including U.S. Forest

Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and National Park Service), universities, and national and international non-government organizations (including National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Bird Life International), as well as independent researchers. Objectives of this group include; 1) expansion of the committee to include additional resource management agencies including those with marine and coastal jurisdiction, federal research agencies, and additional non-government organizations and international partners, 2) international networking with resource professionals, academic researchers, and local ornithological groups in other countries within the species range, and 3) production of a peer reviewed publication or white paper summarizing current available information on ALTE.

The approximately 30-member committee fosters state, provincial, national, and international collaboration to study the Aleutian Tern, and meets in conjunction with the PSG annual meeting as well as formally and informally throughout the year. Several new technical committee members were added in 2017, primarily as a result of networking through PSG and the Alaska Bird Conference, as well as referrals from existing committee members.

This annual report summarizes accomplishments of the technical committee, including highlights of individual member's contributions, during the 2017 fiscal year.

MEETINGS

A subset of members met in Juneau in January 2017, to focus on the collaborative process in developing proposals and implementing research and monitoring. The technical committee formally met twice (February 22 and 24) during the annual PSG conference in Tacoma, Washington. Several additional side meetings between members took place during the conference, and collaboration was ongoing throughout the year.

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Several steps towards elevating the international status of ALTE were accomplished:

(1) Technical committee members provided input (a formal letter from PSG to BirdLife International) to the ongoing IUCN assessment of range-wide Aleutian Tern status. The status has since been elevated from “least concern” to “vulnerable.”

(2) Aleutian Terns were discussed during the January meeting of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership Seabird Working Group, attended by technical committee members Robb Kaler (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds Management) and Simba Chan (BirdLife Asia).

(3) The possibility of adding Aleutian Terns to the list of species receiving official Russian – U.S. bilateral cooperation is also currently under investigation.

A subset of committee members collaborated on a pilot study deploying PTT transmitter tags in 2 regions; Yakutat and Dillingham. Fifteen PTT tags were deployed, and multiple colony surveys were conducted throughout the season. Additionally, a pilot nest monitoring study utilizing remote cameras was implemented on Yakutat area colonies. Project results will be presented at the 2018 Alaska Marine Science Symposium, Aleutian Tern Conservation Planning Meeting, and the 2018 Pacific Seabird Group Annual Conference.

In addition to the Yakutat and Dillingham area surveys, monitoring was conducted by committee members on the Kenai Peninsula (Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Homer area), Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge (including nest camera monitoring and collection of nest-site habitat data), the Alaska National Maritime Wildlife Refuge, and from Naknek to Port Moller on the Bering Sea coast (Alaska Peninsula/Becharof National Wildlife Refuge). Additionally, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge staff conducted pilot work utilizing an unmanned aerial

system (i.e. UAS or “drone”) to survey a mixed Arctic and Aleutian tern colony.

Committee members provided technical review of the Aleutian Tern section of Audubon’s Ecological Atlas of the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas. Several committee members submitted comments to the North Pacific Research Board, to include Aleutian Terns as a research priority for the next annual funding cycle. Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge wildlife biologists are working with the new USFWS “Pacific Seabird Program” data manager to update online records of ALTE colonies.

GRANTS

A subset of committee members was approved for a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant for continued tagging and monitoring work in several regions (Yakutat, Dillingham/Platinum, and Kodiak) as well as conservation planning (i.e. a workshop/meeting to further refine and be consistent in our colony monitoring methods) during 2018.

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge wildlife biologist Heather Renner, in collaboration with Don Lyons and Dan Roby from Oregon State University and U.S. Geological Survey, applied for and successfully secured funding through the Department of Interior’s Science Support Program/Quick Response Program to begin collaboration with Russian ALTE experts. Initial networking has been initiated, with the intent for a field expedition to Sakhalin Island (site of a number of historically large breeding colonies) in 2018.

With support and collaboration from the technical committee, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Landscape Ecologist Dawn Magness submitted a proposal to the NASA DEVELOP program to utilize NASA imagery to map potential Aleutian Tern nesting habitat, including, if feasible, a time series of potential habitat to understand if habitat is shifting. This proposal was chosen for further development.

University of Alaska Southeast professor Sanjay Pyare submitted a proposal for a 2018-2019 Fulbright Scholar award titled “Aleutian-tern migration research as a flagship for Indonesian-U.S. collaboration, conservation and education.” The proposal would support five months of Aleutian tern international research and outreach/networking with Indonesian researchers, government agencies, and students. The Fulbright Foundation’s Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) has completed its review of the proposal, has recommended it for a Fulbright award in Indonesia, and its award is pending budgetary approval.

Several additional grants were applied for through committee member collaborations and either were not accepted or are pending approval.

SEABIRD MONITORING COMMITTEE

Heather Renner and Robb Kaler

The Seabird Monitoring Committee was formed in 1992 to promote: (i) a better coordinated program for monitoring Pacific seabirds; (ii) greater standardization of field methods; (iii) timely availability of results; and (iv) effective use of seabirds as indicators of local and large-scale change in the Pacific marine environment. During the 2017 annual PSG meeting in Tacoma, Washington, the Seabird Monitoring Committee met and discussed 2016 population trends and worked to identify conservation concerns meriting elevation to the PSG Executive Committee and the PSG Conservation Committee. Additionally, the Seabird Monitoring Committee discussed the recently created U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Pacific Seabird Program, which grew from a meeting held at the 2015 annual PSG meeting held in San Jose, California.

The FWS Pacific Seabird Program is funded by the FWS’ Inventory & Monitoring Program from the Pacific regions (Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington) and aims to

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

create a robust, Pacific-wide program fostered by national and international partnerships where FWS seabird monitoring is integrated with other survey efforts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the health of marine and coastal ecosystems in the Pacific. In close coordination with the PSG Seabird Monitoring Committee, federal, state, and non-governmental partners, the FWS Pacific Seabird Program will provide:

- Detailed protocols (field data collection, data management, data analysis, and reporting) for surveys.
- Regionally based seabird survey manuals/protocol frameworks, updated based on new technologies and refined objectives.
- Web-based applications (e.g., Pacific Seabird Monitoring Database, North Pacific Seabird Colony Register) for rapid sharing of information to seabird researchers and managers on seabird status and trends, and other demographic attributes (productivity, diets, and survival).

The FWS Pacific Seabird Program and its partners have made excellent progress in 2017. Following a November 2016 workshop attended by 50 seabird scientists and managers representing federal, state, non-governmental partners, a 12-month demonstration project titled “National Protocol Framework for Monitoring Common Murres (*Uria aalge*) and Brandt’s Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) Breeding Colonies in the California Current System” was launched. A draft of the Protocol Framework should be release in 2018. Additional accomplishments of the FWS Pacific Seabird Program included hiring Steve Holzman as the program’s Seabird Data Manager, based in Newport, Oregon, at the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex. With assistance from Scott Hatch (USGS, retired; PSG Seabird Monitoring Committee Chair, 1992-2013), Steve quickly began searching for opportunities to refresh the Pacific Seabird Monitoring Database, as well as options to update the North Pacific

Seabird Colony Register.

Lastly, the FWS Pacific Seabird Program created a Steering Committee comprised of nine FWS biologists and three partner federal or state agency biologists. The Seabird Monitoring Committee co-chairs (Robb Kaler and Heather Renner, both of whom are agency biologists with the FWS) joined the FWS Pacific Seabird Program’s Steering Committee. While funding support for this effort is provided by the USFWS, seabird monitoring and data management in the Pacific includes both state, federal, and non-governmental partners, and participation and engagement by PSG membership is integral to the success of these effort.

Much of the progress reported here by the PSG Seabird Monitoring Committee is due to the determined efforts of many individuals. We especially thank Roberta Swift, Bill Bridgeland, and Kevin Killbride (FWS) for their leadership and determination to promote the effective use of seabirds as indicators of local and large-scale change in the Pacific marine environment.

TUFTED PUFFIN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

**Peter Hodum and Mark Hipfner,
Coordinators**

The first in-person meeting of the technical committee took place at the 2017 PSG Annual Meeting in Tacoma, WA. Following are the agenda items from the meeting:

Organizational Structure:

- Overview of organizational structure

Updates & Ongoing Research:

- Status of federal listing – Deanna Lynch, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Genetic study – Mark Hipfner, Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Tufted Puffin and climate change - Chris Hart, University of Washington
- PVA of the Tufted Puffin in the

Gulf of Alaska - Holly Goyert, U. of Idaho

- Range-wide meta-analysis, Scott Pearson, WDFW

Conservation, Research, & Monitoring Priorities:

- Threats identified in the Washington State Status Review - Thor Hanson, SeaDoc Society
- Review Peter and Scott’s initial thought process – Peter Hodum, University of Puget Sound

As a result of the technical committee meeting, committee members committed to providing samples for a range-wide population genetics study led by Mark Hipfner (Environment and Climate Change Canada) and Theresa Burg (University of Lethbridge). Sample collection and centralization commenced in 2017 and will continue in 2018.

Scott Pearson (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) and Peter Hodum (University of Puget Sound) are members of an ad hoc committee tasked with writing the Tufted Puffin Recovery Plan for Washington state. This committee met in 2017 to begin work on the plan and currently has a draft version of the plan.

The second in-person meeting of the technical committee is scheduled for the upcoming 2018 PSG Annual Meeting in La Paz, Baja California, México. Given that many committee members will be unable to attend, we are planning a follow-up conference call in March 2018.

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

CRAIG S. HARRISON CONSERVATION FUND COMMITTEE

Verena Gill, Chair

This report covers January 2017 to January 2018. The members of the Committee are; Verena Gill (Chair), Craig Harrison, Bill Henry, Dave Duffy, Doug Forsell, Louise Blight, Mark Rauzon, Melanie Steinkamp, and Shannon Fitzgerald.

Since 2007 PSG has funded 21 projects for a total of \$43,768. Countries covered by the funding include Fiji, Chile, Indonesia, Guatemala, Malaysia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, French Polynesia, and China.

As of 22 January 2018, the Fund total is unknown as I did not receive an update from the Treasurer, Martin Renner, as requested (17 and 18 of January) due to his busy schedule.

In 2017, we received seven inquiries for funding. Three projects were rejected based on not meeting funding criteria, two are still in the process of being reviewed, and two were funded. The two projects funded were; 1) Diversity and Breeding status of Seabirds in Pulau Perak, Malaysia (PI is Abdulmaula Hamza, \$2000), and 2) Building Capacity for Conservation of Ringed Storm-Petrels Affected by Light Attraction in Peru (PI is Yovana Murillo, \$2000). See table below.

Delinquent reports: There are 5 final reports outstanding from funded projects. To date all PIs that are delinquent have been contacted multiple times. Efforts will continue to track down these reports including contacting PI references.

Table 1. Accepted proposals and their current status as of January 2018

PERSON	COUNTRY COVERED BY PROPOSAL	REQUEST	AMOUNT FUNDED	STATUS
Abdulmaula Hamza	Malaysia	Diversity and breeding status of seabirds in Pulau Perak, Malaysia	\$2,000	Project Ongoing
Yovana Murillo	Peru	Building capacity for conservation of Ringed Storm-petrels affected by light attraction in Peru	\$2,000	Project Ongoing

ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

2018 ELECTION

Katie O'Reilly, Coordinator

The election committee members are: Katie O'Reilly (Coordinator), Stephanie Avery-Gomm, Alan Burger, Jane Dolliver (PSG Secretary), Peter Kappes, Ken Morgan, and Kim Nelson.

Alan Burger and Jane Dolliver were extremely helpful in this transitional year from Alan Burger to Katie O'Reilly as coordinator. Using a file listing previous nominees and suggestions, election committee members contacted members to gauge their interest in running for EXCO positions. Two announcements were posted on the listserv asking for nominations. Two nominees were secured for each position. The committee is grateful to everyone who

decided to run and to those members who considered running but determined this wasn't the best time for them to run. As always, please contact a member of the EXCO or the Elections Committee if you are interested in running for a position next year.

2018 Election Results

Survey Monkey was successfully used again as the election platform. Alan Burger set up the ballots for each region once the candidate biographies were secured by Katie O'Reilly. Jane Dolliver, with some assistance from Stephanie Avery-Gomm and Jennifer Lang (Membership Coordinator), ran

the election from December 16, 2017 to January 16, 2018. Using a key feature of Survey Monkey, reminders were sent to just those members who had not yet voted. Reminders were sent on January 1, 9, 15, and 16. An announcement on the listserv was also sent at the beginning of election. A sampling of typical comments submitted on Survey Monkey by voters were positive: Such a great selection of candidates, Thank you for making this an online process, This is a great ballot system, and Great work by the Elections Committee in finding great candidates! Kudos!

The overall voter turnout was 58.5% or 228 of 390 members.

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Table 1. Pacific Seabird Group elections - January 2018

REGION	TOTAL MEMBERS	VOTED	%VOTED
Alaska/Russia	46	31	67.4
Canada	35	21	60.0
Washington/Oregon	72	51	70.8
Northern California	65	35	53.8
S. California/Hawaii/Latin America	79	42	53.2
Non-Pacific U.S.	46	20	43.5
Europe/Africa	15	8	53.3
Asia/Oceania	32	20	62.5
ALL REGIONS	390	228	58.5

The following is the outcome of the 2018 election, showing all the candidates and those elected:

POSITION	CANDIDATES (*elected)	
Chair-elect	Adrian Gall*	Yuri Albores
Treasurer	Kirsten Bixler*	Liz Labunski
Student Representative	Corey Clatterbuck*	Kerry Lukies
Alaska/Russia	Marc Romano*	Melanie Smith
Northern California	Kirsten Lindquist*	Mike Johns
Asia/Oceania	Luke Einoder*	Motohiro Ito
Europe/Africa	Ross Wanless* (re-elected)	Taryn Morris

Note: There were no write-in votes. Many thanks to all these members who were willing to stand for election.



Closing banquet at Galeria Jardin, La Paz. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Joanna Smith, Coordinator

The Communications Committee is comprised of eight PSG members that volunteer to keep communications and publications running for the PSG or that PSG supports (i.e., Marine Ornithology). These volunteers donated many hundreds of hours to PSG in 2017. The Communications Committee started in 2015 and it provides coordination and direction for communications and related topics and issues. The Coordinator also serves to assist bringing issues that need EXCO attention.

For the second year in a row, all of PSG's accounts and publications are active and up to date. The listserv is functioning very well on the BlueHost server, where the website is hosted, and can hold a maximum of 3,000 subscribers so there is still lots of room for new subscribers. The PSG website contains all the latest information for the PSG society business including annual meeting, publications, conservation grants and committees. The WordPress template for the website is working out very well for volunteers to update and maintain, and seabird photographs generously donated by the members are still the highlight of the site. PSG's social media accounts are performing really well, and all have seen an increase in followers or visitors, especially the Instagram account. Marine Ornithology's new Managing Editor has made a lot of progress since taking over the journal from Tony Gaston, and MO continues to be an excellent publication for seabird research and conservation. Pacific Seabirds is being published twice in 2017 and volume 1 was a fantastic effort from the Editor and the team of volunteers and was published on time.

Communications Committee members:

Joanna Smith – Coordinator;

Webmaster; Publications
Stephanie Avery-Gomm – Twitter
Kirsten Bixler – website, Cvent
Louise Blight – Marine Ornithology
Managing Editor
Laura Bliss – Instagram
Jane Dolliver – Facebook; website;
Cvent
Verena Gill – Listserv
Jennifer Lang – Pacific Seabirds
Editor; Publications

Highlights 2017

- All social media accounts have seen huge increases in exposure in 2017:
 - Facebook 'likes' increased by 48% and 53% more followers (now 1,711)
 - Twitter followers increased from 701 to 1,051
 - Instagram followers increased from 50 to 705
- The Listserv now has 774 subscribers, an increase of 10% from 2016
- Facebook posts can reach more than 3.6K subscribers via shares and likes
- Annual Meeting and World Seabird Conference were peak times for PSG Twitter activity
- Pacific Seabirds published on time for Volume 44: Issue 1
- Marine Ornithology redesigned their website and other improvements in journal management.
- Two more members volunteered to assist with website and Cvent
- Twitter hashtag #PSG2017 used during meeting in Tacoma WA
- Website visitation decreased yet annual meeting still the most visited pages.

Challenges and Recommendations

1. The PSG website was rebuilt and redesigned in 2016 and a large effort was focused on the annual meeting pages so that they would not need to be built every year thus saving a huge amount of time for the volunteers. In 2017, a decision was taken by EXCO to stop using RegOnline (because it was being phased out) and to host the annual meeting pages on Cvent, the company that bought RegOnline. It was a challenge to get this new site ready and determine the best use of the existing pages on the PSG website to inform members about the meeting and drive them to this new site. If an external website or application is going to be the norm for annual meetings going forward, and each year the local committee or scientific program chair is going to develop and maintain it, then the PSG website will just contain a single landing page for the Annual Meeting and direct all traffic to that URL. However, there is a lot of information that is archived on the PSG website related to the meeting including the scientific program and awards (LAA and SAA). The request is that the EXCO and annual meeting committee think this through with the communications committee so that (a) volunteers are not building new annual meeting pages every year from scratch and (b) information pertaining to the annual meetings are properly archived, protected and stored independent from a commercial vendor that may or may not be around in the future.

2. PSG members are in more than 16 countries, PSG is a non-partisan organization, and volunteers on the communications committee need to be sensitive that the politics of one country can affect members in other countries. This can make it challenging for PSG's

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

social media coordinators to respond to the topic of the day (see below, Facebook report) and be relevant during conversations or discussions involving seabirds. Also, in taking a non-partisan approach, some members may find that PSG is not responding to issues of importance to them or taking a strong enough stand. Communication from the PSG Chair to members on an annual basis may be beneficial to manage expectations about this, and serve to remind all about the international membership.

3. The social media coordinators work hard to locate seabird news relevant to PSG members to post on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It would be great to have more diversity of posts on the listserv and website also, including more content from the 16+ countries where PSG members live and work. Recommend that the Regional Reps provide news items for the website and social media at least once per month in 2018 and leading up to the 2019 Annual Meeting.

4. All the members on this committee struggle with the amount of time it takes to contribute to the PSG and maintain or manage the accounts or publications. It would be good for EXCO to be aware of the deep effort by members on this committee and the volunteer hours should be tracked as are the EXCO hours. This will help to inform the EXCO regarding the time these members donate to PSG, and the percent contribution to running the organization.

5. Engaging with students and early career scientists is important for PSG's future. The PSG website has some information for this demographic yet it is a challenge to keep it fresh and updated. Similarly, the listserv format may not appeal to this demographic and/or may not be meeting their needs in terms of professional development. A survey to the student and early career scientists would be helpful to better understand what they are interested in,

and what resources are most helpful for their career development.

6. Marine Ornithology is well positioned to embrace the rapidly changing world of science publishing because it is already using an Open Access model. However, three important issues must be addressed this year (see MO report below): replacing the Copy Editor, applying for an Impact Factor, and financial management. The MO Managing Editor provides clear recommendations in the report below, and all of them will require an increase in resources to the journal.

Other Recommendations

- Remind PSG 2018 attendees about the PSG Facebook and PSG Chat Room pages. Include a "Connect With Us!" section in the PSG 2018 program.

- Remind members to send jobs, grants, research-in-the-news, and other updates to the PSG listserv –this content is re-posted to PSG's social media pages and the website.

- As per the handbook, the PSG needs to form an annual meeting committee so that there is a high level of consistency from year to year for the planning of the annual meeting and so that each year a new group is not learning from scratch how to run the meeting.

- Budget up to \$1,500 for website services in 2018 for Anne Francis Web Design to assist with training, customisations, security plug ins and emergency fixes. A small amount of time is still required from Anne Francis for issues that the volunteers cannot solve.

Request for Volunteers

- This is my last year as the Communications Committee Coordinator. A new coordinator will be identified in 2018 and a period of transition and mentoring will ensure a smooth transition for 2019.

- Marine Ornithology is looking for a volunteer to assist with operations and potentially to form a sub-committee to help run the journal (see report below)

- Looking for another volunteer to support the Twitter account posting (see report below).

- The PSG website has a wonderful photo library of seabird images and a volunteer is needed to help organise the photos in taxonomic order.

Acknowledgements

PSG is very lucky to have an energetic group of volunteers that keep PSG's social media presence active and alive, ensures that PSG has an active listserv for member discussions and information sharing, provides the Pacific Seabirds publication to members twice yearly for their reading enjoyment, and manages Marine Ornithology on behalf of the consortium that supports that journal. Thanks specifically to: Jane Dolliver, Stephanie Avery-Gomm, Laura Bliss, Kirsten Bixler, Verena Gill, Jennifer Lang and Louise Blight for all of their hard work in 2017. Also, to the EXCO for their advice and support for communications throughout the year in particular PSG Chair Kyra Mills, Chair-Elect Adrian Gall and Secretary Jane Dolliver. Thanks!

WEBSITE REPORT

Jo Smith, Webmaster

In 2016, the PSG website was completely rebuilt and content updated. Content was maintained throughout 2017 and security updates, and new content added, for example, the monthly seabird publication list from Verena Gill is now archived on the PSG website. There were almost 16,000 visitors to the PSG website in 2017, down significantly from 2013 -2014 when PSG did not have social media or unique event websites for the annual meeting (Table 1). The number of pages that visitors viewed has also declined but unique pageviews increased. Website visits originated from 131 countries and an estimated 1,930 cities. The USA was the top country of origin (60%), followed by Canada (9.6%), Japan (5.1%), Mexico (4.5%) and the United Kingdom (2.2%).

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Most visitors are using Chrome (54%), Safari (18%), Firefox (13%) or Internet Explorer (8%). Windows is the most common operating system (58%) followed by Macintosh (21%). Mobile operating systems are iOS (60%) then Android (38). Of the 45,011 pageviews, home page was 18% (8,452 views), annual meeting page 17% (7,851 views), program and schedule 8.7% (3,931 views), job opportunities 4% (1,800 views). More than 41% of the pages had 1-738 visitors. Peak periods for website updates were: (1) after the annual meeting, (2) in late summer/early fall to prep for abstracts and registration opening; (3) late fall when abstracts close and more information is available for the scientific program; and (4) the four weeks leading up to the annual meeting.

FACEBOOK REPORT

Jane Dolliver,
Facebook Coordinator

Vital Stats

- 1,692 likes (48% increase over last year)
- 1,711 follows (53% increase over last year)
- 43-minute response time
- 4,419 typical weekly reach
- 1,049 post engagements (i.e., clicks) weekly
- 194 members in the PSG chatroom

Volunteer time

The vital stats increases are a result

of approximately 243 hours, annually (approximately 40 minutes, daily), to create and share content on this platform.

Promotional posts

The Facebook Coordinator donated \$42 to see if paid/promoted posts would be worthwhile (see goals from 2017). The results of this small-scale experiment are below:

- 1) Promotion of the PSG 2018 – 783 people reached, 20 engagements, \$32
- 2) Promotion of ECS travel awards – 429 people reached, 4 clicks, \$10

Based on these results, the best way to promote Facebook items is by other or individual groups sharing PSG's posts (no cost, reach of up to 1,000).

Top posts, days, times

Facebook compiles stats on a relatively short timeline. Here are the top-reaching posts in early January 2018, to get a flavor:

- 9 Jan 18: Laysan Albatross egg relocation to Oahu. 3.6K reach (i.e., viewers – sent to their feed), 214 post clicks, 83 reactions (i.e., likes, shares).
- 14 Jan 18: Tristan Albatross. 1.5K reach, 171 post clicks, 78 reactions
- 11 Jan 18: Male gannet who loves his decoy. 1.2K reach, 79 post clicks, 54 reactions

As this shows, PSG Facebook commonly reaches 1K with a single post.

This week, the top day was Wednesday, the top time was 1pm (PST).

Challenges

The largest challenge to maintaining the PSG's positive trend on Facebook is the amount of volunteer time (see above). "Scheduling" posts (i.e., pre-composing content, setting a date/time for post to go live) has greatly helped PSG increase engagement and decrease volunteer time.

The second challenge for Facebook (and all social media accounts) is how to respond to an increasingly political and polarized social media landscape. PSG is a-political (non-partisan), driven by a mission to a) increase the quality and quantity of seabird research b) identify and assess the importance of threats to seabird populations. The Facebook Coordinator has taken a conservative approach; however, this leaves PSG out of the conversation du jour on many days. For instance, should PSG "like" posts by individuals or groups that highlight regulatory/political changes threatening seabirds in the United States? Can PSG share opinion/editorial pieces? Science education advocacy and diversity pieces? A future meeting of the communications committee may discuss these issues, and potentially revise the PSG Social Media Policy (2017) to reflect the changing social media landscape,

Kudos

Kudos are due to Yuri Albores-Barajas, who has been exceptionally communicative and helpful in providing social media content (photos, short text, translations) for the upcoming PSG annual meeting.

TWITTER REPORT

Stephanie Avery-Gomm,
Twitter Coordinator

The @PacificSeabirds twitter account was revived in Feb 2016. The number of account followers has increased from 101 before revival to 701 in January

Table 1. Number of website visitors and page views, 2013-2017 (source: google analytics)

YEAR	NUMBER OF VISITORS (SESSIONS)	UNIQUE PAGEVIEWS	TOTAL PAGEVIEWS
2013	38,268	22,748	107,753
2104	48,890	25,648	103,297
2015	N/A	N/A	N/A
2016	N/A	N/A	N/A
2017	15,921	36,209	45,011

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

2017, to 1051 in January 2018. On average, 13 tweets are sent each month, which generate 9,800 impressions and 421 profile visits per month. The annual meeting (Feb) and the World Seabird Twitter Conferences (typically April/May) generate the most activity.

During the 2017 annual meeting in Tacoma WA, the hashtag #PSG2017 was attached to tweets to advertise events and talks. Several organizers of the World Seabird Twitter Conferences held an informal session to answer questions during a coffee break.

Recommendations for 2018:

- Identify PSG members that are on Twitter. Members could self-identify during conference registration. Or, there could be a signup sheet at registration. This recommendation was also made in 2017 but was not acted on. **ACTION:** The Twitter account manager must remind the ExCo of this suggestion prior to the next meeting registration opening.
- Twitter usage statistics are available for 8 months, and then disappear so need to remember to login and record data before it disappears.

INSTAGRAM REPORT

Laura Bliss,

Instagram Coordinator

The @Pacific_Seabird Group Instagram was created in May 2016. The account changed management at the 2017 PSG annual meeting. The number of account followers has increased from 60 in February 2017 to 505 as of January 12th, 2018. On average, five posts are made each month for a total of 70 posts since February 2017. Seabird photography and field photo posts generate the most activity, the average number of “likes” on each post is about 80. Our highest performing post was a Spectacled Guillemot photo from David Pereksta and our post with the most comments (discussion) was a “Seabirds matter because...” post from PSG 2017.

In my opinion, the primary benefit of the Instagram posts is scientific communication and outreach to the general public, as well as the birding/bird photography community.

Instagram recommendations for 2018:

- Identify PSG members that are on Instagram to connect members
- Continue weekly posts.
- Instagram is best for photographic images; we should continue to focus on bird photography, photos of PSG members in the field, and other candid photos of scientists.

LISTSERV REPORT

Verena Gill,

Listserv Coordinator

As of 22 Jan 2018, the new listserv has 774 subscribers up from 704 subscribers a year ago. The old USFWS-based listserv at a final count had 902 subscribers however many of these addresses were out of date and redundant. The new PSG listserv has a 3,000+ subscriber capacity.

I drafted ‘Terms and Conditions’ for the listserv that are being reviewed and edited by ExCo and the Communications Committee (on Nov 13, 2017 I reviewed and commented on a version sent to me by Jo Smith). They are for listserv etiquette which has not always been the best at times. Most professional listservs have terms and conditions. Once final they should be posted on the PSG web site and sent out on the Listserv.

PACIFIC SEABIRDS REPORT

Jennifer Lang, Editor

Pacific Seabirds Volume 44 Number 1 was published on the PSG website on 11 July 2017. This issue contained a commemorative article for the late Harry Carter, an article outlining the history of the PSG logo and introduction of the new logo, and details recounting,

and reports submitted to the Executive Council for the 2017 annual conference held in Tacoma, WA. This issue was another collaborative effort with the help of Jo Smith, Nina Karnovsky, Kyra Mills, Adrian Gall, Yuri Albores-Barajas, Laura Bliss, Jane Dolliver, Marc Romano, Leslie Slater, and Laura Todd assisting in contributions and edits, the work was completed in a timely manner to publish in late summer. I would like to thank these wonderful and dedicated individuals in assisting me, as well as thank members of the EXCO for supplying their reports.

As of 25 January 2018, *Pacific Seabirds* Volume 44 Number 2 is in its last stages of editing, pending the submission and addition of the Treasurer’s report. This issue will include entirely regional reports from current members and the year-end budget for the organization.

Challenges

For both volumes, my main goal was to maintain the format and general content required to be published in *Pacific Seabirds*, and to publish two issues generally in the summer of 2017 and winter 2017/2018. Retrieving content for the summer issue was relatively simple, as many of the reports submitted to EXCO were already compiled electronically. The challenge was obtaining written materials from members to honor lifetime and special award recipients. Since I requested nominators to write their pieces soon after the conference, I was able to receive them after several weeks of reminders to complete and send them to me. Currently, the last vital piece necessary for publication is the Treasurer’s report, which is dependent on the pending close-out of the 2017 budget.

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

MARINE ORNITHOLOGY REPORT

Louise Blight, Editor

This report updates the Marine Ornithology (MO) report provided to PSG EXCO for the annual meeting in February 2017. As Managing Editor (ME) I reported then on some emerging challenges that are facing the journal. Progress has been made over the past six months but it has become apparent that these require more time than one volunteer ME can provide. Here I am bringing forward a set of recommendations on how EXCO can work together with MO to ensure the long-term stability of the journal.

The three most important issues currently facing MO are: (1) The imminent departure of our long-time Copy Editor (CE), Carolyn Brown, and the changes that will result from replacing her; (2) MO recently applying for an impact factor and the increased workload that obtaining one will bring; and (3) The growing level of financial scrutiny imposed on organizations doing business in our changing world and implications of this for how MO should operate financially.

It is worth noting that these changes are taking place in the context of the sea change in scholarly publishing brought on by the internet, an upheaval that generates its own workload. Although distinct, these three issues are united by the fact that they are emerging at the same time and each one will require effort to address appropriately. Together, they require an unsustainable amount of volunteer work by the ME, and possibly the Online Editor. Thus, some decisions need to be made by EXCO about the future management of the journal.

Replacing MO's Copy Editor:

At present our publication model is working smoothly, but there will be a bump in the road as our CE of several years (and only paid member of the editorial team) plans to leave MO for more lucrative work. We have replacement candidates in mind but this change has highlighted how little leeway

MO has in the largely volunteer system that produces MO: finding a new CE is replacing other important tasks required to run the journal. A new CE will also bring increased production costs as Carolyn has been working below market rate and sometimes provides us pro bono consulting services on science publishing. Managing for emerging issues such as this one has proven to be an important part of the ME's role, including during busy times when journal issues are in production. This reactive approach should be replaced by something more sustainable (e.g., Avian Conservation and Ecology has a 6-person Management Committee).

Applying for an Impact Factor:

In mid-2017 Marine Ornithology applied to be indexed in Clarivate Analytic's (formerly Thompson Reuters') Science Citation Index Expanded, the index through which science journals acquire an impact factor. Should our application be successful, based on the experience of other newly-indexed journals we can expect to receive a flood of manuscripts in response (C Brown, pers. comm.). Our current workflow (and volunteer editors) simply cannot handle this. We will not know if we are successful until late 2018 at the earliest, but there is a reasonable chance that we will be and now is the time to begin preparing for that change.

In addition, while there are several options for how to change (Carolyn Brown has provided us with a short options report describing alternative production models that MO can adopt), whatever option we choose has implications for the future of the journal and should be considered carefully. For example, the original vision for MO was that it include the sort of important but lower-impact papers unlikely to be published in higher-impact journals. A higher submission rate could be addressed in part by rejecting these lower-impact papers, or, alternatively, retaining them while supporting the editors with additional staff, money, and/or technological solutions. This is arguably not just a decision for the ME

and Editor-in-Chief (EIC).

Financial scrutiny and management:

MO's bank account exists in Canada under the name of Marine Ornithology Society, and with PSG switching to a different payment process in January 2016, MO set up a PayPal account using that bank account and a Canadian address. (I understand that prior to Tony Gaston stepping down as Managing Editor a portion of MO's funds, e.g., online subscriptions, passed through PSG, with the remainder going to Tony's account as cheques or wire transfers.) That MO is published by PSG is stated on both websites, but our finances are not explicitly run through PSG. Gone are the days when a small organization could fly under the radar with a local bank account, and I am concerned that our current financial arrangements could mean we are liable for taxes in Canada, or that PSG is not reporting its finances correctly in California. This issue was one of the drivers for developing this report, and in fact as I was drafting it I received an email from PayPal notifying Canadian business account holders that they have recently handed over account information to the Canada Revenue Agency as a result of a federal court order. As I understand it MO is a long-standing project of PSG and thus subject to its tax-exempt status, but we may require changes to our money-handling practices to underpin this assertion.

Recommendations

All of these issues require some changes to how the journal is run, and quite likely an increase in resources to support them. Increased page charges and subscription fees can provide the latter, particularly if we obtain an impact factor. We are still financially supported by the other seabird societies with the exception of The Seabird Group. For EXCO's consideration I provide two recommendations for resolving the issues described above:

1. The way MO routes its finances should be reviewed immediately in collaboration with EXCO, with a goal of

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

consolidating MO's tax exempt status as a project of PSG.

2. Begin sharing MO's strategic decision-making and workload with PSG's Communications Committee — or convening a new committee that includes MO Associate Editors and other qualified candidates (final committee composition to be decided in collaboration with Managing Editor)—based on the model of other society-run journals. Support the ME in working with this committee to investigate

best approaches for future operation of MO, assuming an impact factor is attained and manuscript submission rate increases. An options report to support this work is already prepared.

Accepting these recommendations would mean that EXCO assumes tax documentation and account management of MO finances. The journal would continue its current model of the ME and EIC being in charge of day-to-day aspects of journal publication, production and management.

The world of science publishing is facing a time of disruptive change. MO is well-placed to embrace this as it already uses an open access model. Proactively addressing the issues identified above will allow the ME and EIC to focus on the day-to-day issues (e.g., finding peer reviewers, reinvigorating the Editorial Board, sourcing and implementing electronic manuscript submission, training understudies for the ME and Online Editor roles) involved in producing what could be a very good science journal.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Chris Tyson

Students comprise a substantial part of the Pacific Seabird Group community. We currently have 47 active student members, with 23 student members either lapsed or graduated. At the 45th annual meeting in La Paz, there are 67 scheduled student presentations, which is approximately 35% of the total number of presentations. This gives an indication of the high level of student involvement within the society. Student members range across many different education levels including doctoral, master and undergraduate. Student members are also active in other aspects of the society with multiple students serving on the Executive Council or in other coordinator positions within the society. Students are also taking initiative within the society in other ways by enhancing the online presence of the society through social media.

The silent auction held at the annual meeting continues to be a successful event. Last year at the Tacoma meeting we had a large number of donations, and the auction raised a total of \$3,142.50. This was a 75% increase from the previous year. These funds, along with individual donations, support student travel to the annual meetings. Students

have repeatedly identified this source of funding as vital to their attendance at the annual meetings.

The student-mentor night at the annual meeting also continues to be a successful and important event where students have a chance to meet and to network with a range of more experienced Pacific Seabird Group members. At the 44th annual meeting in Tacoma, we explored a 'quick-rotation' format, in which groups of students alternated between tables of mentors seated based on their professional affiliation. This format gave students an opportunity to interact with a variety of mentors and was well-received by both students and mentors. The same format will be employed at the upcoming meeting in La Paz. Ongoing involvement by mentors is critical to the success of this important event and as such those who might serve as a mentor are strongly encouraged to attend.

Gaining and retaining student members is a perennial challenge for the Pacific Seabird Group. To encourage students to join, it is vital for students to see the value in being a member of the Pacific Seabird Group in years when they do not attend the annual meeting. Currently, reduced meeting registration fees are one of the

few explicit membership benefits. In an effort to attract more student members, the PSG Executive Council is exploring the possibility of creating a research grant that is exclusively available to current PSG students. Such a grant would provide incentive for student membership, thereby increasing student participation in PSG and would support important research objectives.

Aside from supporting students that are members of PSG, it is imperative that PSG support students that are part of the broader scientific community. One way of doing so is by expressing support for paid internship positions. Unfortunately, volunteer positions are quickly becoming the norm for those without prior experience, which excludes large numbers of students that require paid work. The paucity of paid positions is particularly problematic as this clearly disproportionately affects particular socioeconomic groups. One way to realize the values of PSG's Diversity Statement is by expressing support for organizations to only offer paid positions. While clearly a challenging goal, advocating for this type of change is an area in which PSG has the potential to have a significant and positive impact.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Jennifer Lang, Coordinator

In September 2017, Adrian Gall and I worked together to transfer all members from the RegOnline system to a new membership website host: Cvent. Cvent now operates as the portal for creating new memberships, renewing memberships, and managing membership profiles and statuses. We believe this system will be more intuitive and will function with fewer mishaps than what we encountered with RegOnline, especially with recognizing valid renewals. Membership rates will remain unchanged for each membership type, though now, automatic renewals will not be possible because Cvent requires cardholder authorization for all transactions. From discussions at the 2017 PSG Conference in Tacoma, we are exploring the possibility of providing a 2-year membership option at a slightly reduced price to encourage members to retain their current status.

Cvent was launched in late September prior to the influx of membership initiations and renewals due to individuals wanting to take advantage of reduced conference registration. With Cvent, we offered a prorated membership option where members who

renew after September can pay \$10 for the remainder of the current year and also remain current for the following year (total of \$50). As the year progressed, the prorated cost decreased.

Due to the mass transfer of members, some records were transferred with incorrect statuses that needed to be individually assessed (i.e., some individuals were recorded as current although they hadn't paid dues in 2 years). This may mean that past membership numbers were inflated. By 9 March 2018, I had successfully reconciled the membership list to include missing life members, and confirm that all paid members were current members for 2018 (see table below for current membership numbers).

With the Cvent membership download, we can also create the below table totalling the number of lapsed individuals from previous years. This may allow us to further create targeted email campaigns to remind individuals to renew soon after they lapse.

This will be my last year as membership coordinator. I have built upon the Membership Coordinator Handbook, initially created by Michelle

Hester in 2014, to guide future coordinators in their tasks and using the membership management system (Cvent). In June 2018, I will be handing the membership coordinator position off to Emma Kelsey, who will be well suited to continue to encourage the membership base to grow in number and diversity. To support efforts toward improving membership, Emma and I have established a Membership Committee, comprised of members of different career stages and backgrounds. The committee was created to crowdsource potential ways to increase recruitment and retention, and to provide skills and resources to achieve goals set by the committee. The first meeting of the membership committee will take place at the PSG conference in La Paz.

I am honored to have been the PSG Membership Coordinator for the past four years. I am excited to still be able to contribute by being part of the Membership Committee and look forward to seeing how a more reliable website host can benefit our members and membership base.

Table 1. Total number of membership types since 9 March 2018

MEMBERSHIP TYPE	TOTAL
Honorary	1
Life	83
Individual	228
Student	57
Grand total	369
Lapsed	(453)

Table 2. Totals of members who have lapsed since 2013

LAPSE DATE	TOTAL
1/1/2013	8
1/1/2014	100
1/1/2015	57
1/1/2016	76
1/1/2017	101
1/1/2018	111

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

CORRESPONDING MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Kyle Elliot, Stephanie Avery-Gomm, and Thomas Van Pelt, Coordinators

The Corresponding Membership Committee provides PSG membership to researchers and conservationists in developing countries. To retain “Corresponding Membership”, recipients are asked to provide a brief report on research or conservation in their area at least once every three years for Pacific Seabirds. Corresponding members facilitate other communications, such as the Indian Ocean Seabird Group Newsletter that has been periodically posted to the PSG Listserv.

There is a total of 16 Corresponding Memberships granted by the PSG. We can make those names available upon request.

Changes over the past year:

There have been no changes over the past year.

The goals of the Committee in 2018 are to gain two new members. We will be asking for reports from all Committee Members this year. Please contact one of the three co-Chairs if you have suggestions for other members.

Contact: Stephanie Avery-Gomm stephanie dot averygomm [at] gmail dot com, Kyle Elliott kyle dot elliot [at] mcgill dot ca and Thomas Van Pelt tvanpelt [at] transboundary dot net

WORLD SEABIRD UNION REPORT

Kathy Kuletz and Ken Morgan, PSG Representatives to the WSU

The Pacific Seabird Group is a founding member of the World Seabird Union (WSU), which was incorporated in January 2012. The WSU is made up of 25 marine ornithological organizations with members representing 52 countries. The PSG delegates to the WSU, Kathy Kuletz and Ken Morgan, attend the (approximately) bi-monthly meetings via teleconference. Our terms extend from one World Seabird Conference (WSC) through the next (approximately five years). PSG does not vote on decisions before the WSU Executive Council, although both representatives can attend conference calls and engage in discussions. Between February 2017 and January 2018 the WSU held six meetings via teleconference. A synopsis of each meeting is posted at Seabirds.net and official meeting minutes are posted after final acceptance by the Council. Currently, detailed meeting notes are available through July 2015, and annual reports through 2012.

During 2017 the WSU evaluated and selected a host site for the Third World Seabird Conference (WSC3). The WSU Executive Council selected Hobart, Tasmania, Australia as the location, with the conference to occur in October 2020. Funds derived from the 2015 WSC2 will be put towards logistics of the WSC3, and towards continuance of WSU legacy initiatives. WSU Chair and the local host (Australasian Seabird Group) are negotiating venue contracts and arrangements. The activities and business of the WSU can be accessed via the Seabirds.net web site. Also through Seabirds.net, the WSU hosted its third World Seabird Twitter Conference (WSTC3) in April 2017; as with the previous two, it was a great success, thanks to organizational work by Grant Humphries, Sjúrdur Hammer, and Stephanie Avery-Gomm.

During 2017, the WSU continued to define and establish standing committees that remain active between conferences.

Current standing committees include those for financial planning, review of conservation proposals, conference planning, fundraising, communications, early career scientists, awards, and elections. In 2017 a proposal was submitted for discussion for a WSU ‘Specialist Committee on Seabirds & Plastic Pollution’. The WSU welcomed a new Chair for Communications, Sjúrdur Hammer, who is taking over for Grant Humphries.

The Conservation Sub-committee supports member organizations in their efforts to protect seabirds and their habitat. The committee is convened when a member group raises an issue of concern for their country and seeks support (such as a letter) from the WSU. Nicholas Carlile is the WSU Conservation Sub-committee contact person.

ORNITHOLOGICAL COUNCIL REPORT

Ellen Paul, OC Executive Director; Pat Baird and Doug Forsell, PSG Representatives to OC

The Pacific Seabird Group was one of the founding organizations of the Ornithological Council (OC) in 1992. The OC is a separate 501c3 nonprofit organization incorporated in Washington DC with a board comprised of two representatives from each of its 10 member ornithological societies. PSG contributes approximately 3% of the OC operating budget. Most of our budget goes to salary and expenses of our Executive Director, Ellen Paul. She is ready and very willing to help ornithologists navigate permitting processes, and is especially knowledgeable in the areas of import/export of specimens, banding, US migratory bird and endangered species permits, and animal welfare issues related to ornithological research.

Please contact your society representatives or Executive Director Ellen Paul [e-mail: ellen dot paul [at] verizon dot net; phone 301/986-8568] for more information on any matter of interest to you. We welcome your input at any time and are particularly interested in hearing about issues or problems of concern to you that we may not be addressing.

The Ornithological Council seeks to:

- Ensure that the best ornithological science is incorporated into legislative, regulatory, and management decisions that affect birds;
- Enhance the ability of ornithologists to pursue professional activities; and
- Promote the influence of ornithology in public affairs.

The work of the Ornithological Council focuses on permits, animal welfare issues, research funding, and other policies that affect ornithologists and ornithological societies. Activities representative of OC's work over the past year follow.

PROPOSAL TO THE PSG EXCO TO INCREASE THE DONATION TO THE ORNITHOLOGICAL COUNCIL

We, the PSG representatives to the Ornithological Council, propose that in addition to the annual cost of living (COL) increase (a mere \$78), that PSG increase the annual contribution by \$810. This amount is a very small percent of our annual budget, and is well worth it.

The Director of the OC constantly communicates with State and Federal government agencies about their policies, regulations, & rules, and with groups that would be affected negatively by some of the decisions by these agencies. Likewise, without the OC's constant vigilance regarding any legislation and regulations that might impact research or management of birds, issues before Congress that would affect the bird community negatively or which would hamper or complicate the research or permit process would not be known until once they had passed, or after the time to comment was over. Furthermore, instant help with permit issues are quickly resolved by the Council's intervention, when it acts as a liaison between the researcher seeking the permit and the permitting agency, cutting through red tape and clarifying the intent of the researcher for the agencies.

An increase of just \$810 per annum plus COL is a very small cost for what all PSG members get from the OC. For example: In just one month, between December 2017 and January 2018, the Ornithological Council has done the following:

1. Received word that the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) Animal Care program had revised two policy documents - its Animal Care Policy Manual and its Inspection Guide - to conform those

documents to the Animal Welfare Act and the Animal Welfare Act regulations with regard to methods of euthanasia. These changes came about as a result of written requests and in-person discussions in 2016 and 2017 between the Ornithological Council and the Animal Care deputy administrator, APHIS general counsel, and other APHIS authorities. Those documents incorporated the AVMA euthanasia guidelines as the only acceptable methods of euthanasia. The documents now read, "Appropriate methods may include, but are not limited to, those described in the "AVMA Guidelines for Euthanasia of Animals" and return the authority for approval of protocols, including methods of euthanasia, to the IACUC, consistent with the AWA.

2. As reported in the Aug-Sept OC newsBRIEF, OC reached an agreement with APHIS Animal Care to suggest language for a guidance document on the term "field study." The agency had refused to seek stakeholder input or expertise until the OC asked the APHIS directorate to intervene. The OC has now assembled a discussion group that includes veterinarians from each of three federal agencies and we have asked a colleague from the National Institutes of Health Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare to facilitate the discussion. The draft that we hope to present to Animal Care would then be subject to stakeholder input.

3. OC Executive Director Ellen Paul met with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials to continue a discussion about resolving import problems resulting from the new CBP import declaration system known as the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE). A number of actions were identified and will be pursued, including

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

ORNITHOLOGICAL COUNCIL REPORT

a webinar about the import requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service for ornithological specimens and samples and a companion reference document. For CBP's part, the agency is exploring the development of an app that will give importers direct, easy access to the declaration system and has reached out to the OC to discuss the development of unique identifiers and other information about the import process. The CBP will also facilitate a meeting between the OC and airline cargo representatives to develop a standard process for ornithologists to assure that their imports appear on the cargo manifests, which will satisfy the mandatory advance notice requirement. At OC's request CBP is also considering appointing a liaison/trouble-shooter.

4. OC Executive Director Ellen Paul spoke at the initial "21st Century Cures Act" stakeholder meeting organized by the National Institutes of Health Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare and the APHIS Animal Care program. This legislation, enacted in 2016, mandates federal, interagency efforts to reduce administrative burden for researchers and institutions. Specifically, the mandate directs the agencies to complete a review of applicable regulations and policies for the care and use of laboratory [sic] animals. OC intends to participate in the ongoing process as fully as possible to assure that these agencies do not continue to develop policy that is ill-suited to wildlife research.

5. Neared completion of a new website, including state permits update.

6. Continued a major revision of import/export permit guide.

7. Responded to an inquiry from the Forest Service IACUC (Institute of Animal Care and Use Committee) regarding methods for study of waterbirds; OC provided names of expertise and relevant literature.

8. Submitted a request to the Office of the Solicitor of the U.S. Department of the Interior requesting a determination that the Airborne Hunting Act does not prohibit the use of small unmanned aircraft (SUA) in ornithological research and monitoring. The request was supported by a peer-reviewed critical literature review summarizing the impacts of SUA on birds, a detailed legislative history, and a summary of the laws of all 50 states pertaining to drones. A formal petition for rulemaking was also submitted, asking that permits, if needed, be issued by the USFWS. Currently, the USFWS actually has a regulation that prohibits the agency from issuing those permits. OC has also reached out to The Wildlife Society and the Association of State Wildlife Agencies, seeking their support.

9. Continued to urge the USGS leadership to reconsider its decision to terminate its Biological Survey Unit, which curates and manages the USGS collection at the National Museum of Natural History. That decision was premised upon a very large funding cut in the proposed FY17-18 budget. However, the funding cut pending Omnibus appropriations act would be only 1/3 the size of the proposed cut, giving USGS an opportunity to revisit this decision. The OC also shared the underlying information with the collections community and encouraged others to voice their concerns to the USGS.

10. Reached out to the Association of State Wildlife Agencies, seeking their support for changes in state regulations to exempt wildlife research from the "Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship" requirement, which rarely exists in the context of wildlife research and that, if routinely obeyed, would significantly hinder wildlife research conducted in the field, particularly with regard to access to pharmaceuticals needed for anesthesia and euthanasia.

11. Assisted the following individuals with permit questions/problems:

- Sarah Hird (APHIS)
- Kevin Omland (USFWS and APHIS)
- Jean Woods (APHIS)
- Susan Elbin (ESA)
- Brian O'Shea (APHIS)
- Don Lyons, Dan Roby, and Heather Renner
- Jackie Augustine (drones)
- Ben Winger (APHIS)

12. Assisted the following individuals with animal welfare requirements:

- Amber Rice
- John Smallwood

AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF ALBATROSSES AND PETRELS (ACAP) REPORT

Ken Morgan, PSG Delegate

ACAP is a multilateral agreement that strives to conserve albatrosses and petrels by coordinating international actions. There are 13 ACAP Parties: Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, France, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and Uruguay. ACAP is supported by a small Secretariat in Hobart, Australia; consisting of an Executive Secretary (Marco Favero), a Science Officer (Wiesława Misiak), and an honorary Information Officer (John Cooper). ACAP's work is aided by Non-Party Range States (Canada, Japan, Namibia, United States); and by several Non-Governmental Organisations; notably American Bird Conservancy, BirdLife International, Humane Society International, Island Conservation, Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge and Projeto Albatroz.

During the first session of the Meeting of the Parties (MoP1) in 2004, an Advisory Committee (AC) was established; its role is to guide the implementation of the Agreement. The AC is supported by three working groups: i) Population and Conservation Status (PaCSWG); ii) Seabird Bycatch (SBWG); and iii) Taxonomy (TWG). MoP sessions occur every three years; whereas, the AC and working groups meet in each of the two intervening years.

Throughout the year, the Information Officer posts to ACAP Latest News available at: www.acap.aq. The posts provide information on ACAP activities, emerging threats, conservation actions, publications, book reviews, etc., relevant to procellariiform seabirds. All Latest News articles are also posted to ACAP's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/AlbatrossesandPetrels/>

The following are summaries of a few of the 2017 ACAP posts.

- In April, France announced the creation of a 1.66 million km² Marine Protected Area (MPA) around its sub-Antarctic islands. The MPA will contribute to protecting albatrosses and petrels that forage within it, especially those breeding on Crozet, Kerguelen, Saint Paul and Amsterdam islands.

- During March, May and July, ACAP's Executive Secretary, SBWG Convenor (Anton Wolfaardt) or SBWG Vice-Convenor (Igor Debski) participated in meetings of working groups or scientific advisories of four Regional Fishery Management Organisations (the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas). ACAP contributed to discussions related to albatross and petrel population trends, bycatch mitigation practice advice, methods to improve bycatch data reporting, etc.

- During the first half of September, the eighth meeting of the SBWG, the fourth meeting of the PaCSWG and the tenth meeting of the AC occurred in Wellington, New Zealand. Twenty-two Documents and 31 Information Papers were considered by 47 SBWG8 attendees. Papers (in some cases abstracts only) and the SBWG meeting report are available at: <https://www.acap.aq/en/working-groups/seabird-bycatch-working-group/seabird-bycatch-wg-meeting-8>

- Following SBWG8, the PaCSWG4 commenced; 10 Documents and 31 Information Papers were considered by 42 attendees. Papers (in some cases abstracts only) and the PaCSWG4 meeting report are available at: <https://www.acap.aq/en/working-groups/population-and-conservation-status-working-group/population-and-conservation-status-wg-meeting-4>

working-group/population-and-conservation-status-wg-meeting-4

- Between the PaCSWG4 and AC10, ACAP hosted a one-day workshop on gadfly petrels, chaired by Mark Tasker (TWG Convenor), with John Cooper (as rapporteur). The workshop objective was to identify best approaches for international cooperation to conserve the species, and to develop recommendations for consideration at MoP6 (to be held in Kruger National Park, South Africa, in May 2018). The workshop opened with a presentation on the "Status, trends and conservation management needs of the *Pterodroma* and *Pseudobulweria* Petrels". It was noted that of 39 species, approximately 67% are globally threatened. The workshop attendees were supportive of ACAP increasing its role in conservation actions for gadfly petrels (*Pterodroma* sp.). The workshop report is available at: <https://www.acap.aq/en/advisory-committee/ac10/ac10-meeting-documents>.

- Following the gadfly petrel workshop, AC10 began with 38 attendees (10 Parties, three Range States and four NGOs). Twenty-five Documents, 15 Information Papers and the AC10 meeting report are available at: <https://www.acap.aq/en/advisory-committee/ac10>

A few highlights of AC10 are:

- Namibia announced it expects to become the 14th ACAP Party in the near future;

- The UK will attempt to eradicate introduced house mice from Gough Island in 2019; and, South Africa will attempt to eradicate mice from Marion Island in 2020.

- In October, Chile announced the establishment of two large MPAs (closed to fishing and other extractive activities). One MPA protects >117,000 km² around the Diego Ramírez Islands; and the

REPORTS TO PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR 2017

ACAP REPORT

second, at ~ 484,000 km², is situated around the Juan Fernández Islands. The MPAs will respectively help protect breeding populations of Black-browed (*Thalassarche melanophris*) and Grey-headed Albatrosses (*T. chrysostoma*); and Pink-footed Shearwaters (*Puffinus creatopus*).

- In November, Mexico's President signed a decree creating a large marine reserve (~150,000 km²) around the Revillagigedo Islands. The reserve will be closed to fishing and other extractive activities. Two islands (Clarion and San Benedicto) support small breeding populations of Laysan Albatrosses (*Phoebastria immutabilis*).



Laysan Albatross. Photo credit: David Pereksta

PSG NEWS

Read about changes to Pacific Seabirds and other transitions in 2017.

EDITOR'S NOTE

My goal as editor is to provide readers with up-to-date information about Pacific Seabird Group news. To do so, this bulletin will be published online twice a year: one in the summer reporting proceedings from that year's annual meeting, and the other in the winter reporting regional member updates and end of year budgets. Thank you to Executive Council members for their support and timely submission of reports, Jane Dolliver for providing content, and Jo Smith, Kyra Mills and Adrian Gall for their valuable insight and guidance in the production of these documents. I am grateful for all of the individuals who have contributed their time and effort to continue publishing *Pacific Seabirds*.

Pacific Seabirds is now searchable and available in the Biodiversity Heritage Library. Explore this wonderful resource on your own at www.biodiversitylibrary.org.

As always, we welcome new ideas and people. If you are interested in contributing to *Pacific Seabirds* or would like to join the editing team, please contact me at [editor \[at\] pacificseabirdgroup dot org](mailto:editor@pacificseabirdgroup.org).

- Jennifer Lang

TRANSITIONS AND THANK YOU'S

One of the unique qualities of the Pacific Seabird Group is its strong membership-based operations. The PSG relies on the active engagement of its members to complete the business of PSG, including running the Executive Council, serving as an interface between PSG and regional members, conservation initiatives, and planning and execution of our annual meetings. Those who step forward contribute their expertise and time, ranging from hours to years of work. There is, of course, turnover, which is good for PSG growth and it allows others to benefit from this valuable experience. We would like to thank and honor those who handed over the baton in 2018.

We would like to thank Robb Kaler (Alaska and Russia representative), Kuniko Otsuki (Asia and Oceania representative), and Anna Weinstein (Northern California representative) for the years they served as representatives for their region's members. Welcome, Marc Romano, Luke Einoder, and Kirsten Lindquist, to the Executive Council as the new representatives of Alaska and Russia, Asia and Oceania, and Northern California, respectively. Kirsten Bixler is now the new PSG Treasurer following Martin Renner, and Corey Clatterbuck is the new Student Representative following Chris Tyson. Thank you, Martin and Chris for serving in these positions. David Craig has also been elected into the Executive Council as the new Chair-Elect.

Lastly, Jennifer Lang will be handing the membership coordinator position over to Emma Kelsey in June 2018. I have had the pleasure to interact with members directly and look forward to continue to do so as a part of the newly established Membership Committee.



Members at the Lifetime and Special Awards dinner at the Hotel Marina. Photo credit: Kyra Mills

MEETING NEWS

PSG'S 45TH ANNUAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 2018

Adrian Gall

PSG members flocked to lovely Hotel Araiza in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico for the 45th annual meeting organized around the theme “Seabirds without borders – Aves marinas sin fronteras”. The theme highlighted that seabird ecology and conservation require international collaboration to be successful. Our Scientific Program was packed with evidence (156 oral presentations and 42 posters) that PSG members and meeting participants reach across borders, and even oceans, to work together.

The Local Committee did an excellent job showcasing downtown La Paz with events hosted in several venues within walking distance of the waterfront and provided motor coach service as needed. The events kicked off on Wednesday with technical and the Executive committee meetings at the Hotel Perla and the Centro Cultural. In the evening, Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Dr. Enriqueta Velarde gave a public presentation in the historical Teatro Juárez; the capacity crowd included local officials, students, and city residents. Following Dr. Velarde's presentation, meeting attendees were treated to a welcome reception at the Museo de la Ballena, mingling and enjoying refreshments among the impressive collections and displays of local marine ecology. The poster session was held on Thursday in the main patio of the Centro Cultural with catering that featured marine and terrestrial invertebrate delicacies.

A primary objective of the meeting was to foster the conversations that make conservation possible. Several of the Special Sessions and Symposia included time for discussion in addition to formal presentations, starting with Thursday's Symposium on the Conservation Needs in NW Mexico organized by Local Committee Chair Yuri Albores and Gustavo Danemann. On Friday, the Round Table Discussion on Hot Topics drew participants from

seven countries on three continents to compare notes on ocean conditions and observations of seabirds at sea and on colonies. On Saturday, a Special Session on the Impacts of Purse-seining on Seabirds was convened by organizers from Mexico (Enriqueta Velarde), Chile (Cristán Suazo), and the USA (Dan Anderson). This session brought together stakeholders from fishing industry, government agencies, and community organizations. The Conservation Committee meeting open to all attendees on Saturday led to the ad hoc formation of a Feral Cat Policy group, among other spirited discussions.

Two additional Special Sessions held on Friday continued the theme of the meeting. The first, organized by Kim Nelson, Kuniko Otsuki, and Trudy Chatwin, honored the late Harry Carter's tremendous contributions to international seabird conservation throughout the Pacific. The second, organized by Tom Ryan, brought together students and researchers from throughout the Americas to share experiences in community-based research and conservation of *Sternula* terns.

In addition to these focused sessions and our contributed paper sessions, five fantastic plenary speakers gave us the long view of seabird ecology from around the globe. On Thursday, Dr. Juan Esteban Martínez Gomez opened the meeting by sharing the story of Townsend's Shearwaters that breed 600 km south of La Paz. Dr. Michael Brooke concluded the day with tales of petrel conservation on the Pitcairn Islands. On Friday, Dr. Stephen Votier started the day by sharing what he has learned about the behavior of Northern Gannets in the North Atlantic. On Saturday morning, Dr. Enriqueta Velarde offered her synthetic view of the ecology and pressing conservation issues in the Gulf of California, also known as the Vermillion Sea. Dr. Bob Pitman closed out the meeting by taking us 1,600 km south of La Paz to consider

how anthropogenic disturbance, on local and global scales, is challenging the existence of Clipperton Island and its colonies of Masked and Brown boobies.

PSG's highest honors, the Special and Lifetime Achievement awards, were presented during a dinner at the Hotel Marina. Colleagues of Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz shared his contributions to island restoration and his mentorship of a generation of ecologists that are continuing the work of the Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI), work that earned him the Special Achievement Award. Dr. Enriqueta Velarde was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award and celebrated for her research on Isla Rasa and her efforts to engage stakeholders in science-driven fisheries management. Friends and colleagues remembered Harry Carter's dedication to seabird research and conservation, and other seabird researchers, presenting the Lifetime Achievement Award posthumously to his wife, Emma Carter.

The closing fiesta was held at the Galería Galería Garden, a soaring open-air amphitheater that provided the perfect backdrop for recognizing the travel and student presentation awards. Mark Rauzon realized his secret dream of being an auctioneer, hosting a live auction of spectacular photos to benefit the Student Travel Awards fund. PSG lived up to its well-earned party reputation by dancing out the evening to the tunes of La Orden Sagrada.

This fabulous meeting would not have been possible without the tireless work of Local Committee Chair Yuri Albores and his team of co-chairs: Cecilia Soldatini, Christian Salvadeo, Horacio de la Cueva, Laura Treviño, Roberto Carmona and Sergio Flores.

Chair Kyra Mills guided the PSG ship and helped organize the crucial simultaneous translation service, a first for a PSG meeting. Past Chair Nina Karnovsky organized the many awards, including a record 56 foreign and student

MEETING NEWS

travel awards funded in large part thanks to a generous grant from the Packard Foundation. A huge shout-out goes to detail-wrangling, cat-herding, bilingual Secretary Jane Dolliver. Finally, I extend a special gracias to Juliet Lamb for helping build the scientific program from the many excellent submissions.

¡Hasta pronto, México! Hope to see you all in Kaua'i for the next great PSG meeting!



Mingling at the opening reception at the Museo de la Ballena. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver



Poster session at the Centro Cultural La Paz. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver



Emma Carter (second from right) accepting the Lifetime Achievement reward for her late husband, Harry Carter. From left: Nina Karnovsky, Bill McIver, Kim Nelson, Kuniko Otsuki, Percy Hebert, Spencer Sealy, Emma Carter, Mike Parker. Photo credit: Kyra Mills



Selfie by Ava Anderson of some dodgy characters at La Paz! Photo credit: Ava Anderson/Sandy Bartle



Lunch break outside at the Hotel Araiza Palmira. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver

MEETING NEWS

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

The Pacific Seabird Group's board of directors, the Executive Council (EXCO), meets at each Annual Meeting and several times a year via conference call. Minutes are available on the PSG website after they are approved at the subsequent meeting. A summary of the Annual Meeting minutes is provided in *Pacific Seabirds*. All PSG members are welcome to attend EXCO meetings and contact PSG council members if they have questions, suggestions, or concerns.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

21 February 2018

45th Annual Meeting, La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico

Hotel Perla

Summary of actions by EXCO

February 2017-February 2018:

- Organized and held the 45th Annual PSG Meeting in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico in February 2018, with 224 registrants and 24 guests, including 156 oral presentations and 42 posters
- Sent 11 Conservation Letters to advocate for seabird conservation
- Maintained a membership of 369 members representing 16 countries
- Maintained a listserv with 774 active members
- Social media successes include: 1,711 followers on Facebook, 505 followers on Instagram, and 1051 followers on Twitter.
- Finalized the listserv terms and conditions, the Code of Conduct, PSG membership policy, and PSG diversity statement

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORTS

Past Chair's Report:

Dr. Enriqueta Velarde and Harry Carter received Lifetime Achievement Awards, and Dr. Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz received a Special Achievement Award at the 45th PSG conference in 2018.

In 2018 we were able to offer travel awards to 10 times the number of people than last year. This was largely due to a generous grant from the Packard Foundation, a challenge grant and donations from EXCO and other members. Travel grants were offered to 36 students, 18 non-US/Canadian

scientists, and 5 early career scientists.

Kaua'i, Hawai'i has been selected and confirmed to be the site of the 2019 annual PSG meeting with Jessica Hallman Behnke as the local committee chair. We all look forward to hearing of future plans in Hawaii for next year.

Chair's Report:

In 2017, the Chair oversaw the work of all committees and led conference calls to facilitate EXCO projects throughout the year. Two big accomplishments in 2017 were to finalize the listserv terms and conditions (and is now on the PSG website), and to finalize the Code of Conduct, which is on the agenda for our next EXCO meeting, after which it will be shared to the rest of the PSG members. Two additional 2017 accomplishments were the finalization of the PSG membership policy and a PSG diversity statement (now on the website).

Chair-Elect's Report:

The Chair-Elect took the lead in organization of the 2018 PSG Annual Meeting, including selecting a theme, organizing special paper sessions and symposia, planning concurrent sessions, securing five plenary speakers and producing the 2018 program and abstract book. Creation and management of registrations, were all done using Cvent.

Vice Chair for Conservation's Report:

Eleven Conservation letters were sent in the past year. The sources of instigation

to respond or react was brought by PSG committee members, EXCO members and Marbled Murrelet action groups. Five letters concerned Marbled Murrelets, two letters for regulation rollbacks, two letters for Aleutian Terns, and two letters for Japanese Murrelets.

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATES

The 2019 Annual Meeting will be hosted in Kaua'i, Hawai'i with Jessica Hallman Behnke as the local committee chair.

OTHER BUSINESS

Membership:

PSG has 369 current (paid) members, including 57 student members and 84 lifetime members, representing 16 countries.

MOTIONS

The new 2018-2019 EXCO members:

EXCO approved new membership-elected candidates for the 2018-2019 EXCO. They include: David Craig (Chair-Elect), Kirsten Bixler (Treasurer), Corey Clatterbuck (Student Representative), Marc Romano (Alaska and Russia Representative), Kirsten Lindquist (Northern California Representative), Luke Einoder (Asia and Oceania Representative), and Ross Wanless (re-elected, Europe and Africa Representative).

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

March 2017

1. Approve PSG Diversity Statement
2. Create PSG Coloring Book with Advance Wildlife Education

April 2017

1. Approve the nomination of Harry Carter for the PSG Lifetime Achievement Award

May 2017

1. Approve the PSG 2018 Annual Meeting budget
2. Approve the fiscal year 2017 budget

July 2017

1. Approve Cvent registration, membership and abstract management 5-year contract

2. Establish EXCO permanent contributions to PSG travel awards fund - \$50/EXCO member
3. Require PSG Regional Representatives to contact lapsed members

August 2017

1. Approve Luana Events Client Agreement
2. Create Local Committee bank account in Mexico, US \$5,000

September 2017

1. Approve PSG 2018 Registration rates
2. Approve PSG listserv terms and conditions document
3. Approve PSG 2018 disabilities statement

October 2017

1. Approve transfer of \$10,000 (instead of 5K) to Mexico for PSG 2018
2. Approve the PSG Lifetime and Special Achievement award recommendations
3. Sponsor WSTC#4 conference

November 2017

1. Print nametags in different colors of cardstock to identify members
2. Approve a new, Early Career Scientist Travel Award
3. Review the Children's Book, "The Blue Footies"

December 2017

1. Approve PSG 2019 meeting location
2. Approve PSG membership policy



Mingling at the student-mentor mixer at the Hotel Araiza Palmira. Photo credit: Jane Dolliver

PUBLICATIONS OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP

The Pacific Seabird Group publishes symposia and other works. PSG Symposia are occasionally held at Annual Meetings; those which have been published are listed below. Technical Reports prepared by PSG working groups are also listed. To order one of these PSG publications, please see instructions after each item. Abstracts of papers and posters given at PSG meetings are published annually. Abstracts for meetings of 1974 through 1993 appeared in the PSG Bulletin (Volumes 2-20); for meetings of 1994 through 2003, in Pacific Seabirds (Volumes 21-30); and for meetings of 1997 and later, at www.pacificseabirdgroup.org. PSG publishes the on-line bulletin Pacific Seabirds (www.pacificseabirdgroup.org) and the journal Marine Ornithology (www.marineornithology.org). Current and past issues of both journals are available online.

SYMPOSIA

SHOREBIRDS IN MARINE ENVIRONMENTS. Frank A. Pitelka (Editor). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group. Asilomar, California, January 1977. Published June 1979 in Studies in Avian Biology, Number 2. *Available free of charge at* <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Condor/cooper/sab.php>

TROPICAL SEABIRD BIOLOGY. Ralph W. Schreiber (Editor). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Honolulu, Hawaii, December 1982. Published February 1984 in Studies in Avian Biology, Number 8. *Available free of charge at* <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Condor/cooper/sab.php>

MARINE BIRDS: THEIR FEEDING ECOLOGY AND COMMERCIAL FISHERIES RELATIONSHIPS. David N. Nettleship, Gerald A. Sanger, and Paul F. Springer (Editors). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Seattle, Washington, January 1982. Published 1984 as Canadian Wildlife Service, Special Publication. Out of print; *available free of charge at* www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

THE USE OF NATURAL VS. MAN-MODIFIED WETLANDS BY SHOREBIRDS AND WATERBIRDS. R. Michael Erwin, Malcolm C. Coulter, and Howard L. Cogswell (Editors). Proceedings of an International Symposium at the first joint meeting of the Colonial Waterbird Society and the Pacific Seabird Group, San Francisco, California, December 1985. Colonial Waterbirds 9(2), 1986. \$12.00. Order from: Ornithological Societies of North America, PO Box 1897, Lawrence, Kansas 66044; phone (800) 627-0629; no online orders.

ECOLOGY AND BEHAVIOR OF GULLS. Judith L. Hand, William E. Southern, and Kees Vermeer (Editors). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Colonial Waterbird Society and the Pacific Seabird Group, San Francisco, California, December 1985. Published June 1987 in Studies in Avian Biology, Number 10. \$18.50. *Available free of charge at* <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Condor/cooper/sab.php>

AUKS AT SEA. Spencer G. Sealy (Editor). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Pacific Grove, California, December 1987. Published December 1990 in Studies in Avian Biology, Number 14. *Available free of charge at* <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora/Condor/cooper/sab.php>

STATUS AND CONSERVATION OF THE MARBLED MURRELET IN NORTH AMERICA. Harry R. Carter and Michael L. Morrison (Editors). Proceedings of a Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Pacific Grove, California, December 1987. Published October 1992 in Proceedings of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, Volume 5, Number 1. \$20.00. *Available free of charge at* www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

THE STATUS, ECOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION OF MARINE BIRDS OF THE NORTH PACIFIC. Kees Vermeer, Kenneth T. Briggs, Ken H. Morgan, and Douglas Siegel Causey (editors). Proceedings of a Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Canadian Wildlife Service, and the British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Victoria, British Columbia, February 1990. Published 1993 as a Canadian Wildlife Service Special Publication, Catalog Number CW66-124 1993E. *Order free of charge from:* Publications Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0H3, Canada

PUBLICATIONS OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP

BIOLOGY OF MARBLED MURRELETS—INLAND AND AT SEA. S. Kim Nelson and Spencer G. Sealy (Editors). Proceedings of a Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Seattle, Washington, February 1993. Published 1995 in *Northwestern Naturalist*, Volume 76, Number 1. \$12.00. **Available free of charge at** www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

BEHAVIOUR AND ECOLOGY OF THE SEA DUCKS. Ian Goudie, Margaret R. Petersen and Gregory J. Robertson (editors). Proceedings of the Pacific Seabird Group Symposium, Victoria, British Columbia, 8-12 November 1995. A special publication compiled by the Canadian Wildlife Service for the Pacific Seabird Group. Published 1999 as Canadian Wildlife Service Occasional Paper number 100, catalog number CW69-1/100E. Order free of charge from: Publications Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0H3, Canada, or **available free of charge at** www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

SEABIRD BYCATCH: TRENDS, ROADBLOCKS AND SOLUTIONS. Edward F. Melvin and Julia K. Parrish (editors). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Blaine, Washington, 26-27 February 1999. Published 2001 by University of Alaska Sea Grant, Fairbanks, Alaska. Publication no. AK-SG-01-01. \$40.00. **Order from publisher.**

BIOLOGY, STATUS, AND CONSERVATION OF JAPANESE SEABIRDS. Yutaka Watanuki, Harry R. Carter, S. Kim Nelson and Koji Ono (conveners) and Nariko Oka (editor). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Japanese Seabird Group and Pacific Seabird Group, Lihue, Hawaii, February 2001. *Journal of the Yamashina Institute of Ornithology* 33(2); Symposium (5 papers), pp 57-147, other papers pp. 148-213. In English with Japanese abstracts. \$75.00. **Order from PSG** - contact the Chair at Chair@pacificseabirdgroup.org

OIL AND CALIFORNIA'S SEABIRDS. Harry R. Carter (convener) and Anthony J. Gaston (editor). Proceedings of a Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Santa Barbara, California, February 2002. Published 2003 in *Marine Ornithology* 31(1). **Available free of charge at** www.marineornithology.org

THE BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION OF THE AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN. Daniel W. Anderson, D. Tommy King, and John Coulson (editors). Proceedings of a Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group. *Waterbirds*, Volume 28. Special Publication 1, 2005. Published by the Waterbird Society. \$15.00. **Order from PSG** - contact the Chair at Chair@pacificseabirdgroup.org.

BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION OF XANTUS'S MURRELET. Harry R. Carter, Spencer G. Sealy, Esther E. Burkett, and John F. Piatt (editors). Proceedings of a symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Portland, Oregon, January 2005. Published 2005 in *Marine Ornithology* 33(2):81-159. **Available free of charge at** www.marineornithology.org

SEABIRDS AS INDICATORS OF MARINE ECOSYSTEMS. John F. Piatt and William J. Sydeman (editors). Proceedings of an International Symposium of the Pacific Seabird Group, Girdwood, Alaska, February 2006. Published 2007 in *Marine Ecology Progress Series* Volume 352:199-309. **Available free of charge at** <http://www.int-res.com/abstracts/meps/v352/#theme>

THE SALISH SEA ECOSYSTEMS: STATUS AND IMPACTS OF CHANGES ON MARINE BIRDS. Scott Hatch (editor), Douglas F. Bertram, John L. Bower, and Patrick D. O'Hara (guest editors.) 2009. *Marine Ornithology*, Salish Sea Symposium Issue 37: 1-76. **Available free of charge at** <http://www.pacificseabirdgroup.org/publications/Hatch.etal.2008.pdf>

Information on presenting symposia: Pacific Seabird Group Symposia or Paper Sessions may be arranged by any member who is interested in a particular topic. Before planning a special session, refer to Meetings/Symposia Guidelines at www.pacificseabirdgroup.org; also contact the Scientific Program Chair for the annual meeting.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP

TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS

EXXON VALDEZ OIL SPILL SEABIRD RESTORATION WORKSHOP. Kenneth I. Warheit, Craig S. Harrison, and George J. Divoky (editors). Exxon Valdez Restoration Project Final Report, Restoration Project 95038. PSG Technical Publication Number 1. 1997. *Available free of charge at* www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

METHODS FOR SURVEYING MARBLED MURRELETS IN FORESTS: A REVISED PROTOCOL FOR LAND MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH. Pacific Seabird Group, Marbled Murrelet Technical Committee. PSG Technical Publication Number 2. 2003. *Available free of charge at* www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP COMMITTEE COORDINATORS FOR 2018-2019

Committees do much of PSG's business, as well as the conservation work for which PSG is respected. The committees welcome (and need) information concerning their issues. Please contact one of these Coordinators with input, updates, to apply for a small grant (see PSG's website for eligibility), or if you wish to help a committee with its work.

AWARDS COMMITTEE

Kyra Mills, email: pastchair@pacificseabirdgroup.org; **Adrian Gall**, email: chair@pacificseabirdgroup.org; and **David Craig**, email: programchair@pacificseabirdgroup.org

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Kees Vermeer
John and Jane Warriner
Yutaka Watanuki
Jennifer Wheeler
Jeff Williams

**deceased*

HONORARY MEMBER

John Cooper

RECIPIENTS OF PSG'S LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

David Ainley
Daniel W. Anderson
Philip and Myrtle Ashmole
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W.R.P. Bourne
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Enriqueta Velarde
Sarah Wanless
John Warham*

**deceased*

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Hiroshi Hasegawa

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S. Kim Nelson
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Steven M. Speich*

Martin Raphael
Mark J. Rauzon
Gus B. Van Vliet
Enriqueta Velarde
Yutaka Watanuki
Lindsay C. Young
**deceased*

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Members receive the following benefits: announcements of meetings, reduced rates on conferences and some publications, subscription to the PSG listserv, and most importantly, the knowledge of contributing to the study and conservation of Pacific seabirds wherever they occur. Annual membership is for one calendar year and expires each year on 31 December. Lifetime memberships are also available. All Life member contributions are dedicated to PSG's Endowment Fund, a fund to support the publications of the PSG, principally *Marine Ornithology*.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

Individual membership: \$40

Student membership: \$30

Life membership: \$1,200 (can be divided into 5 annual payments of \$240)

TO JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP

To join the Pacific Group or renew your membership, please go to: <http://tiny.cc/psgmember>

To edit information on an existing membership, please follow the link above and login using the e-mail address that you used to renew your membership (which may be different from your mailing-list e-mail address).

If you have any questions, please notify our Membership Coordinator: membership@pacificseabirdgroup.org

The Membership Coordinator is responsible for maintaining the membership database, assisting members with updating their information, sending new member information to the listserv coordinator, and other member assistance as needed.

MEMBER RESOURCES

To subscribe to the Pacific Seabird Group Listserv, please go to: lists-psg.org/mailman/listinfo/pacificseabirds_lists-psg.org
For access to the Pacific Seabird Group mailing list, please contact the coordinator at: listserv@pacificseabirdgroup.org.

Connect with the Pacific Seabird Group through our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/PacificSeabirdGroup>

Follow PSG on: Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/#!/pacificseabirds>

Instagram https://www.instagram.com/pacific_seabird_group/

PSG EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2018

OFFICERS

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