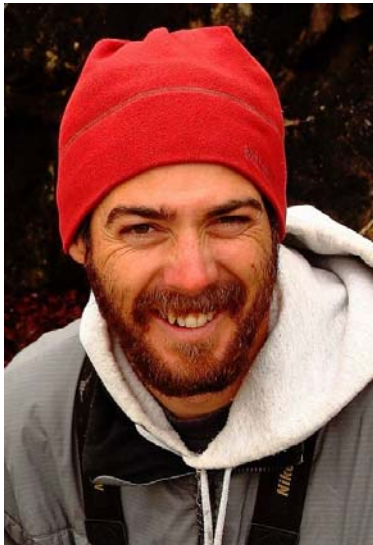




UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
FOUNDATION

For Immediate Release

The University of Alaska Foundation announces the winning proposal for the 2019 Angus Gavin Memorial Migratory Bird Research Grant



Michael Johns, a graduate student in biology and wildlife at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, received \$14,400 to support his proposal entitled “Winter habitat use and oil exposure risks of Cassin’s auklets and pigeon guillemots in the North Pacific.” The project concentrates on identifying important winter environmental conditions and hotspots that may affect the movement and breeding success of North Pacific seabirds, which then can be used to predict habitat use and mortality risks due to climate change.

Johns is collaborating with Point Blue Conservation Science as part of their ongoing study of seabirds on the Farallon Islands in California. The Gavin grant is designed to yield information of value in the management of Alaskan bird species. This award is provided annually to support research on bird species found either permanently or seasonally in Alaska or its coastal waters, including their biology, general ecology and habitat relationships. The collaboration between UAF and Point lue Conservation Science is

important as it looks at factors that may affect the mortality rate of the seabirds while seasonally away from Alaska.

Johns’s project will assist in understanding how climate change may affect Alaska’s avian population over time. The Gavin Grant, part of the UA Foundation’s consolidated endowment fund, was established in 1981 with a gift from Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) to honor the memory of Angus Gavin, an environmental scientist and advisor to ARCO. Gavin was hand-picked by ARCO Chairman Robert O. Anderson to observe, categorize and quantify the little known flora and fauna of Prudhoe Bay in 1969. Gavin’s work was instrumental in helping ARCO and the scientific community draw conclusions, pro or con, about the impact of oil field development on the ecology of the North Slope and to recommend operational changes that would minimize or negate any adverse effects on the environment.

For more information, call Dory Straight at the UA Foundation, 907-450-8030