

The effect of the regular census visits, believed to disturb the nesting birds, while impossible to quantify, coincided with an overall decline in the breeding population. In view of the disturbance to the breeding populations by these visits, we believe that a visit every five years is appropriate to monitor future population trends, and that between these five-yearly visits, all other visits to the breeding sites should be prohibited.

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EDITORIAL

Two articles in this issue describe offshore southwestern Australia where the composition of the seabird fauna is greatly influenced by a unique oceanic current, the Leeuwin Current. Future interpretations of changes will require regular monitoring of both birds and sea. The papers from the Antarctic also reveal changes and the value of long-term monitoring. The Adélie Penguins are increasing in numbers, and the Southern Giant Petrel at the Frazier Islands could be increasing in abundance in contrast to the declines occurring elsewhere. This colony is clearly of major importance and will require regular surveillance in the future. Where a bird is long-lived, rears only one chick a year, and only

breeds successfully when several years old, as do many seabirds, long-term monitoring is essential. The current plight of albatrosses has been recognized because of continuing studies at their breeding and feeding sites over 30 years. Such studies need guaranteed support from funding bodies, preferably to groups with a proven record of commitment and the resources necessary to mount such investigations. They cannot be maintained where available funds are determined by current fashions in science or where investigators change their plumage according to the source of funds.

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