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## **Pacific Seabird Group**



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DEDICATED TO THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF PACIFIC SEABIRDS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

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August 15, 1994

**Mr. Mack Shaver, Superintendent**  
Channel Islands National Park  
1901 Spinnaker Drive  
Ventura, California 93001

**Re: Xantus' Murrelet Conservation Suggestions**

Dear Mr. Shaver:

At the 18 May meeting convened at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology by the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG), Tim Setnicka of the Channel Islands National Park offered to consider actions that the National Park Service could take in advance of the proposal to petition the Fish and Wildlife Service to place Xantus' Murrelet on the Endangered Species List. A draft list of recommendations was compiled at that meeting by Bill Everett, then circulated among all interested parties (including your staff) for comments.

Attached please find the final list of recommendations. PSG applauds your willingness to be proactive in this matter. Many of the suggestions are reasonably straightforward and could be implemented with minimal disruption of normal park operations.

We would be happy to provide additional information or assistance in further developing these conservation efforts. Although we realize that implementing some of these recommendations will take time, and that there are budgetary and other constraints, we are hopeful that when the petition is submitted to the FWS (anticipated March 1995), the park service will have already taken most of these steps. For further information on PSG's conservation recommendations, please call Bill Everett (619-589-0480).

We appreciate this opportunity to provide our expertise and views on these important issues.

Sincerely,

John Piatt  
Craig S. Harrison  
William T. Everett

Enclosure

**RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP  
TO THE CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK FOR THE  
CONSERVATION OF XANTUS' MURRELET**

- 1. Consult with the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) to revise the current research and monitoring program and to acquire more and better biological data on the species.**
- 2. Conduct a thorough census on all Park Service islands, and refine and improve current census techniques. Make results of census work available to PSG and public in a timely fashion, to allow for evaluation of results and input on future census work.**
- 3. Initiate a rat eradication program on Anacapa Island.**
- 4. Implement policies to minimize the potential for rat introduction to Santa Barbara Island during the course of routine supply and material unloading.**
- 5. Survey for rats at the Ventura Park Headquarters, particularly the dock area, and institute a control program, if necessary.**
- 6. Develop a contingency plan to prepare for rapid response to accidental rat introduction to any of the Park Service islands via shipwreck.**
- 7. Initiate a supplemental nest box program to provide additional sites for monitoring and research on Santa Barbara Island.**
- 8. Review current procedures for equipment and material storage on Santa Barbara Island to reduce or eliminate any adverse impacts to nesting Xantus' Murrelets.**
- 9. Investigate and implement policies to control unnecessary use of bright deck lights by boats anchored at Santa Barbara Island.**
- 10. Develop a contingency plan to assess threats to Xantus' Murrelets and advise the command structure in the event of an oil spill.**
- 11. Develop a contingency plan to protect, rescue or rehabilitate Xantus' Murrelets in the event of an oil spill.**
- 12. Initiate research to investigate the significance of mouse and owl predation on Xantus' Murrelets on Santa Barbara Island.**

- 13. Enter into informal consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to consider possible mitigation for the relocation or removal of artificial structures on Santa Barbara Island that may be used by nesting Xantus' Murrelets.**
- 14. Organize an annual meeting on the status and conservation of Xantus' Murrelets in the Channel Islands National Park with participants from FWS, NPS, NBS, California Department of Fish & Game and other interested parties. PSG is willing to co-host some of these meetings during our regular annual conferences.**