

# LEACH'S STORM-PETREL MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

*Raised by Working Group August 21, 2000*

## **Population**

- Leach's Storm-petrels are difficult to census due to their nocturnal habits at nesting sites; consequently, data are inadequate to ascertain current population levels.
- Need improved survey methodology to increase accuracy of population estimates.
- The viability of many colonies in Maine is tenuous, due to their small size. Should focus on holding populations at our biggest colonies.
- Probably many islands in Maine provide suitable nesting habitat; however, they must be predator-free to be successful.
- Gulls, mink, and owls are a threat to petrel colonies.
- Great Duck Island - petrel habitat may be shrinking in the interior as a result of hares and domestic rabbits (?), gulls could move in to petrel habitat.
- Chicks on Little Duck Island are ingesting plastic pellets.

## **Habitat**

- Habitat protection, although improving, is a primary concern for petrel colonies.
- Sheep grazing severely degrades nesting habitat, and while it may not preclude nesting, it may significantly impact it. The effects of sheep grazing on nesting habitat remains long after sheep are removed from the island.
- Habitat protection should be extended to currently unoccupied islands with suitable habitat to aid in maintaining or enhancing petrel habitat distribution.

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### **Management**

- Petrels are very responsive to management and benefit greatly from management.

### **Recreational Use of Islands**

- Because of the extended breeding season of petrels, breeding colonies need continued protection from trespassing and disturbance through October or November.