Seabird Surveys

Background

Seabirds are useful as indicators of marine ecosystems, because they can tell us about what is going on under the ocean's surface without being as difficult to see in their natural habitat as fish or plankton. Studying them, however, often requires many hours of observation over large areas. This project collects observations of birds from expedition staff, assisted by guests, from many different vessels exploring the Southern Ocean and Antarctica, as part of the much larger eBird (*www.ebird.org*) program, which is run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (*www.birds.cornell.edu*). Together, these observations can help us understand and conserve seabirds.

What is required?

All that is necessary is a staff member who is reasonably confident in bird identification in the region (they do not need to be an expert, but there should be someone present who has at least some familiarity with the present species).

The process of collecting data includes:

- Noting some initial data about the date, time, location, number of observers, etc.
- Counting (or estimating) the number of each species identified for a period of between 15 to 60 minutes.
- Recording some information at the end of the survey (time, location, etc.)
- Submitting the data (there are several options for doing so)

There are two types of surveys:

- **At-sea surveys**, of birds seen while underway from the deck of the ship
- **On-shore surveys**, of birds seen while visiting landing sites.

The information from both types is useful, but they are collected slightly differently. You can do as many or as few as you can fit into your schedule—every little bit helps!

How do I (and my guests) get involved?

If you are interested, please contact:

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He will direct you to all the required materials/training and will help you determine which method of data entry is best for your needs.