

Circumpolar Seabird Expert Group (CBird) Implementation Update Iceland, 2019

The [Circumpolar Seabird Expert Group \(CBird\)](#) promotes, facilitates, and coordinates conservation, management and research activities among circumpolar countries and improves communication between seabird scientists and managers inside and outside the Arctic.



*Monitoring of Arctic Terns on Flatey island, Breiðafjörður, W-Iceland.
Population data are available from Flatey island, for nearly half a century.
Photo: Anna Björg Petersen*



Current CBird Priorities

● Country participating ● Country not participating

- Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) (Implementing the Circumpolar Flyway Workplan)
- Implementation of the species-specific conservation strategies and action plans
- Contributing seabird monitoring data to State of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Report (SAMBR) and Seabird Information Network (SIN)
- Circumpolar Review of Arctic Tern Population Trends
- Estimation of the circumpolar status, trends and demography of Leach's and European Storm-Petrels
- Assessment of seabird bycatch in Lumpfish fisheries
- Murre harvest study and scientific recommendations to international and national harvest schemes
- Publication: Circumpolar dynamics of a marine top-predator track ocean warming rates (Descamps et al. 2017, Global Change Biology)

Links with National Priorities

Avian monitoring status and species prioritization was compiled in a report by [Guðmundsson & Skarphéðinsson](#) (2012).

CBird listed the current Icelandic seabird monitoring programs in the [Circumpolar Seabird Monitoring Plan](#) (Irons et al. 2015, CAFF Monitoring Report No.17).



*Participants in the Elliðaey I. Storm-petrel expedition 2018.
Photo: Erpur Hansen*



*Automated camera system in Látrabjarg, Iceland.
Photo: Þorkell Lindberg Þórarinnsson*

CBird Summary of 2017-18 Country Achievements

Storm-Petrel Project

The estimation of the circumpolar status, trends and demography of Leach's (LSP) and European Storm-Petrels (ESP). The project's key objectives are to (1) comparatively monitor breeding success and (2) adult survival for both species. (3) Surveying the Westman breeding populations. (4) Development of the playback survey methodology and analysis. It seems that reduced food availability or something else might be a common cause for decreased adult survival of the whole LSP population across the Atlantic Ocean, likely occurring in the winter and possibly locally supplemented by increased summer predation pressure. (5) Mapping the wintering areas using GLS. (6) Sampling of diet regurgitations in mist nets for DNA-bar coding analysis of diet. Bad weather in 2018 limited the field work planned in an expedition to Elliðaey I. but a detailed survey conducted indicates a 70% population decline in LSP since 1991. Gull regurgitates showed high level of predation. DNA samples were collected and a survival estimate for ESP is in progress.

SEATRACK

Since 2014 Icelandic researchers have collaborated in [SEATRACK](#), a fundamental multinational project mapping important seabird wintering areas and migration using geologgers.

Automated camera systems monitor productivity in cliff breeding seabirds

The North East Nature Research Centre installed five automated camera systems in 2018 using the same system developed in Greenland by Merkel et al. (2016). This is a key improvement in Icelandic productivity measurements for both Murres spp. and the Northern Fulmar.

Icelandic red list 2018 update

The [2018 Icelandic Red List](#) is the first red-list compilation since 2000, and now includes the majority of Icelandic seabirds (20 species), and includes all the locally breeding target species of CBird.

Key publications

- Garðarsson, A. & Jónsson, J. E. (2019). [25 year demographic history of the Icelandic Great Cormorant population](#).
- Garðarsson et al. (2019). The first Icelandic Northern Fulmar population survey, 1.3 million apparently occupied sites. *Bliki* 33: 1-14.
- [Skarphedinsson et al. 2018](#). Major revision of the seabird colony registry, International Bird Areas (IBA), 33 new colonies were added, mainly Northern Fulmar and Atlantic Puffin colonies, totalling 70 IBA seabird colonies (>10.000 breeding pairs). Most of Iceland's IBA colonies are now listed.



Atlantic puffin with a geollogger taken in June on Papey, Iceland 2016.
Photo: Ingvar A. Sigurðsson

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