

- Seabird bycatch data reporting and indicators, guidelines and priority fisheries
- ACAP Species Assessments

Jonathan Barrington (Australia) was selected as the next Executive Secretary, to start in June 2025.

The next AC meeting will be in May 2026. As non-Parties can host, Namibia is looking into hosting AC15. Chinese Taipei will explore with their ministries hosting of AC15 if no other parties or observers will be hosting, but Argentina pointed out that MoP8 may need to look at whether it is possible for an APEC member economy to host.

For copies of all meeting documents and summaries plus an abundance of other valuable reference material go to <https://acap.aq>

## Report #2n. PSG PICES Delegate Annual Report

Not received as of 1/5/2025

## Report #2o. PSG Ornithological Council Delegate Annual Report

### **Ornithological Council Report to the Pacific Seabird Group December 2024**

The Ornithological Council is pleased to provide this report to the Pacific Seabird Group, which provides an overview of the OC's recent and ongoing activities in the context of our mission. This report covers the 2024 calendar year.

During 2024, the Ornithological Council released a [revised strategic plan](#), which builds off the 2006 strategic plan, updating and streamlining it. The revised plan was developed with input from the entire OC board of directors, which includes representatives of all OC member societies.

Under that revised plan, the OC's mission has been updated slightly. The Ornithological Council seeks to:

1. Ensure that the best ornithological science is incorporated into policy, research, and management decisions that affect birds and the study of birds;
2. Safeguard and enhance the ability of ornithologists to pursue professional activities; and

3. Serve as the collective voice of the ornithological community in amplifying the influence of ornithological knowledge in public affairs.

The remainder of this report will be organized under those three mission areas.

### **ENSURE THAT THE BEST ORNITHOLOGICAL SCIENCE IS INCORPORATED INTO POLICY, RESEARCH, AND MANAGEMENT DECISIONS THAT AFFECT BIRDS AND THE STUDY OF BIRDS**

The OC regularly interacts with relevant federal agencies and other institutions, to ensure that the best available ornithological science is used in policy and decision making. Over the past year, OC staff met quarterly with Tony Celis Murillo, the Chief of the Bird Banding Lab, to discuss issues of mutual importance, keep each other informed of current activities, and collaborate on solutions to any issues bird banders are facing. OC staff also met twice with Mandy Lawrence, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lead on purposeful take policy and the liaison to the regional migratory bird permit offices. We discussed the agency's transition to ePermits, future guidance on take limits for scientific collection permits and depredation permits, upcoming agency regulations, and other issues. Finally, we also met with Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service staff, including representatives of the Animal Products Import and Export Program, to discuss recent research on the viability of avian influenza and Newcastle Disease viruses on dried ornithological specimens and its impact on USDA treatment methods for imports.

In November, the OC submitted [comments](#) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, regarding a proposed project to eradicate nonnative rats from four uninhabited islands located in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. In 2010, the OC performed an external review of a 2008 project to eradicate Norway rats from Hawadax Island (formally called Rat Island), in which non-target mortality was higher than expected. The comments submitted in November to USFWS were based on the recommendations made that report. We also submitted comments to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on its proposal to increase the fees for import permits and other various veterinary services.

### **SAFEGUARD AND ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF ORNITHOLOGISTS TO PURSUE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

A major focus area for the OC is ensuring that ornithologists can do the work they want and need to do. We do this by providing valuable, free resources to the community, by answering individual questions from ornithologists, and by communicating directly with federal agencies on issues of concern to ornithologists. This behind-the-scenes work with agencies helps to ensure that formal policies and guidance issued by agencies support ornithological research and management.

In 2023, we published the 4th edition of the [\*Guidelines to the Use of Wild Birds in Research\*](#) in English, which consisted of text from the 3rd edition along with new reference lists for each chapter. In addition, old links throughout the document were updated. We are now making those updates to the Spanish version of the 3rd edition and will release the new version in the coming months.

This year, we also updated our online [Import Guide](#) to include changes in import rules and regulations, including the CDC's new Importer Certification Statement, and published updated [information](#) about how to import live birds for scientific research or display on our website. We also developed a new Fact Sheet on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (an update from our 2020 fact sheet on avian influenza, West Nile virus, and other diseases) and posted it on [www.birdnet.org](http://www.birdnet.org).

In response to many inquiries about compliance with the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), especially regarding field work, in light of the new regulations regarding birds, the OC is developing a sample policy regarding field studies under the AWA that institutions can use to develop and enact their own policies.

Over the past year, we provided direct individual assistance to ornithologists who belong to OC societies regarding how to obtain the permits necessary to complete their research or how to navigate animal welfare requirements on 25 occasions. We also assisted about a dozen museums and institutions facing delays in getting their CITES COSEs renewed, after learning about these delays in August.

### **SERVE AS THE COLLECTIVE VOICE OF THE ORNITHOLOGICAL COMMUNITY IN AMPLIFYING THE INFLUENCE OF ORNITHOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

The Ornithological Council is proud to serve as the voice of the ornithological community and to provide ornithological knowledge both to our community and to the broader public.

In 2023, the OC took over management of the OrnithologyExchange, an online community for ornithologists and others interested in birds. Since then, we have been reviewing existing content, cleaning up old parts of the site, and exploring new ways to use the OE. Over the past year, the OC published more than 50 articles on the Ornithology Exchange, on various topics of interest to ornithologists and shared links to these articles on social media.

We also launched a sponsorship program for the Ornithology Exchange, which will offer tiered benefits to sponsors in return for annual support of the site. The OC took over management of the Ornithology Exchange last year, and it requires about \$1000 a year, as well as an investment of staff time, to manage the site. Learn more about the sponsorship program [here](#).