

# Nisqually Reach Nature Center

## Non-breeding Pigeon Guillemot Survey

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### **Project Goals:**

To answer the following questions:

- Where do they go in the off-season?
- When do they change plumage?
- When do they return to their colonies?
- When does breeding begin?

### **Protocol for non-breeding survey of Pigeon Guillemots**

1. Go to your beach once a month from September through May unless instructed otherwise. To be consistent, try to go about the same time of the month.
2. If you can't go, please make arrangements for a trained substitute to cover for you, otherwise, let us know so we can find a person to substitute.
3. The survey must be completed no later than 9:00AM
4. Count all pigeon guillemots. Note how many are in non-breeding plumage, breeding plumage, fledgling/juvenile, or intermediate/transitional plumage. Document what site(s) the birds are observed at. A spotting scope is not required, but preferred.
5. Document any of the following behaviors and interactions:
  - Approaching the beach or the bluff
  - Burrow visits
  - Ledgesitting
  - Prey deliveries
  - Mating
  - Billing
  - Synchronized flying
  - Water games
  - Vocalizing

6. Assess and record the condition of the bluff and take photos if habitat changes are observed. Look for signs of erosion and new burrows and/or changes in visibility of existing burrows and human activity such as tree cutting. Send photos to [pigu@nisquallyestuary.org](mailto:pigu@nisquallyestuary.org). This part can be done after the survey on your way back to the car if necessary.
7. Please also record observations of other seabirds in your notes. Record all bird species and number of individuals observed. If you cannot identify down to species level, record as follows: Gull (sp). If you are unable to identify at all, please record description of bird in notes and include shape, size, bill inc. color, length (short, med, long), color/pattern, etc. Include anything that could help.
8. Enter your data and upload photos electronically via this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/hwrw9fbBqEJnyuoJ6> or email your survey form and pictures to [pigu@nisquallyestuary.org](mailto:pigu@nisquallyestuary.org) Or mail a hard copy to:

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