



ALASKA BREEDING BIRD SURVEYS

1985 Summary

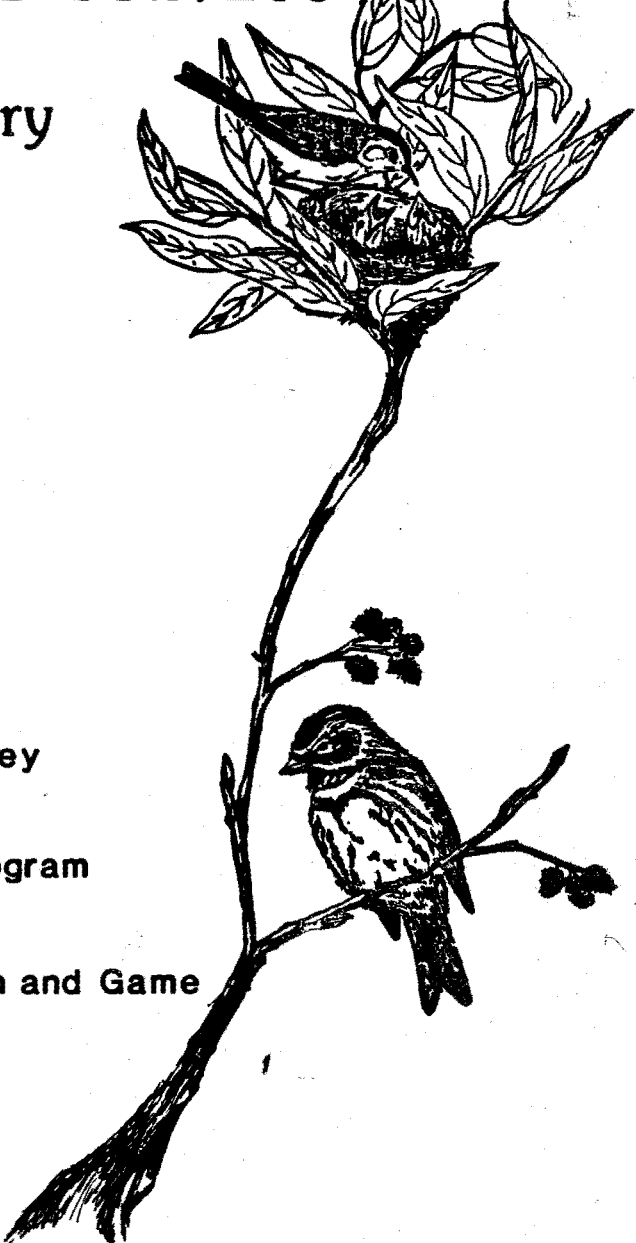
Nancy Tankersley

Nongame Wildlife Program

Game Division

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

July 1985



ALASKA BREEDING BIRD SURVEYS - 1985 SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

1985 was the fourth consecutive year that the Nongame Wildlife Program organized Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) in Alaska. Prior to our involvement, surveys were only done sporadically. In the "Lower 48" states and Canada surveys have been conducted regularly since 1965. All survey information is stored on computer by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland.

The purpose of the surveys is to document changes in the size of bird populations. This can only be accomplished if many surveys are conducted accurately over a wide area of the bird's habitat. Because of Alaska's large size, poor access to remote areas and few numbers of competent observers, the data gathered are less accurate in determining trends in population size.

METHODS

The same standard methods as described in the 1982 and 1983 Alaska Breeding Bird Surveys summaries were used in 1985.

RESULTS

In 1985, 30 different routes were surveyed with the help of 49 volunteers (Table 1). Four routes were run twice (Kodiak, Chiniak, Moose Pass, and Little Salcha). Seven routes were new to the survey (Chiniak, Savage, Galena-Campion, Yukon River-Bear Creek, Nancy Lake, Kugarak, and Selawik).

On the 34 routes run, 164 species were observed (Table 2). The number of species per 25 mi route ranged from 14 (Little Salcha) to 44 (Seward). The total number of individuals observed per 25 mi route ranged from 219 (Savage) to 1,000 (Juneau alternate). The Juneau alternate route was boosted by a flock of 335 Bonaparte's Gulls and a flock of 355 Marbled Murrelets.

Once again, the American Robin was seen or heard on the most routes - 26 out of 30 (Table 2). A robin was even recorded on the Chiniak route near Kodiak, where it is considered a rare bird. However, more Varied Thrushes were recorded than any other species (637 individuals from 23 routes). Species recorded this year for the first time were Boreal Owl (Chena Hot Springs Road) and Saw-whet Owl (Harlequin Lake).

DISCUSSION

A late spring and rainy weather throughout most of June hampered many surveys. Adak surveyors endured 5 false starts before they were finally able to complete the route on 20 June. Kotzebue surveyors were not as successful -- they were stopped by a snowdrift after only 12 stops.

Although several routes were altered this year to alleviate traffic noise or safety problems, a few routes still suffer with these problems. Seward surveyors actually tabulated passing vehicles to document the problem. A timing rule needs to be developed to allow better survey results in areas that are hampered by periodic traffic noise. Habitat classifications also need revisions in some areas, especially logged areas of southeast Alaska.

Routes that are surveyed repeatedly by the same senior observer have the most potential for providing valuable data on breeding bird population trends. Special recognition is due to those birders who have volunteered for surveys every year since 1982: Fred Zeillemaker (Adak), Christian Dau (Cold Bay), Marjorie Ward (Sitka), Mary Portner (Skilak Loop and Swan Lake Road), Herman Griese (Sheep Mountain) Junior Kerns (Little Salcha), and Stacy Scott (Elmendorf and others). For three of the past four years, Tom Kogut, Marlys Tedin, Rich MacIntosh, Jeff Allen, Frank Glass, Mark Kissel, Bruce Dinneford, Betty Bair, Kathy Quilliam, Rick Sinnott, Ruth McHenry, Irma O'Brien, Buzz Scher, Paul Arneson, David Krause, Kent Hall, and Beverly Minn have volunteered. We appreciate everyone's interest and participation.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game will not be coordinating future Breeding Bird Surveys. We appreciate the effort all of the volunteers have put into this program, and hope that enthusiasm will continue under the coordination of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland.

Table 1. Alaska Breeding Bird Survey routes and observers, 1985.

Route Name	Route Number	Quadrangle	Date of Survey	Route Length (mi)	Observers
Adak	5101	Adak	20 June	25	Fred Zeillemaker, Melly Zeillemaker
Craig	5511	Craig	6 June	25	Tom Kogut
Cold Bay	5581	Cold Bay	15 June	15	Christian Dau
Wrangell	5611	Petersburg	28 June	10	Linda Saunders-Ogg, Larry Ogg
Sitka	5724	Sitka	2 June	15	Marjorie Ward, Marlys Tedin
Kodiak	5731	Kodiak	8 June	25	Richard MacIntosh, Matthew Weeks
			9 June*	25	Richard MacIntosh, Matthew Dick
Chiniak	5732	Kodiak	16 June	25	Jeff Allen
			20 June	25	Richard MacIntosh
Juneau	5821	Juneau	16 June	25	Frank Glass, Mark Kissel
Juneau (alternate)	5822	Juneau	6 June	25	Richard Gordon
Homer	5934*	Seldovia	7 June	25	George West, Lisa Climo
Yakutat	5944	Yakutat	19 June	10	Bruce Dinneford
				(incomplete)	
Harlequin Lake	5945	Yakutat	16 June	15	Al May
Hope	6027	Seward	18 June	25	Betty Bair, Kathy Quilliam, Scott Peet, Tom Paragi
Moose Pass	6029*	Seward	10 June	25	Betty Bair, Kathy Quilliam
			20 June	25	Betty Bair, Kathy Quilliam
Seward	6030	Seward	16 June	25	Rick Sinnott, Ruth McHenry, Anne Weiland
Skilak Lake	6031	Kenai	20 June	25	Mary Portner
Swan Lake Rd.	6033	Kenai	17 June	25	Mary Portner
Sheep Mt.	6121	Anchorage	20 June	25	Herman Griese, Bill Parker
Hatcher Pass	6129	Anchorage	15 June	25	Dan Owens, Karen Owens
Elmendorf	6124	Anchorage	20 June	16	Hustace Scott, Dave Delap
Savage	6338	Healy	1 June	25	Nancy Tankersley, Bette Tankersley
Little Salcha	6428	Big Delta	10 June	25	Junior Kerns
			16 June	25	Junior Kerns, Terry Marsan
Chena Hot Springs Rd.	6432	Fairbanks	2 June	25	James Silva Holly Silva
Kotzebue	6671	Kotzebue	16 June	5.6 (incomplete)	Kent Hall, Beverly Minn Terry Birkenstock
Noatak	6771	Noatak	9 June	11.5 (boat)	Kent Hall, Beverly Minn, Kathy O'Reilly, Terry Doyle
Galena-Campion	--	Nulato	17 June	12.5 (boat)	Tim Osborne
Yukon River Bear Creek	--	Nulato	18 June	20 (boat)	Tim Osborne Helen Lons
Nancy Lake	--	Tyonek	15 June	9	John Wenger, David Porter
Kugarak	--	Shungnak	19 June	12.5 (boat)	Pam Nelson, Terry Doyle
Selawik	--	Selawik	20 June	12.5 (boat)	Pam Nelson, Terry Doyle

* route altered or run in reverse direction

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section A (cont'd)	Skilak Lake	Swan Lake Rd.	Sheep Mt.	Elmendorf	Nancy Lake	Hatcher Pass	Savage J/ /	Little Salcha #1 (6/10)	Little Salcha #2 (6/16)	Galena - Campion S/ /B/	Yukon River - Bear Creek S/ /B/	Chena Hot Springs Rd.	Kugarak J/ /S/ /B/	Selawik J/ /S/ /B/	Kotzebue S/ /	Noatak S/ /B/	No. of Routes *	Total No. Birds **
Red-throated Loon			1														2	2
Arctic Loon		1											3	1		11	5	17
Common Loon	4	11			3												6	24
Red-necked Grebe				2		1							4	5		6	6	23
Horned Grebe																1	1	1
Pelagic Cormorant																	2	7
Great Blue Heron																	2	8
Trumpeter Swan			1				2										2	3
Tundra Swan													3	1	3	203	5	213
Gr. White-fronted Goose													2	9			2	11
Brant																	1	1
Canada Goose													2	2		5	7	31
Unid. Goose													5	5			2	10
Green-winged Teal			1												1	7	8	110
Mallard								1		2	3				2	4	10	67
Northern Pintail															4	44	6	66
Northern Shoveler								2							5	4	3	11
Gadwall																	2	4
American Wigeon										1	5		1	8		7	9	35
Canvasback			4													3	1	3
Greater Scaup			10							2					33		5	76
Lesser Scaup																	1	5
Unid. Scaup																9	1	9
Common Eider																	1	2
Harlequin Duck						1											6	96
Oldsquaw														2	13	9	3	24
Black Scoter													2				3	10
Surf Scoter																	2	34
White-winged Scoter			5												3		2	8
Unid. Scoter															9		1	9

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section C	Adak	Craig	Cold Bay	Wrangell	Sitka	Kodiak #1 (6/8)	Kodiak #2 (6/9)	Chintak #1 (6/16)	Chintak #2 (6/20)	Juneau	Juneau alternate	Homer	Yakutat	Harlequin Lake	Hope	Moose Pass #1 (6/10)	Moose Pass #2 (6/20)	Seward
Dunlin		1																
Short-billed Dowitcher							1											
Common Snipe		8				9	9	23	2	1		23	7	8		4	3	1
Red-necked Phalarope	10						1		1									
Am. Black Oystercatcher	3				1		2	2	2									
Unid. Shorebird		3							1			1						
Long-tailed Jaeger																		
Pomarine Jaeger																		
Parasitic Jaeger	13																	
Unid. Jaeger																		
Bonaparte's Gull											335							
Mew Gull		4	4			18	39	7	12	10	6					4		97
Herring Gull				14														
Herring X Gl.-Winged Gull																		
Glaucous-winged Gull	90	15				52	88	64	95		10	7						2
Glaucous Gull																		
Black-legged Kittiwake	2								1									13
Unid. Gull					4													
Arctic Tern	12					3	6	3	5			2				4	3	
Aleutian Tern	29					4	6		8									
Unid. Tern							2		8									
Pigeon Gulllemot						1	5	1	7	1	1	5						
Unid. Murrelet																		2
Marbled Murrelet	2								11		355							
Tufted Puffin	10																	
Horned Puffin	29																	
Great-horned Owl																		
Northern Hawk-Owl								2										
Boreal Owl																		
Saw-whet Owl														1				

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section D	Adak	Craig	Cold Bay	Wrangell	Sitka	Kodlak #1 (6/8)	Kodlak #2 (6/9)	Chintak #1 (6/16)	Chintak #2 (6/20)	Juneau	Juneau alternate	Homer	Yakutat	Harlequin Lake	Hope	Moose Pass #1 (6/10)	Moose Pass #2 (6/20)	Seward
Rufous Hummingbird				3	2						1		2	1				
Belted Kingfisher				2	6	2	1	3		3	2						1	
Red-breasted Sapsucker		6			2					3	5							
Downy Woodpecker							2											
Hairy Woodpecker		3			1						3			2				
Northern Flicker																		
Unid. Woodpecker										6	2	1						1
Olive-sided Flycatcher											1				2			2
Western Wood Pewee																		
Say's Phoebe																		
Alder Flycatcher												3					4	4
Western Flycatcher	16									1								
Tree Swallow					12		10		7	1	1	31	9			39	7	5
Violet-green Swallow										3		11						30
Bank Swallow						25	24	51	86									2
Cliff Swallow																		8
Barn Swallow			1		6					9	1							
Unid. Swallow									3			2		5	14		19	9
Gray Jay												6			3	2		1
Steller's Jay	2				4					9	18	1		4				
Black-billed Magpie						12	12	13	12			6				3	2	3
Northwestern Crow	1		14	45	1	3	4	15	49	29	14							
Common Raven	6	2	2	1	12	1		4	1	80	20	4	7	1			1	4
Black-capped Chickadee						3	1	9	1			4	10	8		1	2	
Boreal Chickadee												2				3	1	7
Chestnut-backed Chickadee		7		3	29					6	1			6				
Unid. Chickadee																		
Red-breasted Nuthatch								1				4						
Brown Creeper												1						
Winter Wren	71				12	31	26	34	38	12	16							2

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section E	Adak	Craig	Cold Bay	Wrangell	Sitka	Kodiak #1 (6/8)	Kodiak #2 (6/9)	Chitlak #1 (6/16)	Chitlak #2 (6/20)	Juneau	Juneau alternate	Homer	Yakutat	Harlequin Lake	Hope	Moose Pass #1 (6/10)	Moose Pass #2 (6/20)	Seward
American Dipper - Golden-crowned Sparrow								1						3				1
American Dipper																		
Arctic Warbler																		
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4							4	8		1	9						6
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2			9	26					17	12	48	2	6	39	45	14	48
Unid. Kinglet																		
Gray-cheeked Thrush						8	5	16	5				32					
Swainson's Thrush	8									5	13	1	2	1	16	10	14	8
Hermit Thrush	30				19	41	33	51	42	13	7	19	58	84	49	13	45	70
American Robin	2			9	29	1	1	1		54	40	63	15		10	31	28	15
Varied Thrush	31			14	24	3	4	24	11	37	47	61	32	69	40	49	30	70
Townsend's Solitaire																		
Unid. Thrush							2											
Water Pipit			18															3
Bohemian Waxwing																		
Northern Shrike								1	2								2	
European Starling					8					3								
Orange-crowned Warbler	10				18	23	20	28	24	18	12	44		12	40	47	56	29
Yellow Warbler					12	38	36	37	48	7		1		9	2	8	2	6
Yellow-rumped Warbler											2	11			28	30	13	3
Townsend's Warbler	35				6					16	2	13			49	31	25	39
Blackpoll Warbler																1	1	
Northern Waterthrush			1									5				3	4	7
Wilson's Warbler	1				8	69	42	37	41	21	6	4	14	17	59	40	33	18
Unid. Warbler					1													
American Tree Sparrow																		1
Savannah Sparrow			30		1	37	24	31	34	12		32	1	7	2	4	8	5
Fox Sparrow		3		6	3	134	145	99	104	13	5	57		8	12	9	17	26
Song Sparrow	13				6	1	1		2	3				3		2	2	1
Lincoln's Sparrow	2									1	5	3			1	2	1	1
Golden-crowned Sparrow			14			61	68	57	48			54		3	22	41	17	11

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section E (cont'd)	Skilak Lake	Swan Lake Rd.	Sheep Mt.	Elmendorf	Nancy Lake	Hatcher Pass	Savage	Little Salcha #1 (6/10)	Little Salcha #2 (6/16)	Galena - Campion	Yukon River - Bear Creek	Chena Hot Springs Rd.	Kugarak	Selawik	Kotzebue	Noatak	No. of Routes *	Total No. Birds *
American Dipper																	3	5
Arctic Warbler			1														1	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet																	5	28
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	23	26	12	11	8	18	2										18	354
Unid. Kinglet												2					1	2
Gray-cheeked Thrush	24	8	24			9		8	5	12	10		21	19		9	13	200
Swainson's Thrush	52	81	7	44	18	40	2	2	3	21	23						19	359
Hermit Thrush	1		28	1		4	1	58	26								18	579
American Robin	16	3	50	26	3	37	6	7	13	16	10	38	11	3		4	26	506
Varied Thrush	14	7	2	4		33	9	24	16	7	31			4			23	637
Townsend's Solitaire			1									2					2	3
Unid. Thrush												1					2	3
Water Pipit																	2	21
Bohemian Waxwing						6											1	6
Northern Shrike			1														4	6
European Starling																	2	11
Orange-crowned Warbler	5	18	34	48	1	29	1	35	17	12	28						21	501
Yellow Warbler		1	4	3		1	4	5	3	4	8	45	28	31		4	21	269
Yellow-rumped Warbler	34	42	27	17	17	49			7		2	9					13	278
Townsend's Warbler	1					1											10	193
Blackpoll Warbler	21	18	22	5	8						1		23	19			9	118
Northern Waterthrush	7	11		8	10	7					2		17	18		4	13	101
Wilson's Warbler			36	1		30							1				16	366
Unid. Warbler																	1	1
American Tree Sparrow			6				74						3	3		7	6	94
Savannah Sparrow	11	6	8	12		7	11			3	1			1	1	3	22	233
Fox Sparrow			13	11	3	14	7	1			5		8	28	4	7	23	500
Song Sparrow	1	4			2	10											12	48
Lincoln's Sparrow			3	7													9	25
Golden-crowned Sparrow			2			19											10	291

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section F	Adak	Craig	Cold Bay	Wrangell	Sitka	Kodiak #1 (6/8)	Kodiak #2 (6/9)	Chinik #1 (6/16)	Chinik #2 (6/20)	Juneau	Juneau alternate	Homer	Yakutat	Harlequin Lake	Hope	Moose Pass #1 (6/10)	Moose Pass #2 (6/20)	Seward
White-crowned Sparrow																		
Dark-eyed Junco		42			92					1	9	27		3	13	15	12	3
Unid. Sparrow																		
Lapland Longspur	230		30				5	1										
Snow Bunting	6																	
Red-winged Blackbird										1								
Rusty Blackbird																		
Rosy Finch	13																	
Pine Grosbeak						1	2	5				1			2	6	3	6
White-winged Crossbill																		
Common Redpoll			2			5	6	6	1			2		7				
Pine Siskin					75	3	1	3		3		15			5	13	6	22
Unid. Birds						3												
Total Individuals	654	288	245	87	535	633	720	673	779	460	1,000	612	200	275	418	468	410	603
Total Species	24	21	18	15	32	36	42	42	41	34	36	40	17	27	23	33	38	44

Table 2. (cont'd)

Section F (cont'd)	Skilak Lake	Swan Lake Rd.	Sheep Mt.	Elmendorf	Nancy Lake	Hatcher Pass	Savage	Little Salcha #1 (6/10)	Little Salcha #2 (6/16)	Galena - Campion	Yukon River - Bear Creek	Chena Hot Springs Rd.	Kugarak	Selawik	Kotzebue	Noatak	No. of Routes *	Total No. Birds **
White-crowned Sparrow	32	14	101	23	1	31	50	19	7	20	6	22	11	9	6	8	15	353
Dark-eyed Junco	34	58	45	4	9	40	8	45	37	7	9	61					20	525
Unid. Sparrow												5					1	5
Lapland Longspur																	3	265
Snow Bunting																	1	6
Red-winged Blackbird				1													2	2
Rusty Blackbird				12	2	1				2	1		1	2			7	21
Rosy Finch																	1	13
Pine Grosbeak																	6	22
White-winged Crossbill																	2	26
Common Redpoll	18	13	4	12	7	2	5	3		6	4	12	6	6	1		19	122
Pine Siskin						93						1					11	234
Unid. Birds							4	2	1				2	1	1	11	8	25
Total Individuals	366	429	532	352	105	584	219	278	184	191	308	274	213	280	155	496		12,452
Total Species ***	31	30	42	30	18	33	21	18	14	25	31	19	25	30	25	36		164

* Duplicative routes not included in total
 ** When duplicate surveys were done, maximum number was included in total birds.
 *** Minimum number.

B/ Survey done by boat.
 S/ Survey shorter than 25 miles.
 L/ Survey done after 20 June.
 R/ Route ran in reverse direction.
 A/ Route altered to avoid traffic or safety problems.
 J/ Survey done by junior observer.