**Seabird Prey Data Base**

This data base was created as part of the Marine Ecosystem Research Programme, funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), that aimed to integrate exisiting and new marine data sets with current models of marine ecosystem services to further our knowledge and understanding of the UK marine ecosystems. The aim of the Seabird Prey Date Base was to collate a new data set with all known information on prey consumed by seabirds breeding in the British Isles. We have focused on the 10 most common seabird species by total biomass during the breeding season. As the focus of the programme was an assessment of the marine ecosystem, for this database we only selected seabird species where the majority of their consumed prey was marine to reflect the focus of the programme. Among the top British seabird species by biomass are two gull species (Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*) and Lesser Black-backed Gulls (*L. fuscus*), but they show a very different diet from the other seabirds, forage to a substantial amount on terrestrial habitat and if they consume marine prey its taxonomy is usually poorly resolved. Therefore we concentrated on Northern Gannet (*Morus bassanus*), Common Guillemot (*Uria aalge*), Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*), Atlantic Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*), Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*), Razorbill (*Alca torda*), Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*), and European Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*). Together, these birds accounted for 95% of biomass of seabirds consuming a marine diet in 2000 and thus the prey reflects the major of marine prey consumed by seabirds in British waters.

Information was primarily gathered from the primary literature by searching the web of science for titles, abstract or keywords containing ‘diet’, ‘food’, and species name. Any publication found in the Web of Science search was then inspected for relevant diet information in that publication and references for earlier studies that may provide diet information. Those publications were then also inspected until no new references would occur. We have also contacted researchers known to collect or have been collecting seabird diet information for further information that sometimes lead to the inclusion of unpublished information if the source agreed to the inclusion of that information into the data base.

For a study to be included in the data base it required to provide at least quantitative information on the diet (see below), a sampling location (site name, latitude and longitude) and sampling date (year of data collection or at least a range of years over which the diet information was collected). We also included a range of other information where available (The attributes table).

Data are presented as the frequency of each identified prey taxa per colony and year; each prey taxa is entered as a separate record. So if for a predator species n prey taxa were identified in a particular year and site, then there are n rows in the data base representing that information. If there was diet information for separate year, we recorded the information separately, otherwise we give the start and end year over which information was collected. For each set of diet information we also recorded whether it was collected in the breeding season (the vast majority of data) or the non-breeding season. Moreover, even in the breeding season typically chicks or birds with chicks are sampled, but there are also non-breeding birds (Birds with chicks bring in food that is higher in energetic density than the food taken by birds without chicks (Noordhuis & Spaans 1992, Brown & Ewins 1996, Ojowski et al. 2001). We also recorded whether the diet sample was obtained from the parent bird or the nestling, as chick food can differ from the food eaten by adults (e.g. Ydenberg 1994, Mehlum, 2001, Dierschke & Hüppop 2003).

For each prey taxa we recorded the name the original study assigned them. We matched each prey taxa with the lowest possible taxonomic level in WoRMS (http://www.marinespecies.org/). The contribution of the prey to the diet in the study year and site is expressed in one of three currencies commonly used in seabird dietary studies (Duffy & Jackson 1986, Barrett et al. 2007): frequency of occurrence, numerical frequency and biomass frequency (see the data attributes table).

Diets from different species are typically collected with different methods but often the majority of studies within a species use the same method. Each method has its limitation (see Barrett et al. 2007, Karnovsky et al. 2012) and we recorded what method each study used. The most accurate diet assessment is likely from stomach content and there is information from stomachs for most species and the predominant method for each species can be compared against stomach content to gain some insight into the limitations specific to the methods and sites collated here.

We did not have any other criteria for inclusion into the data set, like the number of birds sampled in a year and site. We, however, have recorded the sample size from which each diet estimate is derived from under Sample.Size in the data base

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