



United States Department of the Interior
IZEMBEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
P.O. BOX 127
COLD BAY, ALASKA 99571
(907) 532-2445

IN REPLY REFER TO:

March 5, 1993

Thede Tobish
2510 Foraker Drive
Anchorage, AK 99517

Dear Thede:

The following information for the period 01 December 1992 through 28 February 1993 is provided for your possible use in compiling the Alaska Region field notes for American Birds:

Weather- December exhibited a wide range of weather patterns. During the first half of the month Cold Bay experienced a nine day stretch of subfreezing temperatures. The last half of the month included a ten day stretch without any freezing temperatures. The well-above-average moisture total helped area lakes rebound somewhat from extreme low water levels. While the majority of the 1992 calendar year could be characterized by drought conditions, November and December received above normal precipitation. The average temperature for December was 32.4°F, 2.9° above normal. Daily highs ranged from 25° to 47°F and daily lows from 16° to 39°F. Measurable precipitation (≥ 0.1 "") was recorded on 22 days with a trace (< 0.1 "") on an additional 5 days. Precipitation totalled 6.77", which was 3.92" (nearly 240%) above normal. Measurable snowfall was recorded on 10 days during the month with the greatest accumulation of 1.3" on the 13th. Traces of snow fell on 8 days with the total snowfall for the month being 6.9". There were 27 cloudy, 4 partly cloudy and no clear days during the month. Winds exceeded 25 mph on 29 days and 40 mph on 19 days. The peak wind for the month was 68 mph on both the 1st and 31st.

January started out mild, but turned cold at mid-month. For the third consecutive month, well-above-average precipitation was received. The additional moisture continued the refilling of refuge lakes, which had experienced extreme low water levels through most of 1992. The average temperature for January was 27.0°F, 1.6° below normal. Daily highs ranged from 12° to 51°F and daily lows from -4° to 41°F. Measurable precipitation (≥ 0.1 "") was recorded on 21 days with a trace (< 0.1 "") on an additional 6 days. Precipitation totalled 5.32", which was 2.48" above normal. Measurable snowfall was recorded on 12 days during the month with the greatest accumulation of 4" from the 25th to the end of the month. Traces of snow fell on 6 additional days with the total snowfall for the month being 6.8". There were 27 cloudy, 3 partly cloudy and 1 clear days during the month. Winds exceeded 25 mph on 28 days and 40 mph on 14 days. The peak wind for the month was 74 mph on the 3rd. The 51° on the 13th was a Cold Bay record for the date and also the warmest temperature in Alaska that day.

February was anything but CAVU (clear and visibility unlimited)

and above average precipitation was received for the third consecutive month. The average temperature for February was 31.1°F, 3.7° above normal. Daily highs ranged from 13° to 43°F and daily lows from -1° to 36°F. Measurable precipitation (≥ 0.01 "") was recorded on 21 days with a trace (< 0.1 "") on an additional 5 days. Precipitation totalled 3.04", which was 0.77" above normal. Measurable snowfall was recorded on 8 days during the month with the greatest accumulation of 6" on the 6th. Traces of snow fell on 9 additional days with the total snowfall for the month being 8.6". There were 23 cloudy, 3 partly cloudy and 2 clear days during the month. Winds exceeded 25 mph on 26 days and 40 mph on 16 days. The peak wind for the month was 61 mph on the 11th.

Observations-

Pacific Loon- Seven were recorded during the 29 December CBC (six at the Cold Bay dock and one along the Cold Bay shore near Mortensens Lagoon). Six were near the dock 11 January (FZ, MZ), one was on Izembek lagoon during an aerial survey 16 January (CD) and three were on the lagoon during an aerial survey 26 February (CD).

Yellow-billed Loon- One was near the Cold Bay dock 24 December, two were there during the 29 December CBC, and two were near the dock 11 January (FZ, MZ).

Double-crested Cormorant- Three were observed at St. Catherine's Cove, Unimak Island, during an aerial survey 26 February.

Waterfowl, Aerial Surveys:

-Izembek Lagoon, etc ¹ :	15 JAN (CD,FZ)	26 FEB (CD,FZ)
Tundra Swan	11	0
Emperor Goose	7871	3596
Brant	8008	10551
Green-winged Teal	30	23
Mallard	76	600
Northern Pintail	174	1304
Gadwall	39	305
European/American Wigeon	4	70
Greater Scaup	1700	77
Common Eider	359	76
King Eider	0	181
Steller's Eider	32766	35830
Harlequin Duck	45	87
Oldsquaw	497	17
Black Scoter	1054	924
White-winged Scoter	9	115
Common Goldeneye	313	375
Bufflehead	2	12
Common Merganser	4	0
Red-breasted Merganser	405	535

¹ St. Catherine Cove (Unimak Island), Hook Bay, Morzhovoi Bay lagoons, Izembek Lagoon and Kinzarof Lagoon (Cold Bay).

-Unimak Island ¹	02FEB (CD, FZ)
Tundra swan	±430 (18.1 percent juveniles), primarily Peterson Lagoon.
Emperor Goose	4, shoreline at Cape Aksit.
Mallard	20+, stream southwest of Cape Lutke, 50+ stream west of Brown Peak.
Common Eider	Some, offshore Otter Point to Cape Lapin, offshore Raven Point to Cape Sarichef.
King Eider	Some, offshore Otter Point to Cape Lapin, offshore Survey Point, off Seal Cape to Promontory Hill, offshore north of Cape Lutke, off Cape Aksit.
Steller's Eider	Some, offshore Seal Cape to Promontory Hill, offshore north of Cape Lutke, offshore Cape Lazaref, offshore Cape Aksit.
Harlequin Duck	Some, offshore north of Cape Lutke.
Oldsquaw	Thousands, offshore Otter Point to Cape Lapin, 100+ offshore Cataract Cove, 100+ offshore south of Cape Lutke.
Black Scoter	Some, offshore Survey Point, offshore Pinnacle Rock and offshore Seal Cape to Promontory Hill.
White-winged Scoter	Some, offshore north of Cape Lutke.

Green-winged Teal- A drake exhibiting both the vertical white breast bar and the horizontal white scapular stripe was in the company of two "Aleutian" drakes and two hens at Stapp Creek Slough 27 February. Suspicions confirmed!

Barrow's Goldeneye- A pair was at Red Salmon Lake (Outer Marker Road) 27 February (MZ, FZ). There are only five previous records for the area (pair 20 December 1970, pair 27 April 1971, drake 17 April 1972, three drakes 22 February 1984 and drake 01 November 1992).

Golden Eagle- Over the past year we have determined that the species is not as rare as previously thought and now consider it to be an "uncommon" resident to the lower Alaska Peninsula and Unimak Island. We will no longer routinely report on this species.

Merlin- One was at Blinn Lake, Cold Bay, 10 January (MC).

Peregrine Falcon- The second adult Arctic Peregrine Falcon in three months was near Grant Point 14 January (MC). The site of the observation along Grant Point Road was only about two miles from the site of the 25 October sighting. There are no other non-pealei records for this area. A completed Record Report Form is attached.

Mew Gull- In contrast to last winter, the species was recorded throughout the period. Singles were observed during the 29 December CBC and on 31 January. Fifteen were seen from Grant Point, Izembek Lagoon, 14 February. Twenty-six were tallied during the 26 February St. Catherine's Cove (Unimak Island) to Izembek Lagoon aerial survey 16 January and 42 were observed along the same route 26 February (CD, FZ).

¹ Counterclockwise circumnavigation from Swanson Lagoon to Ikatan Bay

Black-legged Kittiwake- One was observed at Izembek Lagoon during the 16 January aerial survey (CD). Hundreds were off Cape Mordvinof, Unimak Island, during the 02 February aerial survey (CD, FZ).

Common Murre- Observed more regularly than normal this period. Fourteen were observed during the 29 December CBC (three off Skunk Hollow, Cold Bay; three off Trout Creek, Cold Bay; five along the Cold Bay shoreline off Mortensens Lagoon Road and three at Grant Point, Izembek Lagoon) (CD, FZ). Four were observed from the Cold Bay dock 11 January and again 13 February. Hundreds were off Cape Mordvinof, Unimak Island, during the 02 February aerial survey (CD, FZ).

Kittlitz's Murrelet- The bird carefully observed along the shore of Cold Bay from the Mortensens Lagoon Road during the 29 December CBC was the only record for the period.

Snowy Owl- One was observed during the 29 December CBC (CD).

Black-billed Magpie- Five at Cape Lazaref, Unimak Island, 02 February were the farthest west we have recorded the species on the island to date (the species has been fairly common in and around the village of False Pass in recent years) (CD, FZ).

Northern Shrike- The species was considered scarce this winter. One along Frosty Road, Cold Bay, 09 January (CD), one along Grant Point Road near the Radar Site 10 January (MC), and one at Refuge Headquarters 17 February (CD) were the only records.

Song Sparrow- A single bird was unexpectedly along the Cold Bay shoreline near Refuge Headquarters 11 January (MZ).

McKay's Bunting- Two birds first appeared at the Refuge Headquarters (Quarters 1) feeding station 04 January (MZ). Both appeared the next day and singles were spotted among the snow buntings and rosy finches during snowy periods through 12 February, with three being observed 29 January and two 03 February (FZ, MZ). Singles were again present 27 and 28 February (FZ, MZ).

Observers- Mark Chase (MC), Chris Dau (CD), Melly Zeillemaker (MZ) and myself (FZ) including uncredited sightings.

Sincerely



C. Fred Zeillemaker
Refuge Manager

cc: Donna Dewhurst
Brad Andres

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ALASKA SIGHT RECORD REPORT

Please fill out as accurately as possible. Include only those details of which you are certain and only those observed in the field; leave blank details not observed. Attach any additional comments or details on separate sheets. Please print clearly or type.

Species Artic Peregrine Falcon (F.p. tundrius) Date(s) 14 January 1993
Location Applegate Trail parking area. Perched on wooden post.

Observer(s) M. Chase Elevation 20'
Number of birds 1

Time of Day 3:30 P.M. and 5:40 P.M. Light conditions Marginal, low overcast

Distance to bird 30m Optical equipment 8x Binoculars

Length of time observed 1 minute, and 1 minute Sex Unknown

Plumage (e.g., breeding) Adult

Overall appearance/relative size

An adult Peregrine. Very obvious "steely" gray plumage with striking contrast to black flecking and yellow feet. Hood and "tear" obvious and striking black. Tail appearing appearing "barred" by striking "steel" gray with contrasting black flecking. Breast nearly white.

Eill Gray

Crown/forehead Dark crown

Nape Black

Face: Light auricular area, prominent "hood"

Eye: Dark

Throat

Breast/sides: Nearly white with dark flecking

Belly/flanks: Not observed

Undertail coverts: Not observed

Back: Steel gray with black flecking

Wings: Steel Gray

Underwings: Not observed

Rump: Steel Gray