



<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervisor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enforcement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flyway Representative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clerk-Steno
<input type="checkbox"/>	Permit Clerk
<input type="checkbox"/>	Secretary

FWLB
70600
C-4

Wildlife Administrator, NPSFW, Kenai

May 12, 1965

- Reply
- Handle
- Discuss
- Review
- Comment
- File

Waterfowl Supervisor, NPSFW, Juneau, Alaska

Bird Observations, Aleutian Island Survey - April-May 1965.

Between April 19 and May 4, 1965 I accompanied a party surveying sea otter populations in the Aleutian Islands consisting of Karl Meyen, Dave Spencer and Theron Smith of the NPSFW and Ed Klinkhart of the ADWIC. We traveled in a DC-3 aircraft and the method was to circle each island and adjacent reefs at an altitude of about 250 feet at a speed of about 150 MPH. My objectives were 1) to see the Aleutian Island waterfowl habitat, 2) to determine if any useful waterfowl information could be derived from this type survey, 3) to make any observations possible of birds and 4) to determine if there were any projects we should consider developing in this area.

The principle islands of the chain are listed in the table together with the principle bird observations I was able to get. The method employed was not ideal for making bird observations for the following reasons. 1) The flight path was directed toward areas of sea otter habitat and frequently away from bird concentrations as they constitute a hazard for the plane. 2) Visibility from behind the wing of a DC-3 is only fair for making bird observations. 3) The speed and elevation of the flight was too high and fast for the best observation of birds. In spite of the technical disadvantages of this type air survey some interesting and valuable data was obtained which is given in the tables and summarized by species.

My impressions on this my first trip to the Aleutians are of fantastic volcanic geology, of the bird and sea mammal life and of the wide extent of the military middens of World War II. This has been a badly abused refuge from an esthetic point of view. The barbed wire entanglements, old machinery and old buildings are decomposing very slowly and it will take many generations before this rubble ceases to be a principle feature of the landscape on many of the islands. Less obvious but more insidious are the military introduced rats which are exterminating the ground nesting song birds from many of the islands. The foxes dating from an earlier day are much in evidence on almost every island by their trails which criss-cross the landscape and by the confinement of roosting and nesting birds to absolutely sheer cliffs and offshore islets.

While at Adak Navy Base I attended a meeting of the local sportsman's club and made tentative arrangements to get duck wings and goose tail feathers during the hunting season. I was informed that the waterfowl kill on Adak is to 500 birds or more. We should be able to derive some good income on the Emperor Goose and the Aleutian common Teal from such a

FWLB
0600

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
1011 E. JUDEN ROAD
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503



Merged With
A.R.L.I.S.
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
Est. 1997

BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES &
210 ADMIRAL WAY,
TUNEAU, ALASKA 99811

FWLB
Colleen
C-3

Supervisor
 Enforcement
 Management
 Flyway Representative
 Clerk-Steno
 Permit Clerk
 Secretary

Library & Wildlife Service
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Wildlife Administrator, BSPFW, Kenai

May 12, 1965

* Reply o Revolver
- Handle / Comment
- Discuss ✓ v. File

Waterfowl Supervisor, BSPFW, Juneau, Alaska

Bird Observations, Aleutian Island Survey - April-May 1965 .

Between April 19 and May 4, 1965 I accompanied a party surveying sea otter populations in the Aleutian Islands consisting of Karl Hanson, Dave Spencer and Theron Smith of the BSPFW and Ed Klinthart of the ADWEG. We traveled in a DC-3 aircraft and the method was to circle each island and adjacent reefs at an altitude of about 250 feet at a spread of about 150 MPH. My objectives were 1) to see the Aleutian Island waterfowl habitat, 2) to determine if any useful waterfowl information could be derived from this type survey, 3) to make any observations possible of birds and 4) to determine if there were any projects we should consider developing in this area.

The principle Islands of the chain are listed in the table together with the principle bird observations I was able to get. The method employed was not ideal for making bird observations for the following reasons. 1) The flight path was directed toward areas of sea otter habitat and frequently away from bird concentrations as they constitute a hazard for the plane. 2) Visibility from behind the wing of a DC-3 is only fair for making bird observations. 3) The speed and elevation of the flight was too high and fast for the best observation of birds. In spite of the technical disadvantages of this type air survey some interesting and valuable data was obtained which is given in the tables and summarized by species.

My impressions on this my first trip to the Aleutians are of fantastic volcanic geology, of the bird and sea mammal life and of the wide extent of the military middens of World War II. This has been a badly abused refuge from an esthetic point of view. The barbed wire entanglements, old machinery and old buildings are decomposing very slowly and it will take many generations before this rubble ceases to be a principle feature of the landscape on many of the islands. Less obvious but more insidious are the military introduced rats which are exterminating the ground nesting song birds from many of the Islands. The foxes dating from an earlier day are much in evidence on almost every island by their trails which criss-cross the landscape and by the confinement of roosting and nesting birds to absolutely sheer cliffs and offshore islets.

While at Adak Navy Base I attended a meeting of the local sportsmans' club and made tentative arrangements to get duck wings and goose tail feathers during the hunting season. I was informed that the waterfowl kill on Adak may amount to 500 birds or more. We should be able to derive some good information on the Emperor Goose and the Aleutian common Teal from such a collection.

ARLIS

Alaska Resources
Library & Information Services
Anchorage, Alaska

3 3755 000 38136 8

The bird observations on Adak were gathered from the ground on the several days we were weathered in except for an Eagle and Riser count from the air.

Bird Observations

Common Loon - April 24. One pair was observed from the beach in Finger Bay, Adak.

Laysan Albatross - May 2. One observed just east of Eiska and 14 west of Eiska over Buldir reef. They are seen as single birds.

Puffin - May 2. About 30 were seen over Buldir reef. They may be common elsewhere but are easily confused with gulls from the air.

Cormorant - Cormorants seem to be present on all of the islands and the Pelagic cormorant is the most numerous. No count of cormorants was attempted but it was quite obvious that they are much more numerous at Attu and Agattu than farther east. I estimate 15,000 plus at Attu and 10,000 plus at Agattu. Cormorants were usually noted only near the water and below the airplane until we reached the Near Islands where they were noted high above us especially at Attu.

Whistling Swan - April 21. Two pairs apparently on territory and a flock of 10 were seen at Unalak. No swans of any sort were seen west of Unalak.

Canada Goose - May 5. Four Canada Geese were seen in a flock evidently just after taking off from a small island on the east side of Eiska. At Buldir Island 52 Canada Geese were observed, 10 in pairs and the rest in flocks. This was in no way a complete census of the island.

Black Brent - April 19. Some 5,000 brant observed at Unalak Bay. No observations farther west although we watched for them.

Imperial Goose - April 19. Some 35 thousand were observed in our incomplete survey of the bays of the north side of the Alaska Peninsula. Subsequently only 875 Imperials were seen in the Aleutians so we may assume the bulk of the birds had left the Chain prior to our trip. We were informed that the 200 odd geese that wintered at Shemya left about April 24.

Mallard - Ten were observed at Glam Lagoon on Adak on April 23. Only 10 were seen from the air at Kanaga. Many more could have been present in the islands.

Common Teal - On April 23, 8 pairs and a flock of 10 were observed from the road at Glam Lagoon and near MacDonald Lake. There was always 2 or 3 pairs in the ponds near the runway. Evidently this species has been able to survive in spite of the fox and rat introductions but it is difficult to believe that these unnatural predators have not had some effect on the size of the population. We were told that no teal were seen at Shemya this winter. Perhaps through the collection of duck wings at Adak we can learn something about productivity of this species in America.

ARLIS

Alaska Resources
Library & Information Service
Anchorage, Alaska

Scaup - April 23. Something over 100 Scaup were observed from the road at Glass Lagoon on Adak. Scaup were not observed from the air. On April 24 only 4 of 49 Scaup in Adak harbor were families.

Common Goldeneye - Something over 100 were observed at Glass Lagoon, Adak, April 23.

Rufflehead - Some 35 observed on Glass Lagoon April 23. Subsequently pairs were seen in small ponds at three locations on Adak looking for all the world like breeding pairs on territory.

Old Squaw - April 24, 57 were observed in small flocks in Adak harbor. These do not show up well from the air thus were not recorded during the flights.

Marlequin - On April 24 in Adak harbor 64 Marlequin were present consisting of 15 adult male, 3 immature male, 19 female and 7 undetermined. Marlequin were frequently seen from the air but do not show up well enough to get counts.

Common Eider - The male Common Eider is readily observed from the air and an effort was made to get as complete a count as possible. Numerous pairs were observed and small flocks of up to 30 some birds. In many cases where a flock was observed closely enough the sex ratio was about even. No immatures were identified. As Common Eiders can be seen in high flocks on the Alaska Peninsula in April it is assumed that the small well scattered flocks we observed represent the breeding population of the Aleutians. The figures in the table represent the total males observed doubled. We found a broken egg shell at Adak on April 23 indicating nesting was already in progress. Over one-half of the eiders observed were at Attu and while circling the island one or more was always in view.

Although a really precise figure for the breeding population of eiders in the Aleutians cannot be made from the coverage made I believe it is safe to say that there are not over 10,000 breeding pairs of Common Eider in the Aleutian Chain. Fox predation is a serious problem to the eiders and if foxes can be eliminated considerable increases in breeding birds may develop. Considering the number of birds at Attu there would seem to be plenty of room for a larger eider population on many of the other islands.

Red-breasted Merganser - Six observed off the beach at Adak, April 23.

Bald Eagle - These great birds are frequently easy to see from the air and an attempt was made to get as accurate a count as possible for each island. Only 7% of the eagles observed were immature indicating either a low productive rate or that they were not on the beach where they could be seen. Although I could not be precise from my back seat vantage point it appeared that about 50% of the adult eagles seen were associated with a nest. Many incubating females and nests with eggs were noted. No eagles were seen in the Near Islands although a nest was seen at Ruldix and the largest counts made were at Kiska and Anchitzka. Our survey indicated there are probably not over 200 pairs of nesting Bald Eagles in the entire Aleutian Chain.

Willow Ptarmigan - Two were observed at Adak.

Glaucous Gull - About 1% of the gulls on Adak appeared to be of this species.

Glaucous-winged Gull - These birds were much in evidence on all of the islands. They were particularly numerous around the dump at Adak. They congregate on small offshore islands where they appear to be preparing to nest in places secure from foxes and rats. At Buldir and also at Segula gulls were occupying the slopes. We know there are no rats or foxes at Buldir and the behavior of the gulls indicate there may be none at Segula.

Black-Legged Kittiwake - Several small colonies were observed at various points in the islands. Only at Buldir is there really large numbers.

Murre - Difficult to identify from the air. Several observations are included in the table.

Raven - Fifteen or 20 were in residence at the Adak dump. We were advised there are about this many at Sheeya.

Winter Wren - Only one was observed at Adak and that near an old building at Finger Bay. We understand that rats have been particularly hard on this species.

Gray-crowned Rosy Finch - April 24 we saw 20 of these birds while walking from Sweeper Cove to Finger Bay on Adak. They were the most numerous song-bird at Adak.

Song Sparrow - Only 3 were seen at Adak in the course of several afternoons afield. This bird may be having a problem from the rats.

Lapland Longspur - One was observed at Adak April 28.

Snow Bunting - About one dozen were observed at different times around Adak.

Jim King

Attachment

cc: Director
Regional Director
Karl Kenyon ✓
Bob Jones

Alutian Islands

	Date	Bald Eagle	C. Eider	Emperor	Other
* Anuk					
* Hainak	4-21				Swan 14
Uganak					
Pigaida					
Avatanak					
Boorok					
Akun					
Alutan					
Unalga					
Unalaska					
* Unak	4-21	4	140	179	
Saaniga	4-21		18	186	
Ulige					
Kaganli					
Chuginadak					
Carlisle					
Herbert					
Tunaska					
Chagulak					
Anakka					
* Soguan	4-21	4			
* Anlin	4-21	9	120	40	
Atka					
* Konugi					Kittiwake colony
Kasatochi					
Oglodak	4-30		32		
Tagalak	4-30	4	80		
Chugul	4-25		160		
Igitkin	4-25		240		
Little Ulek	4-25		30		
Great Sicken	4-25	9	240		
Unak	4-25		288		
Little Tanaga	4-25		278		
Kagalaska	4-25		32		
Adak	4-25	17	488		
Kanaga	4-25	13	16	2	Mallard 10
Bobrof	4-25		40		
Tanaga	4-25	15	76	400	
Ilak	5-2	1	8		
Skagul	5-2	1	32		
Oglinga	5-2	1			
Garoloi	5-1	1			Kittiwake 2,000 +
Kavniga	5-2	1	20		
Ulek	5-2	3	80		
Unalga	5-2	2	8		
Amatignak	5-2	3	22		

Aleutian Islands (continued)

	Date	Bald Eagle	G. Eider	Emperor	Other
Semisopochnoi	5-1	2	4		Murre 20,000 +
Anchitka	5-2	49	148	2	
Little Sitkin	5-1	6			
Rat	5-2	5			
Davidof	5-1		12		
Segula	5-1	2			Auklets 3,000 +
Kiska	5-2	22	26	3	Canada Goose 4
Buldir	5-2	1	120		Gulls 5,000 + Canada Goose 52 Kittiwake 100,000 - Murre 100,000 -
Buldir Reef	5-2				Laysan Albatros 14 Fulmar 30
Shemya	5-2		98		
Niski			20		
Alaid			26		
Agattu			330	62	Comorants 10,000 + Kittiwake 10,000 + Murre 10,000 +
Attu			3,740	1	Comorants 15,000 +
Totals		175	6,992	875	

Where no date is given, these islands were not surveyed.

* Islands so marked were only partially surveyed.

Cook Inlet & Alaska Peninsula

Augustine I.	4-19		80		
Cape Douglas	4-19		12		
Ugashik Bay	4-19			1,100	
Cinder River	4-19			3,200	
Port Heiden	4-19			21,400	
Ilnik Lagoon	4-19			3,150	
Nelson Lagoon	4-19			2,470	
Totals			92	33,320	

Library
 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
 1011 E. Tudor Road
 Anchorage, Alaska 99503