PROLOGUE TO SPECIAL SECTION

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In 1972, the Pacific Seabird Group, "dedicated to the study and conservation of Pacific seabirds and their environment," was founded by a group of idealistic US and Canadian Early Career Scientists (led by George Divoky, and egged-on by some older mentors) (Fig. 1). It was a heady time, with publication of Rachael Carson's *Silent Spring*, the first Earth Day, and the enactments of the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and Clean Water Act. During this time, besides DDT and its effects on marine birds, major marine oil spills occurred in waters off Santa Barabara and San Francisco. The group, affected by the lure of the sea and curious about how those homeothermic feathered creatures could manage its forces (rather than, as most humans do, merely cope), saw that there was a rapidly growing need for scientifically-derived facts.

Fig. 1. The group of Early Career Scientists and mentors meeting at Palomarin Field Station, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Bolinas, California, USA on 01–02 December 1973.

This Special Section of *Marine Ornithology* provides two longer-than usual articles that grew out of PSG's dedicated purpose. The first, by Craig S. Harrison (PSG's first Vice-chair for Conservation, and a seabird ecologist having legal expertise), entitled, "Conserving Seabirds: Actions of the Pacific Seabird Group during its First 40 Years," embodies the conservation angle of PSG's purpose. The ocean was then and has since experienced "death by a thousand cuts," with those feathered indicator species showing this full well (e.g., Paleczny et al. (2015). Population trend of the world's monitored seabirds, 1950–2010. *PLOS One*, *10*(6), e0129342). However, as documented by C. S. Harrison, PSG immediately began to fight the good fight, an oftentimes trying endeavor, but with many successes, more so in its early years, thus, to make members of the organization proud. Much of that effort was directed at issues in the eastern North Pacific and Bering Sea.

The second article, by Schneider et al., entitled, "Seabirds in 3D: A Framework to Evaluate Collision Vulnerability with Future Offshore Wind Developments in the California Current System," is an achievement in summarizing, and making sense of, the early years of the science of marine ornithology. In those days, lots of seabird scientists actually went to sea. By doing so, they could see how these indicator species actually acted and reacted, with seeming ease, to what we think are the daunting forces of the sea, as well as with whom they competed or by whom were facilitated —a dying art in the current age of biologging. In this endeavor,

the species-group specific flight style with respect to the wind was noted, thus adding flight height to the oft-modeled 2D patterns of seabird occurrence.

Owing in large part to the contributions of PSG members, the California Current has become the most surveyed stretch of ocean on the planet, with respect to its marine birds, beginning with the Outer Continental Shelf Environment Assessment Program of the 1970–80s (e.g., Briggs et al. 1987. Bird communities at sea off California: 1975 to 1983. *Studies in Avian Biology, 11*, 1–74), a program launched the careers of many seabird researchers. The seabird survey effort continues to this day with the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) rockfish assessment cruises, United States Geological Survey (USGS) aerial surveys, and only recently terminated (National Marine Fisheries Service) NMFS ORCAWALE cruises. A well-informed NMFS, working with biologists from the California Marine Resources Agency and a bevy of university/private marine research stations, made the California Current the "poster child" of ecosystem-based fishery management. The result is that the California Current, sporting a large resident seabird population, remains the non-breeding season target of huge numbers of seabirds from elsewhere in the Pacific region.