

Bird Surveys of Chignik Lagoon and Chignik Bay
from 24 – 28 January 2011.



Kevin Payne

Key Words: Chignik Bay, Chignik Lagoon, wildlife, birds, winter populations, Emperor Goose (*Chen canagica*), Steller's Eider (*Polysticta stelleri*), Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Alaska Peninsula/Becharof National Wildlife Refuge Complex

P.O. Box 277

King Salmon, Alaska 99613

January 2011

Introduction

Data on the wintering avifauna of the Chignik Lagoon and Chignik Bay areas is limited. To help fill this knowledge gap, bird/wildlife surveys were conducted at Chignik Lagoon on 24 - 26 January 2011 and at Chignik Bay on 26 and 28 January 2011. In total, 15.3 hours of survey time were invested in the project. A majority of this time was at Chignik Lagoon where the number and diversity of birds demanded a greater investment.

Methods

The survey areas were subdivided and all birds and mammals were counted. Efforts were made to avoid double-counting and under-counting. Surveys were conducted using a Kowa TSN-824 scope with a 20-60X eyepiece and a pair of Leica 10x42 binoculars. All counts were recorded in an all-weather notebook. The survey effort was concentrated on water associated birds and little time was spent looking inland. The one exception, the feeders at the Eagles Roost B&B, were monitored for approximately one hour. The lagoon was predominantly ice free during the survey period but this is not always true. The survey area at Chignik Lagoon began adjacent to the town dump and continued down to the sand spit that separates the lagoon from the ocean. The survey area at Chignik Bay included the inner bay and all viewable areas from the end of the runway.

Results

In total, 33 species were identified. Also recorded were several unidentified cormorants, murres, and a single unidentified shorebird. The survey results are presented by location and day (Table 1). It should be noted that hundreds of birds at Chignik Lagoon were too far away to be counted or identified. These birds were not included in the count.

Recommendations

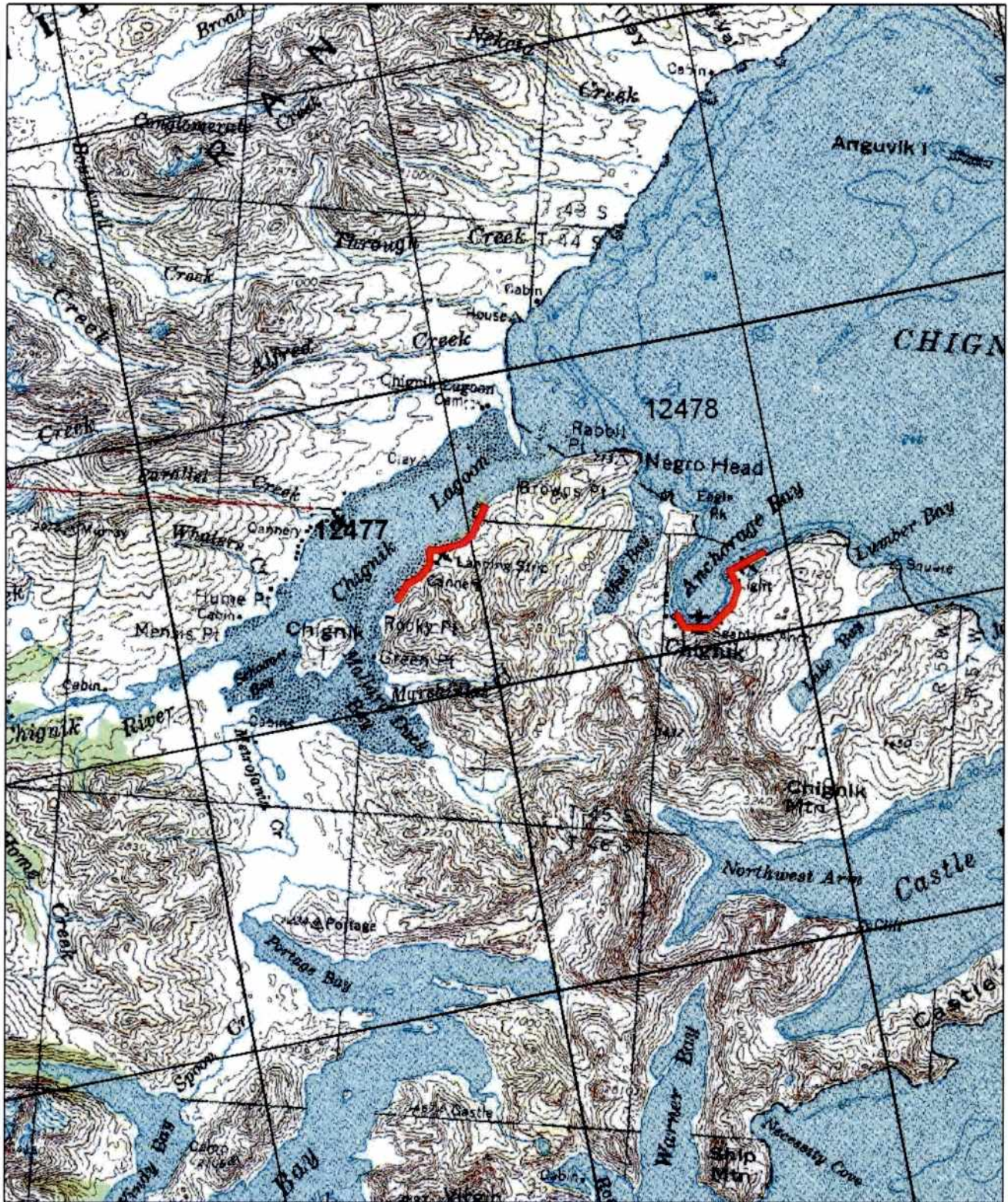
The flights from Chignik Bay and Lagoon are currently scheduled to arrive/leave between 12:00 and 13:00 hours. This schedule allows enough time to survey with a single overnight at each site. One survey should be conducted on the afternoon of arrival and a shorter survey can be done the next morning. This effort, given good weather and viewing conditions, should be sufficient to document all of the common/uncommon species but an additional day may be required to document rare species. The tide may also have a significant impact on the presence or location of birds at Chignik Lagoon and efforts should be made to conduct a survey at both high and low tide.

Table 1. Bird and wildlife surveys of Chignik Lagoon and Chignik Bay from 24 January to 28 January 2011.

Common Name	Latin Name	Chignik Lagoon				Chignik Bay		
		1/24/11	1/25/11	1/26/2011*	High Count	1/26/2011**	01/28/11	High Count
Emperor Goose	<i>Chen canagica</i>	460	1200	NC	1200	0	0	0
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	0	10	0	10	0	0	0
Steller's Eider	<i>Polysticta stelleri</i>	335	181	NC	335	0	0	0
King Eider	<i>Somateria spectabilis</i>	3	0	0	3	0	0	0
Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>	52	55	NC	55	13	118	118
Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	0	0	0	0	1	25	25
White-winged Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Black Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	0	3	0	3	0	2	2
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	75	110	217	217	15	8	15
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	220	84	NC	220	0	0	0
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	20	41	NC	41	0	0	0
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	20	42	NC	42	11	14	14
Red-throated Loon	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	2	0	NC	2	0	0	0
Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>	0	1	NC	1	0	0	0
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	4	2	NC	4	1	2	2
Yellow-billed Loon	<i>Gavia adamsii</i>	0	1	0	1	1	2	2
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	0	1	NC	1	0	3	3
Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax pelagicus</i>	0	0	0	0	1	7	7
Cormorant sp.	<i>Phalacrocorax sp.</i>	9	21	NC	21	0	25	25
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	3	3	NC	3	3	3	3
Shorebird sp.		0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	2	16	53	53	0	0	0
Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	11	8	NC	11	6	16	16
Common murre	<i>Uria aalge</i>	0	0	NC	0	7	0	7
Murre sp.	<i>Uria sp.</i>	1	2	NC	2	21	69	69
Pigeon Guillemot	<i>Cepphus columba</i>	9	3	NC	9	0	6	6
Marbled Murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>	1	0	0	1	0	5	5
Black-billed Magpie	<i>Pica hudsonia</i>	4	5	NC	5	4	2	4
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	4	3	NC	4	3	3	3
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Parus atricapillus</i>	3	8	NC	8	3	3	3
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	0	1	1	1	0	2	2
Golden-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	<i>Leucosticte tephrocotis</i>	30	50	NC	50	0	0	0
Pine Grosbeak	<i>Pinicola enucleator</i>	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
Total number of individuals		1270	1853	272	272	87	313	
Harbor Seal		2	1	11	11	1	1	1
Sea Otter		7	12	57	57	45	9	45

* Only high counts or new species were recorded.

** Inner Bay only.



Red Lines indicate position of surveyor for Incidental Avian Surveys, January 2011, Chignik Lagoon and Chignik Bay.

↓
12477

↓
12478

