

THE HISTORY OF THE SEABIRD GROUP

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The Seabird Group was founded in the UK in 1965 with the aim of increasing the communication between ornithologists interested in seabirds. The history of its progress and development since that date is reviewed.

Another of the aims was to produce a base-line for the seabirds by making a census of all the breeding sites in Britain and Ireland. This massive task was successfully completed and the results reported in a book published in 1974. Since then there have been two subsequent books reporting on the changes in numbers since that date. Methods of counting have become more sophisticated also and there are now more complex protocols for each species.

Seabird workers suffer from a disadvantage compared with most students of other birds. We see only what the birds are doing when they are at their nest and not when they are away from the colony. This means that we still do not know accurately where the birds from many colonies feed during the breeding season or spend the winter and our understanding of their feeding ecology is still poor. It also emphasises the international aspects of these birds. With this in mind suggestions are made for the ways forward for Seabird Groups in the future.