



Black-footed Albatross Photo Eric Preston

# Reduce Night Lights

## LIGHTS & SEABIRDS

In the dark of night, seabirds use their keen senses and light from the moon and stars to navigate, find food, tend their nests, and avoid predators.

Mariners and scientists have observed that bright lights from vessels or land can attract and disorient seabirds, causing injury or death—especially on moonless or foggy nights.



Dan Barton

Avoid attracting seabirds at night by reducing the number and intensity of lights.

Bright lights attracted storm-petrels to this vessel off the coast of Alaska. Once decks were darkened, the birds were returned to the sea.

### HOW CAN BRIGHT LIGHTS AFFECT SEABIRDS?

- Drawn to or distracted by lights, seabirds can fly onto decks or land where they may be trapped, injured, or killed.
- Bright lights can illuminate nesting colonies on rocky coasts and islands, causing problems tending nests, abandonment of eggs or chicks, and increased predation by gulls or owls.
- Lights can distract birds from feeding, navigating, and other vital activities.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

#### Reduce the light on vessels and coasts!

- Use only navigation and safety lighting when anchored. If possible, use a source other than bright lights to keep a load on a generator at night.
- Use smaller or minimal wattage bulbs; locate them close to work areas.
- Keep lights well-shielded and directed downwards.
- Avoid shining bright lights directly at cliffs and islands where seabirds nest (see map).

### WHAT TO DO WHEN SEABIRDS ARE FOUND ON VESSELS:

Darken area as much as possible to avoid attracting more birds and to allow stranded birds to fly away. Use grease-free towels and hands to catch and place birds in clean, well-ventilated, towel-lined boxes in a cool, quiet place. (Ready yourself for seabird care by keeping 2-3 plastic folding pet carriers.) Release birds at dawn or when area is darkened. If possible, take injured birds to a wildlife rehabilitation facility within 24 hours: Northern CA - 707/207-0380, x 110; Southern CA - 310/514-2573.

**Reduce Night Lights Project Partners:** Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary; Island Conservation and Ecology Group; Natural Resources Defense Council; Point Blue Conservation Science; and US Fish & Wildlife Service. **Learn more!** Visit [www.pointblue.org/oceans-and-coasts](http://www.pointblue.org/oceans-and-coasts) or call 707/781-2555.

# California Seabirds Most Affected by Night Lights

## Xantus's Murrelet



NOAA/USFWS/NPS

**KEY NESTING AREAS OF CONCERN** Channel Islands NP.

**STATUS - Rare and declining in CA.** Small world population: breeds at only a few sites from southern CA to Baja California, MX.

**DESCRIPTION** - Plump, robin-sized; black with white belly; thin black bill.

**DIET** - Small fish and zooplankton.

## Cassin's Auklet



Bob Boeke/Heide

**KEY NESTING AREAS OF CONCERN** Farallon NWR; Channel Islands NP; Castle Rock NWR.

**STATUS - Declining in CA.** Breeds from AK to Baja California, MX.

**DESCRIPTION** - Plump, robin-sized; dark gray with light belly; white spot above and below eyes; bluish legs and feet.

**DIET** - Small fish; krill; other zooplankton.

## Leach's Storm-Petrel



Joshua Boardway

**KEY NESTING AREAS OF CONCERN** Castle Rock NWR; Farallon NWR.

**STATUS - Population trend unknown in CA.** Breeds from AK to Baja California, MX.

**DESCRIPTION** - Sparrow-sized; dark gray usually with white rump patch; long, delicate wings; steeply sloping forehead; 'tube nose'.

**DIET** - Small fish; squid; krill and other zooplankton.

## Ashy Storm-Petrel

**KEY NESTING AREAS OF CONCERN** Farallon NWR; Channel Islands NP.



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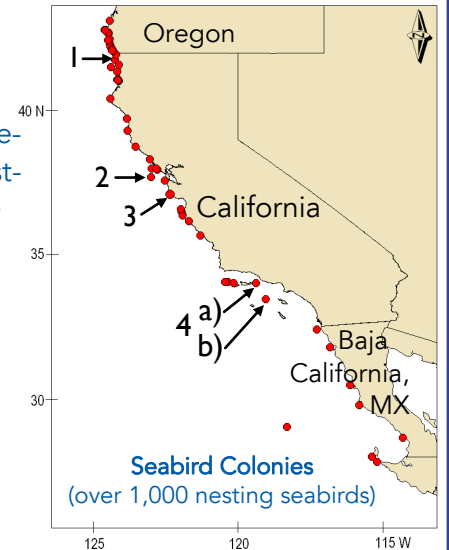
**STATUS - Rare and declining.** Small world range: breeds from central CA to northern Baja California, MX.

**DESCRIPTION** - Sparrow-sized; brownish gray; long, delicate wings; steeply sloping forehead; 'tube nose'.

**DIET** - Small fish; squid; krill and other zooplankton.

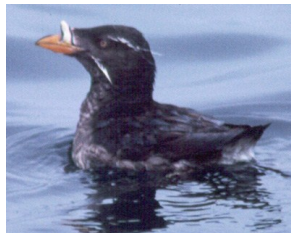
## Reduce Night Lights around all seabird colonies (red dots), especially around these key nesting areas for light-sensitive seabirds:

1. Castle Rock, NWR
2. Farallon NWR
3. Año Nuevo Island SR
4. Channel Islands NP
  - a) Anacapa Island
  - b) Santa Barbara Island



## Rhinoceros Auklet

**KEY NESTING AREAS OF CONCERN** Farallon NWR; Año Nuevo SR; Castle Rock NWR.



Ron LeValley

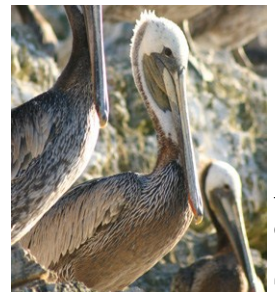
**STATUS - Suspected declining in CA.** Breeds from AK to southern CA.

**DESCRIPTION** - Pigeon-sized; grayish brown with white belly; large orange bill; breeding adult has horn and white face plumes.

**DIET** - Small fish and squid.

## Brown Pelican

**KEY NESTING AREAS OF CONCERN** - Channel Islands NP & Gulf of California, MX.



Dave Gardner

**STATUS - Endangered in US and CA.** Breeds from southern CA to Baja California, MX.

**DESCRIPTION** - Large-sized; adult has dark belly and white head; young has white belly, brown head.