

## ASSESSING KITTLITZ'S AND MARBLED MURRELET ABUNDANCE IN YAKUTAT BAY, ALASKA AND THE FEASIBILITY OF USING YAKUTAT BAY AS A LONG-TERM MONITORING SITE

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We estimated the abundance of Kittlitz's murrelets (*Brachyramphus brevirostris*) and marbled murrelets (*B. marmoratus*) in Yakutat Bay, and its associated bays and fiords, in June and July 2015. This was a pilot project to aid in determining the feasibility of a long-term monitoring program for *Brachyramphus* murrelets in Yakutat Bay. In 2000 and 2009, *Brachyramphus* murrelet surveys were conducted in Yakutat Bay, which is situated between two other long-term Kittlitz's murrelet monitoring sites. Adding Yakutat Bay as a long-term monitoring site in southeast Alaska could provide additional abundance and trend estimates in another high density murrelet area, as well as additional information on habitats utilized by Kittlitz's and marbled murrelets. We used distance sampling during two surveys in 2015 to determine the at-sea murrelet abundance. We conducted the first survey in mid-June, when the 2000 and 2009 surveys were conducted, with the second survey from 1-15 July, more in line with current survey protocols. Results of the surveys will be presented, including a within-year comparison of the 2015 surveys. Additionally, we evaluate the feasibility of long-term murrelet monitoring in Yakutat Bay and discuss the possibility of surveying twice each summer to retain the option of using 2000 and 2009 abundances estimates in trend analyses. (Talk)



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# Abstract Book

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