

PREFACE

Eleven years have now passed since the Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO) first established a permanent research station on the South Farallon Islands. In the course of serving as a truly positive force in limiting human disturbance (thereby aiding the population growth of existing species and the natural re-establishment of several previously extirpated species), the staff and volunteers of PRBO have studied the breeding marine birds and mammals and have conducted daily censuses of the visitant birds on and near the island. This monograph is a result of the latter effort. The data from which it is constructed—eight years of daily censuses of an offshore island—are truly remarkable. No similar data base exists anywhere in North America or, for that matter, anywhere on Earth. Such a monumental effort could not have been accomplished by a single individual, nor even by any handful of individuals. Rather it is the accomplishment of a large group of people, from both the scientific and lay communities, who gave freely of their time and energy in their commitment to the continuation of this project. It is to these people, mentioned by name in the Acknowledgments, that we respectfully and gratefully dedicate this work.

Several of these people deserve special mention. To Richard W. Stallcup, who first recognized the vast potential of the Farallones for monitoring migration, whose energy and enthusiasm continually sparked volunteers to help on the island, and who contributed greatly to an earlier version of this manuscript; to C. John Ralph, John Smail, and L. Richard Mewaldt, whose unselfish work and energy turned the vision of a permanent research station on the Farallones into a reality; to Henry Robert, who heroically manned the station, often for months at a time, during the first two tenuous years of its existence; and to T. James Lewis, whose unswerving dedication to the Farallones and competence and expertise in all matters pertaining to the island, be they scientific or maintenance, brought about the maturation of a truly permanent research station, we extend a personal message of thanks.

Dave DeSante
David Ainley

Stinson Beach, California
12 April 1979