Executive Summary of Communications Committee Accomplishments

Now in its fifth year, the PSG Communications Committee is responsible for three social media platforms, two websites, one listserv, and publication of the Pacific Seabirds bulletin. It also provides the link between PSG and management of the journal Marine Ornithology. Not surprisingly, this hard-working team donates an immense amount of time and in-kind support to PSG, about 700 hours annually (valued at ~$19,040 – PSG portion) and 2,600 hours annually (valued at ~$70,720 – Marine Ornithology portion).

2020 Highlights:
- Likes and follows to ALL social media accounts (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) grew in 2020
- Content and streamlining occurred on the student and About sections of the PSG website
- The listserv now exceeds 950 subscribers
- Marine Ornithology published 30+ papers

2021 Committee Changes:
- Jane Dolliver, Communications Coordinator, will be replaced by Wieteke Holthuijzen and Anna Vallery on 26 February 2021
- Jac Huard, Facebook Co-Coordinator, will be replaced by the end of February 2021
- Julia Gulka, Jenny Howard, Ed Jenkins, Twitter Co-Coordinators, will be replaced by March 2021

Recommendations:
- Use PSG 2021 to recruit additional help for social media platforms (see above)
- Continue to capture photos, video, and short quotes at annual meetings, esp. mentor sessions, early career scientist panel
- Gather profiles/testimonials/quotes from PSG awardees for website and social media
- Continue to maintain at least 2 coordinators per Communications subcommittee, minimum.
- Host annual or biannual Communications Committee meetings to brainstorm new initiatives, create camaraderie.

8A. PSG Website (Wieteke Holthuijzen, Coordinator; Jane Dolliver, Assistant Coordinator)

- Total visitors (20,963) and total page views (45,923) increased over the previous year.
- 55% are new visitors, 45% are returning visitors
- Average session duration is 1min:46sec, 2 pages viewed
- 67% of viewers are from the U.S., 6% Canada, 3% U.K., 3% Japan, 3% Mexico, 2% Chile
- 60% of incoming viewers bounce to the annual meeting site
Throughout 2020, the entire website was reviewed for broken links and to update high priority content. Nearly all pages have been updated. In particular, we updated and re-formatted the Committees and Delegates page as well as the Conservation Action page for more efficient viewing and reading. We also created a (growing) database of Seabird Research Labs (for students looking for research opportunities and experience), compiled tips and advice from Former Chairs, and posted interviews with PSG Student and ECS members. In addition, we update the Annual Meeting page and related news almost daily per updates from the EVCO, Local Chair, and Scientific Program Chair.

In 2021, we expect to finish updating the following sections: History of PSG, Photo Gallery, Early Career Scientists, Students, Jobs, Grants, and Publications.

Proposal for PSG Website Updates and Changes in 2021:

- Remove “News” and “Volunteer” items from banner, and put into sub-menu under “About PSG”
- Rename “About PSG” news banner item to “About”
- Create a new Membership page as a banner item, and include a sub-menu linking to the following:
  - How to become a member and membership benefits (potentially will also include a map of current members)
  - PSG HELPS program information and application
  - Profiles of PSG student members
  - Profiles of PSG ECS members
  - Profiles of PSG Corresponding Members
  - Profiles of Life Members
  - The PSG Student and ECS profiles will look similar to the Former Chairs page, and will replace the more-lengthy interviews
- Continue to post content regularly from PSG (Meeting Minutes, Conservation Letters/Action, News, Jobs, etc.)
- Revise PSG Handbook and create accessible, electronic version
- Revise “History of PSG” page with additional stories, information, photos, and a timeline of noteworthy events, and a map of current members
- Revise Student and ECS pages to include more updated information and useful resources
- Update Code of Conduct Committee and Seabird Monitoring Committee information
- Update Grants page
- Find all past PSG Annual Meeting Covers and update Annual Meeting Cover Gallery
- Update Photo Gallery page

The Website Coordinator spends 80 hours annually adding new posts, updating and adding content to pages, communicating with webmaster, EXCO, external organizations wishing to post jobs.

8B. Listserv (Verena Gill, Coordinator)
As of 8 February 2021, the new listserv has 975 subscribers up from 909 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 3,000+ subscriber capacity.

The Listserv Coordinator spends 104 hours annually approving new subscriptions, and delayed posts, updating and archiving content.

8C. *Marine Ornithology* journal (Louise Blight, Managing Editor)

2020-21: *Marine Ornithology* continues under its volunteer editorial team (David Ainley, Editor-in-Chief; Louise Blight, Managing Editor; Ben Saenz, Online Editor; Rachel Buxton, Book Review Editor; Jenna Craig, Assistant to Managing Editor; Iain Duncan, Assistant to Online Editor; Carmen Antaky, Twitter feed). On the fee-for-services side, copy editing is still ably provided by Rosalyn Johnson and Kyra Nabeta, and layout by Reber Creative.

The scope of *Marine Ornithology* continues to be truly international. Since the beginning of 2020 we have published or in-press papers by first authors from over 20 countries: 5 in Europe, 5 in South America, 5 in Asia, 3 in North America, 2 in Central America and the Caribbean, plus Australia, New Zealand, and Africa (Morocco this time, rather than our usual contributions from South Africa).

In 2020 the journal published 40 papers, totaling approximately 10% more pages than in 2019 and 30% more than 2018. We published both 2020 issues on schedule, a minor triumph given the challenges of the last year. One topical highlight was the twin book review of two volumes on antiracism, written by the MO editorial team and led by book review editor Rachel Buxton.

Rather than offering a detailed report on the journal here, I’d like to acknowledge the commitment and professionalism of the editorial team, as summarised in my end-of-year message to them in December:

“I want to acknowledge the sometimes Herculean efforts everyone has put in to keep the journal going to press this year. A special thanks to Kyra for meeting deadlines while juggling domestic lockdown and internet-free weeks at sea, to Rosalyn for juggling her deadlines with home-schooling, to Rachel (also a mom) for taking on the extra task of leading us in our antiracism readings over the summer, and to Ben for keeping the online journal going while dodging forest fires with his family. But really, special thanks to everyone for such dedication during a year when there were so many stressful and sometimes painful things calling for our time and attention. I know the authors who published in MO this year have greatly appreciated everyone's time and flexibility.”
MO continues to be largely self-supported by authors’ page charges, member society fees, and subscriptions, with the cost of publishing offset by the volunteer editorial team. Rosalyn, Kyra, and Reber are based in Canada so the relatively strong US dollar continues to be an advantage, although the exchange rate has weakened over the past six months. Because of this, and the fact that our 2021 subscription renewals are down - continuing a long-term trend, but perhaps also due to the pandemic - I am requesting PSG’s annual (now semi-annual) $6K contribution. I believe this is the first time it has been requested in three years.

8D. Pacific Seabirds bulletin (Theo Squires, Editor)

Due to a series of extenuating circumstances, the Editor of Pacific Seabirds continues to work on the draft of Pacific Seabirds 47 no 1, with an expected first draft available by end of March. Twelve sections have been edited and placed, one section is edited and not placed, seven sections need edits and placement.

The Editor is in ongoing communication with the Communications Committee Coordinator, who a) retains a draft copy of Pacific Seabirds 47 no 1 and b) will recruit Associate Editors from the PSG membership to fill crucial roles in the short-term.

8E. Facebook (Anna Vallery, Coordinator; Jac Huard, Assistant Coordinator)

Summary Statistics, Feb 2020-Jan 2021

- Average page views/month: 300 (down from 500 last year)
- Average post reach/month: 13,128 (up from 3,700 last year)
- Average page likes/month: 23 (up from 20 last year) *Facebook is combining “likes” and “follows” soon, so the distinction will go away
- Average page follows/month: 23 (up from 20 last year) *Facebook is combining “likes” and “follows” soon, so the distinction will go away
- Average number of engagements/month: 1,142 (down from 1,500 last year)
- Total page likes: 3,466 (up from 3,315)
- Total followers: 3,564 (up from 3,475)
- Average number of posts/month: 29 (from 67)
- The top post for this year was the 4th Annual World Seabird Day post featuring the Great Auk, which reached 7,400 people.

Opportunities and Challenges

A goal for 2019 was set to decrease the number of Facebook posts to one every day or every other day. We achieved that goal throughout 2020, posting PSG updates, seabird-related news, jobs openings, and other related information once a day on average. Anna Vallery was brought on in February to help Jac Huard manage the Facebook page, but we will be seeking additional volunteers at the leading up to the 2021 meeting. Facebook viewership and followers have increased throughout the year with spikes near the annual conference. In late 2020 a
graphics/marketing company called Peppermint Narwhal approached PSG via FB asking for expert consultations and PSG shares on some upcoming graphics and educational material in 2021. This shows the value and importance of maintaining an active presence on social media platforms, as the premier seabird science organization of the Pacific.

Goals for 2021 include:

• Participate (via multiple posts leading up and on the day of) for World Albatross Day and World Seabird Day
• Post 1x everyday
• Start several post series (ideas include: member highlights (maybe ECS/Student members); Species spotlights (beak of the week); Featured new article of the week)
• Work with conservation education partners, like Peppermint Narwhal, to connect them with expert reviewers and to share relevant posts (especially when tagged).

Managing the PSG Facebook account has taken approximately 180 hours (between Anna and Jac) in 2020 to create and share content and interact with PSG’s friends.

8F. Twitter (Brad Wilkinson, Coordinator; Julia Gulka, Jenny Howard, Ed Jenkins, Assistant Coordinators)

• The @PacificSeabirds twitter account was revived in 2016, since then, followers have steadily grown from 101 before revival, to 701 in 2017, to 1,051 in 2018, to 1,356 in 2019, to 1,753 in 2020.
• In January 2021, Twitter now has 2,395 followers!
• On average, from Jan - Dec 2020, 21 tweets were sent each month, which generated 38,608 impressions and 447 profile visits per month. While the number of monthly tweets and impressions decreased from 2019, profile visits increased dramatically. The annual meeting (Feb) and #WorldSeabirdDay-related tweets (July) generated considerable activity.
• By far the most popular tweet (earning 85,300 unique impressions alone) was a game-related Tweet in August which asked viewers to find a digitally-Photoshopped penguin amongst a large group of murres.
• The hashtag #PSG2020 was used for the 2020 annual meeting and attached to tweets to advertise events and talks. It was also very successfully used by conference participants.
• As part of PSG 2021 registration, we have asked registrants to provide their twitter handle.
• Julia Gulka was the primary lead on curating content for the PSG Twitter account, but Edward Jenkins, Jenny Howard, and Bradley Wilkinson were also assisting. Julia, Edward, and Jenny will be stepping down from managing the Twitter account in 2021 and Bradley will take the primary lead.
• Recommendations for 2021:
1. The Twitter Manager should engage with the World Seabird Union (worldseabird@gmail.com) regarding opportunities to promote PSG over social media and in relation to the 2021 World Seabird Conference.

2. The Communications team should consider additional opportunities for engagement. The #30EarthMonthHeros was a successful campaign, and there may be other similar opportunities. In addition, explore the possibility of a member takeover as an additional outreach opportunity.

3. World Albatross Day and Juneteenth fall on the same day. We should respectfully consider reserving the American hours of June 19th for Juneteenth, and consider posting World Albatross Day content the day before and/or after June 19th.

   **ACTION:** Twitter manager to discuss these topics at the next Communications Committee meeting.

1. Following PSG 2021, the Twitter manager should discuss with the Communications team and consider the archiving of conference tweets (#PSG2021) to share on the PSG website. This can be done using the Advanced Search option, and may be a great way to share with a broader group the happenings at the conference.

   **ACTION:** Twitter manager to discuss this possibility with the ExCo and Communications Committee.

1. In the lead up to PSG 2022 the local committee should be contacted regarding social media engagement and the meeting hashtag #PSG2022 should be promoted.

   **ACTION:** Twitter manager to set a calendar reminder for fall of 2020 to coordinate a conversation about opportunities with the Communications Committee & Local Committee.

   1. At PSG 2022, we could take the opportunity to identify and engage with PSG members that are on Twitter. Members could self-identify during conference registration, there could be a signup sheet at check-in, and people could be encouraged to share their twitter handle on their Title slide or poster. Signs to encourage people to follow us on all social media platforms could also increase followers.

   **ACTION:** The Twitter account manager must remind the ExCo of this suggestion prior to the next meeting registration opening.

The team estimates 140 hours were spent to keep PSG active on Twitter, 2020-2021

### 8G. Instagram (Laura Bliss and Olivia Townsend, Co-Coordinators)

- The Instagram account was created in May 2016
- The number of followers has continued to increase over time:
  - 60 in Feb. 2017
  - 505 in Jan. 2018
  - 1,004 in Jan. 2019
  - 1,217 in Jan. 2020
  - **1,465 as of Feb. 2021**
- And since the beginning of 2021, the PSG Instagram profile has had 5,379 impressions, 155 profile visits, and 48 website taps (using the link in bio)
- Top cities of our followers:
1. Honolulu, HI
2. Santiago, Chile
3. Hilo, HI
4. Seattle, WA
5. Auckland, NZ

- Age distribution of our followers supports that Instagram is overall a younger audience:
  - 45% between the ages of 25-34
  - 23% between the ages of 35-44
  - 13% between the ages of 45-54
  - 11% between the ages of 18-24
- Total of 66 posts in 2020 (5-6 posts per month)
- Top 5 posts of 2020:
  1. PSG Awardee Spotlight on Olivia Townsend; graduate research on red-tailed tropicbirds (173 likes)
  2. Announcement for PSG 2021 and debut of logo (166 likes)
  3. Launch of PSG HELPS Program with photo of noddies (152 likes)
  4. Highlight on Rachael Orben for World Albatross Day (150 likes)
  5. Photo of Caspian terns for #seabirdsaturday post (148 likes)

- Volunteer hours
  - average about 5-6 per month per person (about 132 hours/year)
  - includes finding content, editing/uploading photos, writing captions, and engaging with followers

- Recommendations for 2021:
  - Continue photo promotions, such as our successful series in 2019 and 2020 highlighting students and early-career scientists that won awards from PSG. We can continue this following PSG 2021.
  - Try to increase number of posts to 2 per week
  - Be more diligent about posting on Saturdays for #seabirdsaturday, and use it to highlight seabird species, research articles, job openings, etc.
  - Utilize Instagram’s newer features, such as stories and IGTV to engage with our followers (e.g., we can do live Q&As with seabird researchers on IGTV)

8H. PSG 2021 Event Website (Jenny Howard, Zoe Burr, Adrian Gall, Co-Coordinators)

Overview
The Cvent website went live on October 21, 2020 for #PSG2021. 13 active pages including:
Home
Contact Us
Local Committee
Merchandise
Registration & Fees
Silent AUKtion
Scientific Program
Agenda
Abstract Guidelines
Presenter Information
Virtual Field Trips
Social Events
Students

*Meeting Sponsors
*Sponsorship & Exhibitors
*Travel Awards
*Travel & Accommodations
*Venue Location
**Plenary Speakers

*was present in 2020 Cvent but was either not relevant to virtual format or we did not receive information so these pages didn’t go live in 2021
**was present in 2019 Cvent but we did not received plenary info or biographies in time this year so this page didn’t go live in 2021, same as 2020.

Total Team Volunteer Hours (includes email, Cvent page maintenance)
Many more hours upfront to launch and then sporadic busy periods throughout to get various pages launched (i.e., Events or Merchandise). We estimate 20 hours upfront in 2021 (reduced significantly because copying the website over from previous PSG Annual Meetings made this a lot easier) and then 2 hours per week until the conference. Approximate total = 80 hours.

Recommendations for PSG 2021
  ● We recommend having one person that can dedicate a lot of time, or two people that could work seamlessly together or divide roles.
  ● It would be helpful if the PSG secretary or ExCo member sends an introductory email to Cvent team and LoCo to get the ball rolling. Start early because it can take a while to acquire all the key information, especially with people’s field schedules.
  ● Cvent team can create a folder of documents that need to be updated and included on the website for PSG 2021, which should be easy to make edits to. EVERYONE should have access to this (maybe Google Drive or Dropbox) so that LoCo can see early on in the process what information will be needed to launch Cvent.
  ● Investigate if/how to make the Cvent website URL more google-able when searching “PSG Annual Meeting 2021”; maybe look into SEO.
  ● Add Google Analytics to track visits to the website. Under Cvent: Promotions & Communication > Web > Weblinks > Google Analytics Then enter Google Tracking ID from PSG Google Analytics account?