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12 January 1978

Mr. Don Redfern
Director of Refuges
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
813 'D' Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Don:

Sorry it has taken me so long to forward these Shemya Island bird survey reports to you, as I said I would in our conversation last October, but I wanted to wait until the fall 1977 report had been completed.

As you can see, these reports are merely outlines of migrant activity during the periods of coverage. They do provide, however, even at this stage, a cross-section of a migration that does not touch the United States anywhere east of the far western Aleutians. I hope that you will agree that gathering this information on a little-known part of the U.S. avifauna is of sufficient value to USFWS to warrant continuing this study for perhaps two additional fall migrations. Two more such surveys would provide a total of three springs and three falls of information, and at such time I would compile and evaluate all of the data in a Shemya Island paper for publication.

Bits and pieces of the information gathered at Shemya have been disseminated at various times and in various ways, through the Alaska Region columns of American Birds, in several notes and articles that I have coauthored, and in a treatise on the status and distribution of over half of Alaska's birds that is currently in press in Pacific Coast Avifauna and which Brina Kessel and I expect to be in print before this spring.

All of the data gathered at Shemya, indeed all of the data that I have collected throughout the Aleutians in the last ten years, will ultimately be of much importance, whether unpublished or disseminated in interim notes and articles, to the book, Status and distribution of the birds of Alaska, on which Brina Kessel and I have been working for eight years.

Any comments you might have would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dan Gibson

Daniel D. Gibson
Curatorial Assistant
Vertebrate Collections

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BIRDS OBSERVED AT SHEMYA ISLAND, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS, 31 AUGUST-3 OCTOBER 1977

by

Daniel D. Gibson

University of Alaska Museum
Fairbanks
December 1977

ARLIS
Alaska Resources
Library & Information Services
Anchorage, Alaska

INTRODUCTION

Under cooperative agreement between the University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the Museum sent Gibson to Shemya Island on 30 August 1977 for a five-week fall migration survey, methods based on those of the previous spring surveys (see 1975, 1976, and spring 1977 reports), to be conducted through 3 October 1977. George E. Hall participated from 9 to 27 September.

Field work was conducted entirely on foot, and much of the island perimeter was covered daily (see descriptions in previous reports). Weather during the period was very good, with much bright sunshine and light Northerly winds and few storms.

Seventy-six species of birds were recorded on Shemya this period, two of them new to Alaska and North America: Sooty Flycatcher (Muscicapa sibirica) and Little Bunting (Emberiza pusilla). Seven others were added to the growing list of species known to have occurred in the Aleutian Islands: Dotterel, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Violet-green Swallow, Townsend's Warbler, and Bullfinch. With the addition of twenty-five species this fall, the Shemya Island total now stands at 134 species, 35 percent of all of the birds known in Alaska.

Twenty-four specimens (indicated in text) of 21 species were collected this period, all of them study skins on deposit at the University of Alaska Museum.

ANNOTATED LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED FALL 1977

Gavia immer. Common Loon. One winter-plumaged Common Loon observed on Cable Bowl bay on 23 September was the only record during the period.

Podiceps grisegena. Red-necked Grebe. A single winter-plumaged Red-necked Grebe on Northeast Bight on 27 September was the first fall arrival, the only record this period.

Podiceps auritus. Horned Grebe. Probably regular winter visitants, Horned Grebes arrived on 30 September, when two were observed together on Alcan Harbor. One was seen on Cable Bowl bay on 1 October, two were present on Alcan Harbor on 2 October, and on 3 October three were seen together on Alcan Harbor and one individual was observed on Upper Lake.

Puffinus tenuirostris. Short-tailed Shearwater. Short-tailed Shearwaters were recorded almost daily, 2-20 September, several thousand of them just offshore on days of strong winds early in the month.

Less than ten birds were seen offshore on 30 September, the only record of the species after the 20th.

Phalacrocorax pelagicus. Pelagic Cormorant. A resident species, Pelagic Cormorant was present in small numbers throughout the period.

Phalacrocorax urile. Red-faced Cormorant. Common and conspicuous throughout the period.

Philacte canagica. Emperor Goose. A single adult bird observed in flight west along North Beach on 27 September was the only record this period. The species is a winter visitant.

Anas platyrhynchos. Mallard. Recorded almost daily throughout the period. Maximum counts were 19 on 23 September and 18 on 2 October.

Anas acuta. Pintail. Recorded almost daily throughout the period. Maximum count was 39 birds on 2 October.

Anas crecca. Green-winged Teal. Recorded almost daily throughout the period. Maximum count was 32 on 3 October; maximum flock size was 19 on 19 September.

Anas querquedula. Garganey. Small numbers of Garganeys were recorded throughout the period, but we could not tell how many were birds moving through versus how many were simply moving about the island during the period. At least two birds were seen at Corner Pool, old runway area, 31 August; at least one was noted along South Beach on 13 September; four were present together at Antone Lake on 14 September; one was at Upper Lake on 15 September; singles were noted at North Beach Ledge and at Lower Lake outfall on 17 September; one was at North Beach Ledge on 18 September; there were four together at Antone Lake on 19 and 20 September, and one was collected there on the latter date (UAM 3607, immature ♀); one was at Upper Lake on 21 September; two were seen together at North Beach Ledge, 22-24 September; two were at Antone Lake on 25 September; one at Skoot Cove on 26 September; one at Northeast Bight on 27 September; one at Upper Lake on 30 September; and singles at Kay and Upper lakes on 3 October. The species is a regular migrant in Alaska only in the western and central Aleutians, where it is a rare spring transient, apparently the same in fall as well.

Anas clypeata. Northern Shoveler. One shoveler was observed at Kay Lake on 2 October and probably the same bird was seen on Upper Lake on 3 October. The species is a rare migrant.

Anas penelope. European Wigeon. The first fall arrivals were three birds together at Laundry Lake on 21 September. Seven birds were present there with Pintails, Mallards, and Green-winged Teal on 2 October, the only other record this period.

Aythya marila. Greater Scaup. Two female-plumaged Greater Scaup on Upper Lake on 30 September were the first fall arrivals of the species. Three females were present on Upper Lake on 1 October, and five or six were seen on Lower Lake on 2 October.

Histrionicus histrionicus. Harlequin Duck. Common about the shoreline throughout the period. First full-plumaged males, birds that had completed the eclipse molt, were seen on 26 September.

Somateria mollissima. Common Eider. Common and ubiquitous along the coastline. Newly-molted males were prominent from 27 September on.

Mergus albellus. Smew. Two female-plumaged Smews arrived on Upper Lake on 29 September, the earliest fall arrival date in the state, and they were present from then through 2 October on Lower Lake. The species is a regular spring and fall migrant and winter visitant in the western and central Aleutian Islands.

Circus cyaneus. Marsh Hawk. Possibly the same female Marsh Hawk was observed at North Beach Ledge on 23 September, at Lower Lake on 29 September, between Lower Camp and Cable Bowl on 30 September, near Antone Lake on 2 October, and along North Beach on 3 October. The species is a very rare fall migrant and winter visitant in the central and western Aleutians. This is the first Shemya record.

Falco peregrinus. Peregrine Falcon. At least three immature Peregrines were present on the island throughout the period and were seen almost daily, hunting at various locations on the island.

Charadrius semipalmatus. Semipalmated Plover. A Semipalmated Plover was observed with a group of four golden plovers and ten turnstones on the Alcan Harbor beach on 7 September and was collected (UAM 3593, immature ♂). Two records (one spring, one fall) at Buldir Island are the only previous western Aleutian records, although the species breeds as far west as Umnak Island.

Pluvialis dominica. American Golden Plover. Uncommon to common fall migrants, golden plovers were recorded from 7 September through 3 October in numbers that varied much from day to day. Maximum day count was 136 on 2 October, and maximum flock size was 55 birds on 1 October. Day totals exceeding 30 birds were also recorded on 14 September (34 birds), 20 September (65), 22 September (74), 25 September (31), 29 September (41), and 3 October (79).

Eudromias morinellus. Dotterel. A single Dotterel was studied on the moors above East End, at about 60 m elevation, on 17 September and was collected (UAM 3605, adult ♂). The bird was alone, although there were three golden plovers in the area. This is a first Aleutian Islands record.

Numenius phaeopus. Whimbrel. A single Whimbrel was heard and seen in flight over Lower Camp on 6 September, the only record this period. The eastern palearctic subspecies, N. p. variegatus, is a regular migrant in the western islands.

Tringa erythropus. Spotted Redshank. A lone Spotted Redshank was observed at the edge of Upper Lake on 20 September and was collected (UAM 3608, adult ♀). The species is a regular rare fall migrant in the western and central Aleutians.

Actitis hypoleucos. Common Sandpiper. One Common Sandpiper was present alone on the Alcan Harbor beach and reefs 7-14 September. There are previous fall records at Buldir, and the species may be a regular migrant at this season, as it is in spring in the western islands.

Heteroscelus incanus. Wandering Tattler. Tattlers were present throughout the period in small numbers. Maximum counts were 14 birds on 13 September, 13 on 17 September, and 11 on 8 and 11 September. Maximum group size was seven birds together on 8 September.

Arenaria interpres. Ruddy Turnstone. Turnstones were common throughout the period and were recorded daily. Maximum counts were 130 birds on 10 September and 129 on 17 September. The species occurred in flocks of up to 45+. Three immatures were collected on 11 September (UAM 3599-3601).

Phalaropus lobatus. Northern Phalarope. A very few migrant Northern Phalaropes were seen during the period, one along the Upper Lake margin on 2 September, one there on 7 September, and one at North Beach Ledge on 22 September.

Phalaropus fulicarius. Red Phalarope. Red Phalaropes were recorded almost daily, 3-29 September, usually singly. Maximum count was eight, including a flock of seven, on 25 September.

Gallinago gallinago. Common Snipe. Single Common Snipe were seen at North Beach dump on 8 September, at Kay Lake on 20 September, at North Beach dump on 21 September, at Kay Lake on 25 September, and at North Beach dump on 30 September. The Asiatic subspecies, nominate gallinago, is a regular migrant in the western Aleutians.

Calidris canutus. Red Knot. One Red Knot was present with a flock of turnstones at West End and at Alcan Harbor 2-9 September. There is no previous record in the western Aleutians, and the species is an irregular migrant and summer visitant anywhere in the Chain.

Calidris alba. Sanderling. Rare fall migrants, Sanderlings were observed on 8, 27, and 29 September and on 2 October, all singles on the open sand of South Beach.

Calidris pusilla. Semipalmated Sandpiper. A Semipalmated Sandpiper was observed on the Upper Lake mud flat, accompanied by a Temminck's Stint, on 4 September and was collected (UAM 3591, adult ♂?), the first Aleutian record of the species.

Calidris mauri. Western Sandpiper. A lone Western Sandpiper was studied as it fed on kelp and at the water's edge on South Beach on 14 September and was collected (UAM 3603, immature ♂). Another individual, judged to be a female by its long bill, was observed on the South Beach kelp, 16-20 September. These are the only western Aleutian records of the species, a very rare migrant anywhere in the Chain, known only in fall.

Calidris ruficollis. Rufous-necked Sandpiper. A Rufous-necked Sandpiper was observed with a Pectoral Sandpiper on the sand bank of a creek draining across South Beach into the Pacific on 10 September and was collected (UAM 3597, immature ♂). The species is a rare spring, and apparently fall, migrant in the western and central Aleutians.

Calidris temminckii. Temminck's Stint. One immature Temminck's Stint was seen on the Upper Lake mud flat, accompanied by a Semipalmated Sandpiper, on 4 September and was collected (UAM 3590, immature ♀?). This species is probably an annual spring and fall migrant in the western Aleutians, but it is exceedingly rare. There are previous records for both Shemya and Buldir islands.

Calidris bairdii. Baird's Sandpiper. One Baird's Sandpiper was studied at length on the Alcan Harbor beach on 5 September, the only record during the period.

Calidris melanotos. Pectoral Sandpiper. Pectoral Sandpipers were recorded regularly, 31 August-14 September, one or two birds per day. One bird on 21 September was the only record thereafter.

Calidris acuminata. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were seen in very small numbers throughout the period. One was present with turnstones on kelp at Alcan Harbor 3-5 September, a single bird was seen at Barrel Cove and/or Kay Lake 19-21 and 26-27 September, one was observed at North Beach Ledge on 24 September, and two were seen together at Barrel Cove and/or Kay Lake 30 September-3 October. The species is a regular, and sometimes fairly common, fall migrant in the Aleutians.

Calidris ptilocnemis. Rock Sandpiper. A flock of 30-45 Rock Sandpipers was present at intervals in a lumber pile above Skoot Cove, and a flock of about 100 birds present under the Alcan Harbor dock throughout the period may have included these birds. A few were seen on high ground adjacent to Laundry Lake on several occasions, but none was seen at any other location on the island this period.

Calidris alpina. Dunlin. Small numbers of Dunlins were recorded from 16 September through 2 October on South Beach or on Alcan Harbor beach. Maximum count was three on 21 September.

Calidris ferruginea. Curlew Sandpiper. A Curlew Sandpiper was seen with a flock of turnstones on the Alcan Harbor beach on 11 September and was collected (UAM 3598, immature ♂), a first record for the Aleutians.

Tryngites subruficollis. Buff-breasted Sandpiper. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper was seen with a flock of turnstones on the Alcan Harbor beach in dense fog on 8 September and was collected (UAM 3594, adult ♀), another first record for the Aleutian Islands.

Philomachus pugnax. Ruff. A female Ruff with a bad leg was present on a South Beach kelp bed with other shorebirds from 1 to 19 September. An immature male was observed at West End 2-4 September. The species is a regular rare migrant in spring and fall in the western Aleutians.

Stercorarius parasiticus. Parasitic Jaeger. Light phase Parasitic Jaegers were recorded just offshore, associated with large flocks of shearwaters, on 2 September (one bird), 3 September (two together), and 13 September (one bird).

Larus glaucescens. Glaucous-winged Gull. Common and ubiquitous throughout the period.

Rissa tridactyla. Black-legged Kittiwake. Kittiwakes were common and ubiquitous offshore throughout the period. At least several hundred birds were noted most days.

Synthliboramphus antiquus. Ancient Murrelet. One bird observed on the ocean at West End on 2 October was the only record this period.

Aethia cristatella. Crested Auklet. One Crested Auklet seen in flight at close range at East End on 6 September was the only record.

Fratercula corniculata. Horned Puffin. One adult bird was seen at North Beach Ledge on 22 September.

Lunda cirrhata. Tufted Puffin. No more than 20-30 Tufted Puffins were seen about Hammerhead Island and Shemya Pass, 2-10 September, and none was noted thereafter.

Apus pacificus pacificus. White-rumped Swift. Two White-rumped Swifts were watched hawking about over Northeast Bight and Bunting Bluff, in the lee of a southwesterly windstorm, on the afternoon of 22 September, and one was collected (UAM 3610, ♂). The remaining bird was present in the same area through 24 September. This is the fourth Alaska record of the species, the first Aleutian Islands specimen.

Alauda arvensis. Skylark. A single very wild Skylark that was present on the moors above East End from 16 to 19 September is the first fall record in Alaska. The species is a regular spring migrant in the western Aleutians, where it is known at Attu, Agattu, Shemya, and Amchitka islands.

Tachycineta thalassina. Violet-green Swallow. Four immature Violet-green Swallows arrived together at North Beach dump on 16 September, and one was taken (UAM 3604, immature ♂). One subsequently disappeared, but the remaining two were seen there through 2 October. There is no prior Aleutian record of this species, a common mainland Alaska bird, nor is there a later fall record in the state.

Corvus corax. Common Raven. Common and ubiquitous.

Troglodytes troglodytes. Winter Wren. Single juvenile Winter Wrens, still with bright yellow/orange skin at base of gape, were seen along North Beach on 22 September, east of the Ledge, and at Cable Bowl on 30 September. Since no wrens bred on Shemya in 1977, it was of particular interest to see these apparently immigrant young birds, neither of which was seen subsequently.

Oenanthe oenanthe. Wheatear. Single Wheatears were seen near North Beach dump 13-14 September and in the old runway area on 27 September. The species is a rare migrant in the western and central Aleutians, primarily in fall.

Luscinia calliope. Siberian Rubythroat. A male rubythroat observed at North Beach dump on 27 September and a female seen there on 3 October are the first fall records in Alaska. The species is an irregular spring migrant in the western Aleutians.

Phylloscopus borealis. Arctic Warbler. An Arctic Warbler was watched and pursued at length from one patch of Heracleum to another as it made its way east along the bluff at North Beach Ledge on 16 September. This species is a scarce migrant in spring and fall in the western and central Aleutians.

Muscicapa sibirica sibirica. Sooty Flycatcher. An immature Muscicapa flycatcher was observed flycatching from a rocky bluff at North Beach dump on 13 September and was collected (UAM 3602, immature ♂). The specimen was identified as this eastern palearctic species, a first record for Alaska and the United States, by R.C. Banks at the National Museum of Natural History.

Motacilla flava. Yellow Wagtail. A few Yellow Wagtails were seen early in the period, 31 August through 10 September: one bird in the old runway area on 31 August, an adult at Lower Lake outfall the same date, one on South Beach on 1 September, one at Kay Lake on 3 September, an adult and an immature above South Beach on 4 September, an immature at Lower Lake and an adult at Kay Lake on 5 September, and one adult at Alcan Harbor 8-10 September.

Anthus spinoletta. Water Pipit. Water Pipits were uncommon to fairly common fall migrants, occurring throughout most of the period. A single bird on 4 September was the first record, and two were seen on the 6th. A passage of pipits occurred on 7 September, when a total of 61 (including flocks of 16, 15, and 14 birds) were seen, and from 8 to 18 September day counts varied from 21 birds (8th and 14th) to six (15-16th). From 20 September on day counts were of one to four birds, with exceptions on 30 September (nine) and 2 October (seven).

Anthus cervinus. Red-throated Pipit. Very small numbers of Red-throated Pipits occurred from 3 to 17 September. One bird was recorded in the old runway area on 3 September, one was observed in South Beach kelp

on 10 September and was collected (UAM 3596, ♀), one was seen at Alcan Harbor on 11 September, one was heard over Lower Camp on 13 September, singles were recorded along North Beach and at Alcan Harbor on 14 September, and one was seen at Alcan Harbor on 17 September. The species may be a regular fall migrant in the western Aleutians; it has been known as a regular spring migrant there since 1974.

Dendroica townsendi. Townsend's Warbler. A single Townsend's Warbler was observed as it foraged about a log pile on North Beach on 3 October and was collected (UAM 3612, immature ♂). The species is fairly common in Alaska as far west as Cook Inlet, but there is no previous Aleutian record of the species. Indeed, there appears to be no previous record of any member of the family Parulidae west of Unimak Island.

Fringilla montifringilla. Brambling. Bramblings arrived on 17 September, when two birds were seen together in the vicinity of North Beach dump, and the species was seen almost daily from then through 3 October. One bird was seen over the East End moors on 18 September, singles were seen at Barrel Cove and above East End on 19 September, a flock of eight was present at North Beach dump on 21 September, a flock of ten birds was observed feeding on the ground and in Cirsium and Heracleum at North Beach dump on 22 September and one female (UAM 3609, immature ♀) was collected, a flock of eight was present at North Beach dump and three were seen at Bunting Bluff on 23 September, one was present at Bunting Bluff and a flock of six were watched at North Beach dump on 24 September, two were seen at North Beach dump on 27 September, three there on 29 and 30 September, two on 1 October, one was seen above Northeast Bight on 2 October, and single birds were seen at North Beach dump and at Barrel Cove on 3 October. Ten birds together (above) is the largest flock known in Alaska. The species is an annual spring and fall migrant in the western Aleutians in small numbers, but this Old World finch is hardly known elsewhere in the state.

Pyrrhula pyrrhula cassinii. Bullfinch. A lone Bullfinch was observed foraging along the bluff at North Beach dump on the afternoon of 27 September and was collected (UAM 3611, subadult ♀). There is no previous record of the species in the Aleutian Islands.

Carpodacus erythrinus. Common Rose Finch. A female Common Rose Finch was observed in Cirsium and Heracleum at North Beach dump on 31 August. There is no previous fall record in Alaska. The species has been seen annually in spring in western Alaska since 1972, twice at Buldir Island.

Leucosticte tephrocotis. Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. As in previous surveys, rosy finches were not common, but present, throughout the period.

Carduelis sinica kawarahiba. Oriental Greenfinch. A flock of four Oriental Greenfinches was watched at length on 5 September, feeding on Cirsium kamtschaticum along the bluff at Cable Bowl, and one bird was collected (UAM 3592, immature ♂). One immature was seen briefly

on 11 September in Alcan Draw, and on 18 September two birds, an adult and an immature, were seen together in Cirsium at North Beach dump, and the adult was taken (UAM 3606, adult ♂). These are the first U.S. specimens of this eastern palearctic finch. There are previous sight records at Amchitka, Buldir, and Attu islands.

Carduelis flammea. Common Redpoll. From one to five Common Redpolls were seen almost daily at North Beach dump from 31 August through 19 September. Subsequently, one was seen in Alcan Draw on 24 September, and singles were seen in the old runway area and at North Beach dump on 27 September.

Passerculus sandwichensis. Savannah Sparrow. A Savannah Sparrow was observed in dense Elymus along North Beach on 31 August and was collected (UAM 3589, immature ♂). Another individual was seen about Alcan Harbor on 7 September, and single birds were seen at Bunting Bluff on 12 September and in Elymus above North Beach Ledge on 16 September. There are no previous records of this species in the western Aleutians, where it would appear to be a casual fall migrant.

Melospiza melodia. Song Sparrow. Song Sparrows were common and ubiquitous about the island perimeter, their numbers swollen by fledged young-of-the-year. Birds defended territories vigorously throughout the period.

Calcarius lapponicus. Lapland Longspur. Abundant migrant, present throughout the period. Many hundreds of longspurs were recorded daily from 31 August through 18 September, although numbers varied from day to day and with areas covered. There was a noticeable exodus 18-19 September (e.g., less than 30 birds in North Beach dump, where several hundred had been present before), and the species was seen in scattered flocks, and in much smaller numbers, from 20 September through 3 October.

Plectrophenax nivalis. Snow Bunting. Snow Buntings were recorded daily in small numbers, their numbers augmented by the presence of many juveniles. Fall flocks, replacing family groups, became apparent by mid-September.

Emberiza pusilla. Little Bunting. A single Little Bunting was observed foraging on the ground among Eriophorum at North Beach dump on 8 September and was collected (UAM 3595, immature ♂), the first record of this widespread palearctic bird in Alaska and the United States.

Emberiza rustica. Rustic Bunting. Very secretive and elusive in dense Heracleum at the base of the bluffs along North Beach, Rustic Buntings were first recorded on 15 September, when one bird was seen at North Beach dump. Subsequently, one was seen at North Beach dump on 18 September, two were seen at Bunting Bluff on 22 September, at least two birds were present there on 23 September, and one was seen there on 24 September. The species appears to be a regular rare migrant in the western Aleutians both spring and fall.

BIRDS OBSERVED AT SHEMYA ISLAND, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS, 29 APRIL-7 JUNE 1977

by

Daniel D. Gibson

University of Alaska Museum
Fairbanks
July 1977

INTRODUCTION

Under cooperative agreement between the University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the Museum sent Gibson and George E. Hall to Shemya Island on 29 April 1977. We were to conduct a six-week-long spring migration survey on the island, methods based on the two-week-long survey conducted there in May 1975 by Gibson and Hadley (see 1975 report) and on the five-week-long survey conducted there in May 1976 by Gibson and Hall (see 1976 report). We were accompanied from 20 May to 3 June 1977 by Brina Kessel.

For the first time we had a vehicle to use on the survey. It greatly facilitated the field work, enabling us to cover most of the island perimeter each morning, spot-check every lake on the island (i.e., Upper, Middle, Laundry, Kay, Lower, Antone, Headquarters, Myrtle, June, and Sweeney lakes as well as Twin and Wash ponds and many widely scattered smaller ponds and sloughs) as well as lee areas, greening areas, etc, which changed from day to day. We then returned to walk areas of the old runway area, South Beach, East End, Northeast Bight, North Beach Ledge, North Beach dump, Alcan Harbor, etc., in the afternoon. Most of the island was surveyed most days, and, in general, the vehicle meant that we were able to conduct a much more thorough survey of the island.

Weather at Shemya during the period 29 April-7 June 1977 was atypical spring weather in the Aleutian Islands. The period began normally--cold and windy, spitting snow, but between 12 and 29 May, a period in which numerous Low pressure systems out of the West could have been expected, Shemya sat in a stable High, basking daily in brilliant sunshine and light Northerly winds. There was, overall, very little precipitation during the period. It was very poor weather for migrant waterfowl and shorebirds to stop, and most of them apparently continued on North over the western Aleutians without stopping. We did record a few individuals of most species that were expected to occur, but very few species occurred at Shemya in numbers during this period (cf. May 1976). The only species of waterfowl that was more numerous in spring 1977 than in previous surveys was the Pintail. No shorebirds were numerous at all. The list of passerine species known to have occurred at Shemya was augmented this spring by seven new species, but, of them, only Motacillids, as a family, could be said to have occurred in any numbers.

We recorded 83 species of birds on Shemya during this period, two of them new to Alaska and North America: Red-breasted Flycatcher (Ficedula parva) and Gray Bunting (Emberiza variabilis). Twelve others were added to the growing list of species known to have occurred on the island: Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Canvasback, Sanderling, Baird's Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Slaty-backed Gull, Thick-billed Murre,

Barn Swallow, Siberian Rubythroat, Gray-spotted Flycatcher, Indian Tree Pipit, and Reed Bunting. The total known for the island is now 109 species and includes only two not recorded on the 1975, 1976, or 1977 surveys: Whooper Swan (Olor cygnus) and White-throated Needle-tailed Swift (Hirundapus caudacutus), the former a fall/winter/early spring visitant and the latter an accidental.

Unique in this category, the Winter Wren, a resident species recorded in very small numbers on both the 1975 and 1976 surveys, was not seen at all on the island during spring 1977.

ANNOTATED LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED SPRING 1977

Gavia immer. Common Loon. A molting, but largely winter-plumaged bird on the ocean at East End on 26 May was the first record during the period. Subsequently, a full breeding-plumaged individual was seen on Upper Lake 28-30 May and 4-5 June.

Podiceps grisegena. Red-necked Grebe. Probably remnants of the winter population, these grebes were seen only on Shemya Pass: eight 30 April, seven 1 May, 39 on 2 May, nine 3 May, seven on 4, 6 and 7 May, six 10 May, singles 11-12 May, five 13 May, and one 18 May.

Diomedea immutabilis. Laysan Albatross. These albatrosses were seen regularly from East End: two 4 May, one 5 May, at least three 6 May, ten 9 May, at least two 10 May, two 11 May, one 12 May, two on 13 and 16 May, one 18 May, at least three 26 May, and one 30 May.

Oceanodroma furcata. Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel. A single bird seen in flight over the old runway area on 25 May was the only record.

Phalacrocorax pelagicus. Pelagic Cormorant. These cormorants were vastly outnumbered by the following species at Shemya, but small numbers were seen regularly on one group of boulders along South Beach (15+ birds) and at North Point, where 16 birds were nesting on inshore rocks, between the intertidal zone and the outer rocks and islets populated by Red-faced Cormorants. As in the last two years, single adult Pelagic Cormorants were seen on Upper Lake, this year on 7 and 16 May and on 7 June.

Phalacrocorax urile. Red-faced Cormorant. Common and ubiquitous along the coast of the island. Approximately 5000-5500 of these cormorants populated Shemya in May 1977, about 50 percent in Shemya Pass and most of the other 50 percent along North Beach from Alcan Harbor to East End.

Philacte canagica. Emperor Goose. Two Emperor Geese seen on Hammerhead Island reefs on 30 April and 2 May were the only records this period.

Anas platyrhynchos. Mallard. Recorded almost daily, in small numbers. Maximum count was 12 on 1 May. The earliest female with brood was seen at Lower Lake outfall marsh on 4 June.

Anas acuta. Pintail. Distinctly more numerous than they were in previous years, Pintails were recorded daily and in large numbers through late May. Maximum count was 198 on 10 May and maximum flock size was 120+ at North Beach Ledge 9-10 May.

Anas crecca nimia. Green-winged Teal. These teal were widespread and fairly common through 29 May, after which none was seen. Maximum count was 36+ on 7 May. We saw no evidence of breeding, but nesting probably accounted for the absence of birds in late May-early June.

Anas querquedula. Garganey. A male that arrived with a small group of Pintails in the Warehouse Bowl/Lower Lake outfall marsh area 10 May is the earliest arrival on record in Alaska. Two males were seen irregularly, 12-20 May, one in the old runway area and one at North Beach Ledge, and a pair was present in the Upper Lake area 29-31 May. Maximum count was three, a pair plus a male, 19 May.

Anas penelope. European Wigeon. Wigeon were recorded daily through 1 June. Maximum count was 47, including a flock of 29, on 10 May. A lone female was last seen at North Beach Ledge on 4 June.

Anas clypeata. Northern Shoveler. A pair of shovelers arrived in the old runway area on 2 May and was present daily through 11 May. Subsequently, up to two pairs were seen daily 16 May-1 June.

Aythya ferina. Common Pochard. One female that arrived with the following species on 5 May was the only pochard recorded at Shemya this spring. The bird remained on Laundry, Upper, or Middle lake through 17 May.

Aythya valisineria. Canvasback. A pair present on Laundry Lake 5-9 May is the first Aleutian record of spring birds, the only record of the species west of Amchitka. Their origin provides interesting speculation: were they 1) overshoots from mainland Alaska (where the species occurred in substantial numbers in spring 1977), 2) vagrants returning from a winter in Asia (see the fact that they were accompanied by preceding species), or 3) an example of intra-Aleutian movement (suggested by the fact that small numbers winter at Adak)?

Aythya marila. Greater Scaup. As in previous years, Greater Scaup were present in small numbers throughout the period. Maximum count was 10 in the old runway area 9-14 May.

Aythya fuligula. Tufted Duck. Tufted Ducks were present in much smaller numbers than in other years. The species was present throughout the period, except 24-28 May, on lakes in the old runway area. Maximum count was six birds 3-12 May.

Bucephala clangula. Common Goldeneye. Goldeneyes were present in small numbers throughout the period. Maximum count was 24 on 4 May.

Bucephala albeola. Bufflehead. Two males and a female were present on Upper Lake almost daily 29 April-9 May. None was seen thereafter.

Clangula hyemalis. Oldsquaw. Oldsquaws were seen regularly on saltwater through 7 May, irregularly thereafter through 23 May. Maximum count was 50 on 2 and 5 May.

Histrionicus histrionicus. Harlequin Duck. As in previous years, Harlequins were common and ubiquitous along the coastline.

Polysticta stelleri. Steller's Eider. Seen only on Alcan Harbor in spring 1977, Steller's Eiders were present in very small numbers: two females 7 May, five females together at irregular intervals 8-19 May, and one female on 20 and 24 May.

Somateria mollissima. Common Eider. As in past years, this species was common and ubiquitous along the coastline.

Melanitta deglandi. White-winged Scoter. White-winged Scoters were seen in small numbers and at irregular intervals on saltwater: one 1 May, a pair 3 May, three 7 May, at least four 11 May, and a pair 13 May.

Melanitta nigra. Black Scoter. As preceding species, seen in small numbers on saltwater at irregular intervals: eight 29 April, 14 on 30 April, 19 on 1 May, four 5 May, one 7 May, eight 14 May, four 19 May, and three 26 May.

Mergus albellus. Smew. A ♀-plumaged Smew present on Lower Lake 26-28 and 31 May was our only record this period.

Mergus merganser merganser. Common Merganser. 'Goosanders' were present in very small numbers, on freshwater and saltwater: one male 29 April-1 May, a male and a female on 10-11 May, two males and a female, all separate birds, on 12 May, and two separate females on 14 May.

Mergus serrator. Red-breasted Merganser. A pair of these mergansers 2-3 May, single females on 9 and 25 May, and a pair on 27 May were our only records this period.

Falco peregrinus. Peregrine Falcon. Single birds were seen in the Lower Lake area 1-2 May and at North Beach dump on 2 June.

Charadrius mongolus. Mongolian Plover. A lone male Mongolian Plover arrived on Alcan Harbor beach on 15 May. One bird was seen on South Beach 18 May, three birds--a male and two females--were present there 19 May, two birds on 20 May, a male and two females on 21 May, a male and a female on 22 May, one female on 23 May, one female on 25 May, a male and a female on 26 May, and a female was present on North Beach on 29 and 31 May.

Pluvialis dominica. American Golden Plover. One bird in the old runway area 1 May was first arrival. Subsequently, single birds were seen 10, 12 and 13 May, two on 14 May, three 17-19 May, two on 20 May, three 21 May, and singles on 25 and 29 May.

Limosa lapponica. Bar-tailed Godwit. One bird on South Beach on 19 May was the first one seen this spring. Up to four birds were present 21-30 May.

Numenius phaeopus variegatus. Whimbrel. A single 'Siberian' Whimbrel arrived on South Beach on 28 May. Up to two birds, one on South Beach and one at East End, were present from then through 2 June.

Tringa glareola. Wood Sandpiper. One Wood Sandpiper arrived at Warehouse Bowl on 11 May, tieing the earliest arrival on record in Alaska, set last year at Shemya. But the ensuing passage was very poor: single birds on 13, 16, and 17 May; three on 27 May, two on 28 May, singles on 29-30 May, four on 31 May, and singles on 1, 4 and 5 June.

Actitis hypoleucos. Common Sandpiper. One bird arrived on South Beach with a tattler on 20 May. Two were seen in the same area on 21 May, and one was present there 22 May. There were no further records.

Heteroscelus incanus. Wandering Tattler. The first tattler arrived on South Beach on 20 May. Subsequently, up to eight birds per day, in groups of up to seven, were seen regularly on boulder beaches through the end of the period.

Arenaria interpres. Ruddy Turnstone. As in previous years, turnstones occurred in small numbers. The first arrivals were two on 12 May, and maximum count was seven together on 3 June.

Gallinago gallinago gallinago. Common Snipe. One bird, arriving from the ocean in a storm, was seen at East End on 4 May. Another individual was seen near Upper Lake on 5 May, and single birds were noted in the old runway area on 27-28 and 30 May. A poor passage.

Calidris alba. Sanderling. One bird was seen on South Beach on 30 April. It was not regarded as an arrival since the species winters locally in the Aleutians.

Calidris ruficollis. Rufous-necked Sandpiper. Two birds, one at Northeast Bight with a Mongolian Plover, an American Golden Plover, and a turnstone and a lone bird on the Alcan Harbor beach, arrived 29 May. Both were still present 30 May, and the Alcan Harbor individual was last seen 31 May.

Calidris subminuta. Long-toed Stint. Another example of a very poor showing of a regularly-occurring shorebird, Long-toed Stints were not seen in spring 1977 until 29 May, when two were seen in the old runway area. Subsequently, three were seen 30 May, two 31 May, one 1 June, and three on 2 and 4 June, all in the old runway area.

Calidris bairdii. Baird's Sandpiper. A lone bird closely observed on the Barrel Cove beach on 16 May was our only record.

Calidris ptilocnemis. Rock Sandpiper. At least one singing male was present on the heath in the Laundry Lake vicinity from 2 May on. Three birds were seen together in this area on 7 May, and two singing males were recorded once, on 20 May.

Philomachus pugnax. Ruff. A red-ruffed male observed at Laundry Lake and in the old runway area on 1 May is the earliest arrival on record in Alaska. It was the only individual seen at Shemya this period.

Stercorarius pomarinus. Pomarine Jaeger. Two light-phase adults watched together just off Alcan Harbor on 3 June were the only record.

Larus hyperboreus. Glaucous Gull. Glaucous Gulls, of all ages, were present in small numbers throughout the period. Maximum count was nine on 7 May.

Larus glaucescens. Glaucous-winged Gull. As in past seasons, this species was common and ubiquitous.

Larus schistisagus. Slaty-backed Gull. Not recorded in previous years, Slaty-backed Gulls occurred throughout the spring 1977 period of observation. At least 12 individuals were recorded, all with other

gulls either along South Beach or at the dump. An adult female was observed on 30 April; an adult female, two 3rd-year, and two 2nd-year individuals on 2 May; a 3rd-year female (UAM 3566) on 3 May; a 2nd-year male (UAM 3567) on 4 May; one 2nd-year bird on 5 May; an adult female (UAM 3569) and a 3rd-year bird on 6 May; an adult male and two 3rd-year birds on 7 May; one 3rd-year on 8 May; two 3rd-year and three or four 2nd-year birds on 9 May; two 3rd-year and two or three 2nd-year individuals on 10 May; three 2nd-year birds on 11 May; a 3rd-year and a 2nd-year bird on 12 May; two 2nd-year birds on 13 May; one 2nd-year on 16 May; an adult on 21 May; an adult and two 3rd-year birds on 22 May; an adult and one 3rd-year on 23 May; one 3rd-year bird on 25 May; and a 4th-year, subadult bird on 3 June.

Larus argentatus vegae. Herring Gull. Herring Gulls, mostly immatures, were seen in small numbers throughout the period. Maximum count was four on both 7 and 10 May. An adult male (UAM 3568) was collected on South Beach on 5 May.

Larus canus. Mew Gull. A single, worn 1st-year individual was seen on South Beach on 3, 7 and 11-14 May.

Larus ridibundus. Black-headed Gull. Very few Black-headed Gulls were recorded this year. A full-plumaged adult was seen on kelp a few hundred yards off North Beach on 12 May, single adults were seen on 15 and 19 May, an adult and an immature were recorded together on 20, 22 and 23 May, and a subadult bird was seen on 1 June.

Rissa tridactyla. Black-legged Kittiwake. Small numbers of kittiwakes were seen off East End at various intervals. A flock of 44, including 11 immatures, was seen in Northeast Bight on 3 and 6 June.

Sterna hirundo longipennis. Common Tern. An adult female (UAM 3576) was observed foraging over Lower Lake on 31 May. Our only additional records were of a pair at Lower Lake on 4 June and a single bird at Upper Lake on 5 June.

Sterna paradisaea. Arctic Tern. A single full-plumaged adult flying about Alcan Harbor on 9 May was a bird that had been blown onshore by storms. Flocks of Arctic Terns were seen feeding in Alcan Harbor at the end of the period: 12+ on 28 May, 56 on 29 May, five on 2 June, recorded on 3 June, three on 5 June, and two on 6 June.

Sterna aleutica. Aleutian Tern. Three Aleutian Terns arrived on 26 May. Subsequently, three were noted 27 May, seven on 28 May, three on 31 May, at least eight on 3 June, six on 4 June, and one on 6 June. The species may breed on Shemya.

Uria lomvia. Thick-billed Murre. A lone breeding-plumaged bird on the ocean off North Beach on 12 May was the only certain record, although we saw small numbers of unidentified murres in flight at great distance off East End on several occasions.

Cepphus columba. Pigeon Guillemot. As in 1976, there was one record: a pair seen well at Hammerhead Island on 2 May.

Synthliboramphus antiquus. Ancient Murrelet. Small numbers of Ancient Murrelets were seen on offshore waters at irregular intervals. Maximum count was six on 1 May.

Fratercula corniculata. Horned Puffin. A pair of Horned Puffins off North Beach on 20 May was the only record.

Lunda cirrhata. Tufted Puffin. Tufted Puffins were present throughout the period about Hammerhead Island and Shemya Pass. Small numbers were present about North Point. Maximum count was 32+ at Hammerhead on 13 May.

Nyctea scandiaca. Snowy Owl. At least four Snowy Owls, all separable by plumage characters, were seen at irregular intervals on different parts of the island throughout the period. Maximum count was three on 9 May, and two were seen together only once, on 3 June.

Asio flammeus. Short-eared Owl. One bird was observed above Northeast Bight on 24 May, the only record this period.

Alauda arvensis. Skylark. A single Skylark arrived in the old runway area on 1 May, almost but not quite the earliest arrival on record in Alaska [29 April 1974, Attu Island]. Thereafter, as many as four singing males were recorded in song flights in the old runway area at regular intervals throughout the period, last on record a singing male on 5 June. One male was timed in a 16 minute 30 second song flight in the old runway area on 26 May. One bird was seen at the east end of the E-W runway on 31 May, our only record at another location on the island.

Hirundo rustica. Barn Swallow. A white-bellied (palearctic) Barn Swallow was observed hawking over South Beach on 19 May, the only record of the species.

Corvus corax. Common Raven. Ravens were common and ubiquitous, as in past years.

Turdus obscurus. Eye-browed Thrush. Eye-browed Thrushes arrived on 31 May, when a male was seen on Grace Hill and nearby at North Beach Ledge. Probably the same bird was seen in that area on 1 June. At least three were seen along North Beach on 2 June, two were seen together on 3 June, and one bird was present in North Beach dump on 6-7 June.

Turdus naumanni eunomus. Dusky Thrush. A very wild Dusky Thrush was observed at length in North Beach dump on 24 May. Possibly the same individual was observed briefly on 28 May at Lower Lake and on 29 May near Laundry Lake.

Luscinia calliope. Siberian Rubythroat. A small passage of rubythroats arrived at the very end of May. An adult male (UAM 3577) was observed in wrack and timbers at North Beach Ledge on 31 May, an adult female (UAM 3579) was seen among beach boulders at East End and a male was observed at Northeast Bight on 1 June, and a male was present in North Beach dump 2-3 June.

Ficedula parva albicilla. Red-breasted Flycatcher. An adult male (UAM 3578) observed foraging about World War II wreckage and sea stacks in the intertidal zone at Barrel Cove on 1 June is the first record of this species in Alaska and North America.

Muscicapa griseisticta. Gray-spotted Flycatcher. A small flight of Gray-spotted Flycatchers arrived at the end of May. On 30 May two were found in North Beach dump and an adult male (UAM 3575) was collected, and three more were observed in Cable Bowl. Subsequently, three were recorded on 31 May, one on 1 June, two on 2 June, and single singing males were seen in North Beach dump on 3 June and at Alcan Harbor on 5 June.

Motacilla alba lugens. White Wagtail. Two males arrived together at Lower Lake outfall on 1 May, the earliest arrival date on record in Alaska, and one was collected (UAM 3565). Single black-backed males were seen in the same area 7-8 May, 15-16 May, and on 20 May, and one White Wagtail was heard and seen there briefly on 22 May.

Motacilla flava simillima. Yellow Wagtail. Three birds together in the Cable Bowl intertidal zone on 12 May tied the earliest arrival record in Alaska, set at Shemya in 1976. One adult male (UAM 3570) was collected. The species was seen in small numbers during the ensuing two weeks: five 13 May, at least five 14 May, one 15 May, six 16 May (adult male, UAM 3571), two 17 May, three 19 May, one 21 May, singles 23 and 24 May, two 25 May, three 26 May, two 27 May, one 28 May, two 29 May, and one 1 June.

Anthus spinoletta. Water Pipit. As in past years, Water Pipits occurred in small numbers. Four arrived together on 12 May, four were seen on 13 May, seven on 14 May, three on 15 May, two on 27 May, one on 28 May, and one on 4-5 June.

Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis. Indian Tree Pipit. An adult male (UAM 3572) was observed in North Beach dump on 16 May. A male collected at Buldir in May 1976 by Byrd is the only previous Aleutian record.

Anthus cervinus. Red-throated Pipit. Two male Red-throated Pipits that arrived in the old runway area on 12 May provide the earliest arrival on record in Alaska. Our only additional records were of single singing males in the old runway area on 16 and 30-31 May.

Fringilla montifringilla. Brambling. Occurring in smaller numbers than in 1976, Bramblings arrived on 14 May, when four birds were observed. Subsequently, one was seen 15 May, two 16 May, one 17 May, three 19 May, two 21 May, one 22 May, one 26 May, one 28 May, and one 29 May.

Leucosticte tephrocotis. Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. Rosy finches were not common, as in previous years. They were seen primarily in the vicinity of the aircraft hangars and other buildings, but in 1977 we also saw them regularly in North Beach dump.

Melospiza melodia. Song Sparrow. Song Sparrows were seen or heard daily throughout the period of observation. Maximum count was 20+ birds on 7 May.

Calcarius lapponicus. Lapland Longspur. Four male longspurs arrived on 5 May, and the first female arrived on 14 May. The species was common and ubiquitous thereafter.

Plectrophenax nivalis. Snow Bunting. Snow Buntings were recorded daily in small numbers, as in 1975 and 1976, mostly paired birds or singing males. Flocks of 25 and 8 in the old runway area on 5 May were the only suggestion of passage that we saw in this species.

Emberiza rustica. Rustic Bunting. A female Rustic Bunting arrived at North Beach dump on 12 May and was present there daily through 16 May and again 19-20 May. A male was seen in Cable Bowl 21-22 May, and a male was present above Northeast Bight 25-27 May. Two singing males were present above Northeast Bight 29-30 May, and three males were seen there 31 May. One female was observed in North Beach dump on 4 June.

Emberiza variabilis. Gray Bunting. An adult male (UAM 3573) observed feeding in a runoff at North Beach Ledge on 18 May is the first record of this species in Alaska and North America.

Emberiza schoeniclus pyrrhulina. Reed Bunting. An adult male (UAM 3580) was observed in Lower Lake outfall marsh on 4 June. A male taken at Buldir in May 1975 by Byrd and a male seen at Attu in May 1977 by Tobish are the only previous records for Alaska and North America.

BIRDS OBSERVED AT SHEMYA ISLAND, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS, 30 APRIL-31 MAY 1976

by

Daniel D. Gibson

University of Alaska Museum
Fairbanks
November 1976

INTRODUCTION

Under cooperative agreement between the University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the Museum sent Gibson and George E. Hall to Shemya Island on 30 April 1976. We were to conduct a month-long spring migration survey of the island, methods based on the two-week-long survey conducted there in May 1975 by Gibson and Hadley (see 1975 Report).

Daily surveys were conducted over a walking circuit of the bogs, pond and lake edges, and boulder beaches (South Beach) of the western third of the island. Other areas covered with some regularity were South Beach from Lower Lake outfall east, and North Beach from North Beach Ledge west to and including Alcan Harbor. East End, off limits because of unexploded ordnance, was surveyed only once.

Weather at Shemya during the period 30 April-31 May 1976 was, as it was in May 1975, typical spring weather in the Aleutian Islands: cold, wind, rain and snow, with one low pressure system after another moving in on us from the West. Winter 1975-76 deposited much snow on the island, and, arriving much earlier than we had in 1975, we faced much drifted snow and frozen freshwater for the first week of May 1976. Temperatures ranged from an estimated 25°F to about 60°F, and there were intermittent periods of calm weather with brilliant sunshine during the month.

We recorded 89 species of birds on Shemya during this period, about 38 percent of them palearctic species that are poorly, if at all, known on mainland Alaska. Of these, the passages of Garganey, Tufted Duck, Smew, Mongolian Plover, Long-toed Stint, Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper, Black-tailed Godwit, the thrushes, wagtails, and pipits, Brambling, and Rustic Bunting were extremely impressive. Twenty-one specimens were collected. They are all on deposit at the University of Alaska Museum and are cited in text. Species also recorded in May 1975 are marked by asterisk. Only four species were recorded in May 1975 that went unrecorded this season: Ruff (Philomachus pugnax), Greater Yellowlegs (Tringa melanoleuca), Bristle-thighed Curlew (Numenius tahitiensis), and Hoary Redpoll (Carduelis hornemanni).

ANNOTATED LIST OF SPECIES

*Gavia immer. Common Loon. Common Loons were seen at irregular intervals throughout the period. Single breeding-plumaged birds were observed on Upper Lake on 1 and 4 May, on Middle Lake on 6 May, on Lower Lake on 10 May, on both Middle and Lower lakes on 12 May, on Upper Lake on 28 May, and on Lower Lake on 29 May. Lone winter-plumaged individuals were seen off South Beach on 16 May, on Upper Lake on 17 May, and off North Beach on 30 May.

Gavia adamsii. Yellow-billed Loon. One winter-plumaged Yellow-billed Loon observed off South Beach on 3 May was the only record.

Gavia stellata. Red-throated Loon. One breeding-plumaged Red-throated Loon seen off South Beach on 26 May was the only record.

Podiceps grisegena. Red-necked Grebe. On 4 May at least 21 breeding-plumaged Red-necked Grebes were observed on Shemya Pass. Most were paired, calling, and courting. None was seen subsequently.

Diomedea immutabilis. Laysan Albatross. At least four Laysan Albatrosses were observed off East End on 31 May for over an hour, during which time two of them came within .5 km of the beach.

*Phalacrocorax pelagicus. Pelagic Cormorant. Pelagic Cormorants were not identified with regularity among the numerous Red-faced Cormorants. At least two breeding-plumaged adults were observed on 1 May, two were recorded on 4 May, one on 5, 14, and 20 May, and at least one on 25 May. One full-plumaged adult was seen on Upper Lake on 15 May, the only cormorant recorded on freshwater during the period.

*Phalacrocorax urile. Red-faced Cormorant. As in 1975, this species was common and ubiquitous along the coast. In 1976 it was discovered to be nesting on Shemya Island itself (in addition to various offshore rocks and islets), several dozen birds on the steep cliffs above North Beach.

*Philacte canagica. Emperor Goose. The remnant of the winter population departed shortly after the beginning of the survey period. At least 16 were recorded on 30 April, 10 on 1 May, 12 on 2 May, six on 3 May, and three on 5 May, all along South Beach. Quite unexpectedly, two birds were found on South Beach, at Lower Lake outfall, on 27 May, and these birds were still present 29-30 May.

Anser fabalis. Bean Goose. A lone Bean Goose was seen in flight along South Beach, and later on the ground in the old runway area, on 12 May, and it was found grazing on the shore of Upper Lake on the morning of 13 May. A single individual observed in the old runway area on 27 May was the only additional record.

*Anas platyrhynchos. Mallard. Mallards were recorded almost daily in small numbers. Maximum count was at least six birds on 12 May.

Anas strepera. Gadwall. A pair of Gadwalls present with other surface-feeding ducks at North Beach Ledge, 25-27 May, was the only record.

*Anas acuta. Pintail. Pintails were recorded almost daily, in small numbers until the third week of May. Maximum count was 42, including a flock of 35, on 26 May.

Anas falcata. Falcated Teal. A pair of Falcated Teal was observed with other surface-feeding ducks at North Beach Ledge on 26 and 29 May, and a pair, perhaps the same birds, was observed at length on Lower Lake on 31 May.

*Anas crecca nimia. Green-winged Teal. Green-winged Teal were widespread and fairly common during this period. Maximum count was 30+ on 10 May and the largest flock seen was of 19 birds on 5 May.

*Anas querquedula. Garganey. At least six Garganeys were recorded between 17 and 30 May. A pair was observed at Kay Lake on 17 May, and the male (UAM 3448) was collected. On 22 May a pair plus a female (probably remaining from first pair) were present in the same area, and these three birds were seen together on various ponds and ditches in the old runway area daily through 30 May. Another pair was observed with other surface-feeding ducks at North Beach Ledge on 26 and 27 May. The specimen is the second one taken in Alaska.

*Anas clypeata. Northern Shoveler. Shovelers were distinctly uncommon, but the species was recorded almost daily after the arrival of the first pair on 12 May. Two pairs on 27 May was maximum count.

*Anas penelope. European Wigeon. European Wigeon were the most numerous surface-feeding duck observed and the only one that was recorded every day of the period. Less than 10 birds were present until 9 May, after which date numbers increased to maxima of 57 birds, including a flock of 35, on 22 May and 55 birds on 18 May.

*Aythya ferina. Common Pochard. Pochards were present daily on Upper, Kay, or Laundry lakes from 30 April through 17 May. Maximum count was four birds present 6-15 May. A male (UAM 3437) was collected on Kay Lake on 4 May.

*Aythya marila. Greater Scaup. Greater Scaup were present in small numbers on Upper, Laundry, Kay, or Lower lakes throughout the period. Maximum count was 23 birds, including a flock of 14, on 27 May.

*Aythya fuligula. Tufted Duck. The first Tufted Ducks, four adult males, arrived on Upper and Lower lakes on 6 May, after which date the species was recorded daily through 31 May. Numbers built slowly to a maximum of 33 birds on Upper Lake, 23-24 May. An adult male (UAM 3441) was collected on Kay Lake on 12 May.

*Bucephala clangula. Common Goldeneye. Common Goldeneyes were observed daily on Upper, Middle, Laundry, Kay, or Lower lakes from 30 April through 27 May. Numbers apparently involved a single flock of 10-15 birds throughout much of the period; maximum count was 33 birds on 10 May.

*Bucephala albeola. Bufflehead. A flock of up to eight Buffleheads (seven ♀♀, one ♂) was present on Upper Lake from 30 April through 15 May, after which date a lone female was seen irregularly through 22 May.

*Clangula hyemalis. Oldsquaw. Oldsquaws were seen off South Beach for the first few days of the period, maximum 50+ on 4 May. A single bird seen off North Beach on 27 May was the only record after 10 May.

*Histrionicus histrionicus. Harlequin Duck. As in 1975, Harlequins were common and ubiquitous along the rocky coastline. No counts were made, but several hundred birds were present.

Polysticta stelleri. Steller's Eider. One female Steller's Eider was observed with Harlequins and Common Eiders near Skoot Cove on 10 May, the only record.

*Somateria mollissima. Common Eider. As in 1975, these eiders were common along the coast of the island, but they were less numerous than Harlequin Ducks. Groups of up to three pairs were seen on large freshwater lakes on eight occasions from 2 to 31 May.

*Melanitta deglandi. White-winged Scoter. White-winged Scoters were recorded only three times, all on saltwater: six birds on 5 May, one on 9 May, and four on 30 May.

Melanitta nigra. Black Scoter. A flock of 10+ Black Scoters off South Beach on 30 April was the only record.

*Mergus albellus. Smew. As in 1975, Smews occurred in small numbers on large freshwater lakes. An adult male was present on largely frozen Middle Lake on 30 April and 1 May. A pair was observed on Lower Lake on 10-11 May, and the male and two female-plumaged birds were present there 12-14 May. On 22 May a male molting into adult plumage and two female-plumaged birds were seen on Laundry Lake, and this trio was observed on Lower Lake on 24 May. The young male and one female were seen on Lower Lake on 25 May, and the trio was present on 26 May. One female-plumaged Smew was present on Lower Lake on 27 and 30 May.

*Mergus merganser merganser. Common Merganser. A pair of Common Mergansers was observed at Upper Lake on 2 May and on Kay Lake 4-5 May. The adult male (UAM uncatalogued, specimen still frozen) was collected on 5 May. On 6 May another, somewhat lethargic, adult male was seen on Laundry Lake, where it was noted again on 7 May and found emaciated and dead on 8 May (UAM 3438). These are the first two specimens of the nominate subspecies taken in Alaska. Other Common Mergansers, probably also of this form but female-plumaged and thus unidentifiable, were: two at Upper Lake on 11 May; two at Kay Lake on 12 May; one at Lower Lake on 17, 18, 22, 23, and 24 May; five together at North Beach Ledge on 25 May; three together at North Beach Ledge on 27 May; and three together at Upper Lake on 28 May.

*Mergus serrator. Red-breasted Merganser. A single female was noted on Middle Lake on 1 May and on Upper Lake on 2 May, and one was seen off South Beach on 3 May. A pair was seen in flight over the old runway area on 22 May, and a male was present at North Beach Ledge 25-29 May.

Buteo lagopus. Rough-legged Hawk. At least one light phase Rough-legged Hawk was observed in the old runway area and at the K-House on 17 May, and a single bird was noted in the old runway area on 18, 22, and 23 May.

Falco peregrinus. Peregrine Falcon. A single bird that flew in off Shemya Pass and flew high over the island, headed NE, on 10 May, was the only record.

Charadrius mongolus. Mongolian Plover. Mongolian Plovers arrived on 17 May, when one bird was seen briefly at Laundry Lake and a flock of four birds was observed at rest on the old North-South runway. On 19 May a flock of five birds was observed at length on the old runways, and on 22 May in the same area one individual was seen with a flock of five golden plovers. On 27 May one bird was present with a flock of five Dunlins, two Ruddy Turnstones, and a Great Knot on South Beach. Five together is a new high count for the state.

*Pluvialis dominica. American Golden Plover. A single golden plover observed in flight over the heath near Building #600 on 2 May preceded the main movement by a week. One bird was present on Yellowlegs Marsh 9-12 May, and small numbers were seen in the old runway area at irregular intervals through 29 May. Maximum count was 14 birds on 19 May, and maximum flock size was six on 20 May.

*Arenaria interpres. Ruddy Turnstone. Turnstones occurred in small numbers, as in 1975, the first arrival a single bird on South Beach on 18 May. Subsequently, two birds were noted on 23 May, four on 24 May, one on 25 May, two on 26 May, and two on 27 May. Maximum flock size was three on South Beach on 24 May.

Calidris ruficollis. Rufous-necked Sandpiper. Two Rufous-necked Sandpipers, one in the old runway area with Long-toed Stints and the other on South Beach near Skoot Cove, arrived on 22 May. Subsequently, one bird was seen near Laundry Lake on 23 May and one bird was seen near Skoot Cove on 24 May, the only other records.

*Calidris subminuta. Long-toed Stint. The first Long-toed Stints arrived on 12 May, when a pair was found on Yellowlegs Marsh and a male (UAM 3440) was collected. One bird was seen in the same area on 13 May. None was seen on 14 May, but on 15 May five single birds and a flock of six were found in the old runway area. A female and a male (UAM 3442 and 3443, respectively) were taken

from the flock. The species was recorded daily thereafter, primarily on bogs and grassy pond margins in the old runway area. Peak numbers were reached on 16 May, when 40+ Long-toed Stints, in flocks of up to 10 birds, were counted. Subsequent day totals were: 35 on 17 May, 21+ on 18 May, 26+ on 19 May, 17+ on 20 May, 'only a few' on 21 May, 18 on 22 May, seven on 23 and 24 May, 10 on 25 May, six on 26 May, three on 27 May, four on 28 May, three on 29 May, five on 30 May, and four on 31 May. There was no evidence (e.g., courtship activity, songs) to suggest that any of these birds might have stayed to breed; all of those recorded were apparently migrants.

Calidris temminckii. Temminck's Stint. One Temminck's Stint, feeding alone on a floating mat of vegetation at the north end of Laundry Lake on 22 May, was observed and collected, an adult male (UAM 3451). It is the second Aleutian record.

Calidris melanotos. Pectoral Sandpiper. A single Pectoral Sandpiper was observed in a boggy area on the north side of Upper Lake, 23-26 May, the only record.

*Calidris ptilocnemis. Rock Sandpiper. On 22 May a single Rock Sandpiper, accompanied by a Rufous-necked Sandpiper, was observed on South Beach just east of Skoot Cove. It was bright orange dorsally and about the head and was identified as C. p. quarta. Attempts were being made to collect a very elusive Eye-browed Thrush at the time, and the sandpiper was not seen subsequently. On 29 and 31 May a single singing male C. p. couesi was observed on the heath near Laundry Lake, the only other record of the species.

*Calidris alpina. Dunlin. Dunlins were recorded daily after the first two arrived on 15 May. Maximum counts were 14 birds on 19 May and 13 on 16 and 27 May. Maximum flock size was eight birds on 19 May.

Calidris tenuirostris. Great Knot. One Great Knot, accompanied by a Whimbrel and a Bar-tailed Godwit, was observed at length on the open sand of South Beach on 24 May. Undoubtedly the same individual was present at the same location on 27 May, then accompanied by five Dunlins, two Ruddy Turnstones, and a Mongolian Plover. This is the second Aleutian record of the species.

*Tringa nebularia. Greenshank. One Greenshank at Kay Lake on 16 May was the first arrival, and the species was observed daily (except 28 May) from then through 31 May, the records involving at least 15 individuals: one at Upper Lake and two at Laundry Lake on 17 May; one at Laundry Lake and two below Building #600 on 18 May; two at Alcan Harbor on 19 May; four together at Alcan Harbor on 20 May; one at Alcan Harbor and one at Lower Lake on 21 May; one

at Laundry Lake and one near Skoot Cove on 22 May; one each at Laundry and Lower lakes on 23 May; one at Lower Lake on 24 May; one each at Upper and Lower lakes, plus a flock of nine birds at North Beach Ledge, on 25 May; one in the old runway area and one at Lower Lake, plus the flock of nine at North Beach Ledge, on 26 May; one at Lower Lake and five at North Beach Ledge on 27 May; one at Lower Lake on 29 May; one at North Beach Ledge and one at Lower Lake on 30 May; and one in the old runway area on 31 May. Nine Greenshanks together is easily a new high count for Alaska.

*Tringa glareola. Wood Sandpiper. Wood Sandpipers staged a truly impressive migration at Shemya in spring 1976. The first arrivals, five birds, were observed in the old runway area on 11 May, two days earlier than in 1975, and the species was recorded daily from then through 31 May. Wood Sandpipers were practically ubiquitous for most of the latter half of the month. Daily counts were: four on 12 May, one on 13 May, two on 14 May, 42 on 15 May, 142+ on 16 May, 133 on 17 May, 110 on 18 May, 75+ on 19 May, 85 on 20 May, 'recorded' on 21 May, 67+ on 22 May, 76 on 23 May, 42+ on 24 May, 118+ on 25 May, 67+ on 26 May, 52+ on 27 May, at least six birds on 28 May, 20 on 29 May, 22 on 30 May, and nine on 31 May. Maximum flock size was 45 birds on 16 May.

Tringa brevipes. Polynesian Tattler. One Polynesian Tattler was observed at length with a turnstone among the boulders of South Beach on 18 May. An attempt was made but failed to collect the specimen. It was the only record of the species.

*Tringa incana. Wandering Tattler. Wandering Tattlers were recorded regularly on boulder beaches after the first arrival, a single bird on 23 May. Two were recorded on 24 May, five on 25 May, three on 27 May, six on 29 May, three on 30 May, and 14 on 31 May. Maximum group size was 10 together at East End on 31 May.

*Tringa hypoleucos. Common Sandpiper. Common Sandpipers again demonstrated that they are regular, if rare, migrants in the western Aleutians. The first arrival was a single bird at Lower Lake outfall on 14 May. From then through 31 May from one to three individuals were recorded regularly at Lower Lake outfall or elsewhere along South Beach. Elsewhere on the island, three together (maximum group size) were observed east of North Beach Ledge on 27 May, one in that area on 29 May, and one at Upper Lake on 31 May.

Xenus cinereus. Terek Sandpiper. An adult male (UAM 3454) was observed and collected among the boulders along South Beach on 24 May, the third Alaska specimen.

*Limosa lapponica. Bar-tailed Godwit. As in May 1975, few Bar-tailed Godwits, which normally over-fly the Chain on passage, were seen at Shemya. Single birds were observed at Laundry Lake, in flight over the old runway area, and on South Beach, 21-25 May, and a flock of 55 flew in over South Beach, headed North, on 23 May.

Limosa limosa melanuroides. Black-tailed Godwit. A pair of Black-tailed Godwits was observed at Kay Lake on 18 May and one bird was seen in flight in the old runway area on 20 May. On 23 May an adult male (UAM 3453) was collected from a pair feeding at Laundry Lake, and a pair was seen in flight in the old runway area on 24 May. There was only one record of this species in the Aleutians prior to spring 1976. The specimen is clearly of the small Asiatic race.

Numenius phaeopus variegatus. Whimbrel. A single pale-rumped "Siberian" Whimbrel was observed at close range on South Beach, accompanied by a Bar-tailed Godwit and a Great Knot, on 24 May. It was the only record of the species.

*Capella gallinago gallinago. Common Snipe. The first Common Snipe arrived on 15 May, and the species was recorded regularly from then through 28 May. Daily counts were: five on 17 May, seven on 18 May, three on 19 May, four on 20 May, two on 21 May, three on 22 May, one on 24 May, three on 25 May, one on 26 May, two on 27 May, and one on 28 May. Winnowing courtship flights were heard briefly on several occasions, but not so often as in May 1975. Two males (UAM 3446 and 3447) were collected in the old runway area on 17 May.

Phalaropus fulicarius. Red Phalarope. A lone Red Phalarope was seen in flight about Alcan Harbor on 21 May, the only record.

Stercorarius parasiticus. Parasitic Jaeger. Parasitic Jaegers were seen twice. Three light phase adults were observed in flight together headed North over the island on 13 May and two light phase and one dark phase adults were observed together in flight North over the island on 28 May.

Stercorarius longicaudus. Long-tailed Jaeger. A single adult Long-tailed Jaeger was observed at rest on one of the old runways, apparently forced down by fog, on 19 May. It is one of few records of this species onshore in the Aleutians.

*Larus hyperboreus. Glaucous Gull. Maximum count of Glaucous Gulls was 15+ along South Beach on 30 April. Up to five subadults were present through 10 May, and one injured bird was seen at South Beach through 31 May.

*Larus glaucescens. Glaucous-winged Gull. As in spring 1975, this species was common and ubiquitous.

*Larus argentatus. Herring Gull. Present in very small numbers, Herring Gulls were recorded through mid-May. One adult was seen at South Beach on 30 April, and up to three subadults were seen at irregular intervals through 22 May.

*Larus canus kamtschatschensis. Mew Gull. At least five Mew Gulls were observed between 7 and 23 May, usually on South Beach with other gulls in the vicinity of the sewer outfall below Lower Lake. A second-year individual was seen on South Beach at irregular intervals, first on 7 May, and a third-year bird was seen on Upper Lake on 12 May. The second-year bird appeared to be large-billed and thus an "Asiatic Common" Gull, but it was not until 16 May, when a large-billed adult female (UAM 3444) was observed and collected on South Beach, that the occurrence of this subspecies in Alaska was confirmed. Subsequently, two adults were seen together at the sewer outfall on 18 May, and one adult was present there daily, 19-23 May. All of the adults were apparently of this form.

*Larus ridibundus. Black-headed Gull. A breeding-plumaged adult Black-headed Gull arrived on South Beach, at the sewer outfall, on 13 May, and the species was recorded there daily 15-31 May. Probably the same bird that arrived the 13th was seen there 15-16 May, but on 17 May eight adults (maximum count) were present together. Only three adults were seen there on 18 May, but five were there from 19 through 22 May. On 23 May four adults were seen, on 24 May six birds were seen (five adults at the outfall and one 2 km east along the beach), on 25 May two adults were seen, and on 26 May one breeding-plumaged and one winter-plumaged adult were present. Two adults were present from 27 through 31 May.

Rissa tridactyla. Black-legged Kittiwake. Present offshore during this period, Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen onshore apparently only as a result of passing storms. A single breeding-plumaged adult was seen at South Beach on 13 and 15 May, a winter-plumaged adult was seen on 18 May, and single birds were noted on 19, 30, and 31 May as well.

Rissa brevirostris. Red-legged Kittiwake. A weak breeding-plumaged Red-legged Kittiwake was caught in the hand at North Beach Ledge on 3 May by John L. Trapp and others. It was the only record.

Sterna hirundo longipennis. Common Tern. A small number of "Nordmann's" Terns, all breeding-plumaged adults, was present at Shemya in late May. The first arrival was one bird at Alcan Harbor on 19 May. On 22 May a pair was seen at close range at Lower Lake, one was seen at "Antone" Lake, and three were seen together at Laundry Lake. One bird was seen at Laundry Lake on 23 May, one was seen at Lower Lake and one along South Beach on 24 May, and three birds were seen together at Lower Lake on 25 and 26 May. Six (above) is a new high count for Alaska.

Sterna paradisaea. Arctic Tern. Five breeding-plumaged Arctic Terns were observed at Alcan Harbor on 20 May and a pair was seen there on 29 May, the only records of the species.

*Sterna aleutica. Aleutian Tern. The first Aleutian Tern, a single, arrived on 16 May, and the species was seen irregularly afterwards: one at Laundry Lake on 22 May, nine on 24 May (a pair over the heath near Laundry Lake, a pair along South Beach, and a flock of five birds over Warehouse Bowl), eight on 26 May (a pair at Upper Lake and a flock of six over Warehouse Bowl), ten on 27 May (a pair at Lower Lake, a flock of five over Warehouse Bowl, and a flock of three over Upper Lake), a pair and a flock of four over Warehouse Bowl-South Beach on 28 May, and a pair along South Beach on 31 May.

Cepphus columba. Pigeon Guillemot. Two birds seen about Hammerhead Island on 1 May were the only record.

*Synthliboramphus antiquus. Ancient Murrelet. A few Ancient Murrelets were observed on offshore areas: one on 4 May, one on 23 May, and five together on 25 May.

Fratercula corniculata. Horned Puffin. The only Horned Puffins seen were five birds together on one of the bays along North Beach on 30 May.

*Lunda cirrhata. Tufted Puffin. Tufted Puffins were probably present about Hammerhead Island throughout the period. They were observed there first on 1 May, at least six birds, and a maximum of about 50 birds was counted there on 9 May.

Nyctea scandiaca. Snowy Owl. Probably the same lone Snowy Owl was observed in the old runway area on 10, 20, and 23 May.

*Asio flammeus. Short-eared Owl. Perhaps the same single Short-eared Owl was seen in the old runway area on 25 and 28 May, the only records.

*Alauda arvensis. Skylark. A single singing Skylark was observed at close range in the old runway area 8-9 May. It was regularly pestered by recently territorial longspurs. It was the only record in spring 1976.

*Corvus corax. Common Raven. Ravens were ubiquitous. Maximum count was 35 birds on 25 May.

*Troglodytes troglodytes. Winter Wren. A single singing Winter Wren was recorded at "Antone" Lake on 2, 15, and 17 May. One other singing male was recorded east of North Beach Ledge on 27 May. There were no other records.

Turdus obscurus. Eye-browed Thrush. At least four, and probably five, Eye-browed Thrushes were recorded between 20 and 31 May, all close to cover. The first was seen briefly about timbers and debris at Alcan Harbor on 20 May. On 22 May an adult male (UAM 3452) was collected about timbers and old warehouse foundations above South Beach. On 24 and 26 May one male was seen in the Warehouse Bowl area, and on 27 May another was seen on the bluff above North Beach Ledge. A female was closely observed about a collapsed building above East End on 31 May.

Turdus naumanni eunomus. Dusky Thrush. A single very wild Dusky Thrush was observed briefly in the Upper Lake-Yellowlegs Marsh area during a snowstorm on 18 May and, finally, collected, an adult male (UAM 3449). A second individual was observed in the Warehouse Bowl vicinity several times on 24 May. This is the first specimen of the species taken in Alaska, but there are three previous sight records, all of this distinctive subspecies.

*Motacilla alba lugens. White Wagtail. A single black-backed male White Wagtail, the first arrival, was seen in the old runway area on 12 May. Two black-backed males, one at Lower Lake outfall and one at Upper Lake, were seen 14-15 May, and the Lower Lake outfall male was still present on 16 May. A female, which could not be assigned to subspecies, was seen at Lower Lake outfall on 17 and 23-26 May, and one was observed at North Beach Ledge on 25 May.

Motacilla cinerea robusta. Gray Wagtail. A lone adult male (UAM 3456) was observed and collected at the old dump on North Beach on 29 May. It is the third Alaska record of the species, all of which have been examples of this short-tailed form.

*Motacilla flava. Yellow Wagtail. Yellow Wagtails occurred at Shemya in impressive numbers in spring 1976. The first two birds arrived at Yellowlegs Marsh on 12 May, and the species was recorded at localities all over the island subsequently. Daily counts were: one on 13 May, six on 14 May, four on 15 May, three on 16 May, at least seven (including a flock of six) on 18 May, four on 19 May, nine on 20 May, at least nine (including a flock of at least six) on 21 May, three on 22 May, six on 23 May, five on 24-25 May, one on 26 May, at least five on 27 May, one on 28 May, four on 29 May, four on 30 May, and three on 31 May.

Anthus spinoletta. Water Pipit. Water Pipits arrived on 12 May, when a singing male was found at the old North Beach dump. Small numbers were subsequently recorded in the old runway area and elsewhere on the heath: six birds on 15 May, two on 16 May, one on 17 May, at least five on 19 May, two on 20 May, three on 22 May, one on 23 May, a flock of six birds on 24 May, two on 25 May, one on 26 May, a singing male on 27 May, two on 29 May, one on 30 May, and two singing males on 31 May.

Anthus cervinus. Red-throated Pipit. Three male Red-throated Pipits arrived in the old runway area on 17 May and one (UAM 3445) was collected. In the same area, at least two were seen on 18 May, one on 19, 20, and 21 May, three on 22 May, two on 23 May, and one on 27 May.

*Fringilla montifringilla. Brambling. The first Brambling arrived on 10 May, a lone adult male (UAM 3439) that was collected near Middle Lake. Subsequently, single adult males were seen on 16 May in the old runway area and on 20 May above Alcan Harbor. On 22 May, a flight unparalleled in Alaska arrived (or began). On that date a flock of four was observed at Lower Lake outfall, a group of three males was seen at Laundry Lake, and a lone male was seen near the Weather Station. On 23 May the flock of four at Lower Lake outfall and a female and an immature male together near Kay Lake were recorded. On 24 May three birds were seen at Yellowlegs Marsh, three at Warehouse Bowl, and one female about the warehouses above Skoot Cove. Along North Beach Ledge one female was found on 26 May and two females were seen together on 27 May. On 28 May flocks of six and five were recorded in the old runway area. Maximum count was made on 29 May, when a total of 17 Bramblings was counted along North Beach between the Ledge and the old dump: groups of five, four, two, four, and another two. On 30 May a flock of six was observed at the old North Beach dump.

*Leucosticte tephrocotis. Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. As in 1975, rosy finches were seen primarily in the vicinity of the aircraft hangars or other buildings. Maximum group size was a flock of five on 5 May.

Carduelis flammea. Common Redpoll. Single Common Redpolls were seen in the old runway area on 6, 12, and 28 May, the only records.

*Melospiza melodia. Song Sparrow. As in 1975, Song Sparrows were heard or seen daily in small numbers along the perimeter of the island. Transects were conducted in 1976 to determine the numbers of territorial birds present. On 2 May 13 Song Sparrows were counted along South Beach from Lower Lake outfall to West End (about 1 km); on 7 May seven birds were counted along South Beach from Lower Lake outfall to the east end of the new E-W runway (about 4 km); and on 13 May seven singing males were counted along North Beach from southeast corner of Alcan Harbor to "North Point" (about 2 km).

*Calcarius lapponicus. Lapland Longspur. Three male longspurs in flight West across the old runway area on 2 May were the first ones seen, but probably not first arrivals. Two flocks, of 25+ and 20 birds, were seen Westbound on 3 May, and the first singing male was recorded near Kay Lake on 4 May. On 5 May a flock of

20+ birds was seen on passage West, and on 6 May eight to twelve singing males were on territory in the old runway area. The first female longspur was a single observed near Upper Lake on 8 May, and by 10 May both sexes were numerous. Flocks of migrant longspurs, all headed West, were seen at irregular intervals throughout the month, the latest noted a flock of nine birds observed flying in off the ocean (headed West) at East End on 31 May.

*Plectrophenax nivalis. Snow Bunting. Snow Buntings were recorded daily in small numbers, as in 1975, mostly paired birds or singing males.

Emberiza rustica latifascia. Rustic Bunting. A lone adult male (UAM 3450) collected above the shore of Alcan Harbor on 20 May was the first arrival. By its bright chestnut back and rump it is clearly an example of this form. During the ensuing week, it was not clear exactly how many individuals were present, but on 23 May three birds were observed (a male and a female at Lower Lake outfall marsh and a female at Warehouse Bowl); on 24 May the male was present at Lower Lake outfall marsh and another male was observed at warehouses above Skoot Cove; on 25 May the male was still at Lower Lake outfall marsh, another male was seen at Alcan Harbor, and a female was recorded at North Beach Ledge; on 26 May five Rustic Buntings were observed (a male on Lower Lake outfall marsh and a female and three separate males [one in song] along North Beach); on 27 May two separate males and a female were observed along North Beach and the adult female (UAM 3455) was collected. On 29 May four birds were observed (two separate singing males and a silent male along North Beach and another silent male at warehouses above Skoot Cove). On 30 May three separate silent males, one singing male, and a female were recorded along North Beach between the Ledge and Alcan Harbor, and on 31 May one female was observed in the old runway area, near Middle Lake.

BIRDS OBSERVED AT SHEMYA ISLAND, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS, 9-23 MAY 1975,

by Daniel D. Gibson and Raymond S. Hadley
University of Alaska Museum

Under cooperative agreement between the University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the Museum sent Gibson and Hadley to Shemya Island on 9 May 1975. We were to go aboard the USFWS vessel Aleutian Tern as soon as it could reach Shemya and proceed to Massacre Bay, Attu Island, where we were to conduct a two-week survey of the 1975 spring migration, with emphasis on finding whether or not any Aleutian Canada Geese returned to the 1974 holding area, where pair bonds were formed among the birds subsequently released on Agattu Island. Because of weather, however, the M/V Aleutian Tern was unable to get to Shemya until 20 May, much too late for us to undertake the Attu project. Thus we produced a two-week migration survey at Shemya Island instead. We saw no Aleutian Canada Geese at Shemya.

University of Alaska Museum
Fairbanks
September 1975

INTRODUCTION

Weather at Shemya during the period 9-23 May 1975 was typical spring weather in the Aleutian Islands: cold, windy, rain and snow, with one low pressure system after another moving in on us from the West. Temperatures ranged from an estimated 30°F to about 60°F, but usually they were between 35°F and 45°F. We saw very little calm weather, most toward the end of our stay on the island, when we were socked in by fog.

Over the first few days on the island, we developed a walking circuit that we subsequently covered twice a day. We visited the north shore several times, the east end only once, and we walked the entire south shore only once. Most of our time was spent walking the bogs and pond and lake edges in the old runway area, at the west end of the island. Because we were covering this area with regularity, we were able to chart precisely the arrival of a number of spring migrant species (e.g., shorebirds) and to see the development of arrival of some others (e.g., Lapland Longspur).

We recorded 56 species of birds on Shemya during these two weeks, many of which are of particular interest to Alaskan ornithogeography because they are of palearctic origin and are scarce birds on the Alaskan side of the Bering Sea. Under Federal permit #7 SC 6 and State of Alaska permit #75-193 Amended, Gibson collected five specimens, all now on deposit at the University of Alaska Museum (UA): 1 Long-toed Stint (Calidris subminuta), 1 Ruff (Philomachus pugnax), 1 Greenshank (Tringa nebularia), 1 Common Sandpiper (Tringa hypoleucos), and 1 Common Snipe (Capella gallinago gallinago).

ANNOTATED LIST OF SPECIES

Gavia immer. Common Loon. Single breeding-plumaged adult Common Loons were observed on Upper Lake on 13 and 20 May and on Lower Lake on 21 May.

Phalacrocorax pelagicus. Pelagic Cormorant. Less than six Pelagic Cormorants were identified among numerous Red-faced Cormorants along the north shore on 10 May, and another individual was seen with diving ducks on Upper Lake on this date. Four birds were identified on 18 May.

Phalacrocorax urile. Red-faced Cormorant. This species was common and ubiquitous along the coast. Birds collecting and carrying off nesting materials from steep grassy slopes along the north side of the island on 10 May were apparently nesting on offshore rocks nearby. Others were nesting on Hammerhead Island and some smaller rocks in Shemya Pass.

Philacte canagica. Emperor Goose. Apparently the last remnant of the winter population, six Emperor Geese were seen along South Beach on 9 May and four were seen in the same place on 10 May.

Anas platyrhynchos. Mallard. Mallards were recorded daily, maximum count 30+ on 11 May.

Anas acuta. Pintail. Pintails were recorded daily, maximum 60+ on 11 May.

Anas crecca nimia. Green-winged Teal. Green-winged Teal were common and widespread on the island. The species was seen daily, and maximum flock size was 11 on 13 May.

Anas querquedula. Garganey. We repeatedly observed a pair of Garganeys on ponds in the old runway area, 20-22 May. This is the fifth Aleutian and Alaska record of the species.

Anas clypeata. Northern Shoveler. Shovelers were seen almost daily, in small numbers. Maximum counts were 6-8 on 11 and 16 May and 7-8 on 13 May.

Anas penelope. European Wigeon. Wigeon were seen almost daily, on freshwater ponds and lakes and on the ocean, where they were noted feeding as far as .25 mile from shore on kelp beds. Maximum count was 28+ on 10 May, but other high counts included 20+ on 11 May, 19 in one flock on 12 May, and 25+ on 13 May.

Aythya ferina. Common Pochard. Pochards were present daily on Upper Lake, and we also observed the species on Laundry and Kay lakes. Maximum count was nine, four males and five females, on Kay and Upper lakes on 17 May. All nine were seen together on Upper Lake on 18 May. To our knowledge, this is the highest count of pochards known in Alaska.

Aythya marila. Greater Scaup. A small flock of up to 15 Greater Scaup was observed daily on Upper Lake.

Aythya fuligula. Tufted Duck. Tufted Ducks were present daily on Upper Lake, and we also saw them on Laundry and "K-House" lakes. Maximum count was 43, 26 adult males and 17 females, on Upper Lake on 17 May, another new high count for Alaska. Minimum was seven there on 9 May. Other daily counts were 27+ on 10 May, 20 on 11 May, 24 on 12 May, 26 on 13 May, 20+ on 15 May, 34 on 16 May, 42 on 18 May, 20+ on 20 May, 23 on 21 May, and 20+ on 22 May.

Bucephala clangula. Common Goldeneye. A small flock of up to 12 Common Goldeneyes was present daily on Upper Lake, and one subadult male was regularly observed with Smews on Lower Lake. Individuals were also seen occasionally on Middle Lake.

Bucephala albeola. Bufflehead. One subadult male was observed regularly on Upper Lake, once on Kay Lake. Maximum count was two pairs on Upper Lake on 10 May.

Clangula hyemalis. Oldsquaw. We saw Oldsquaws only twice: one bird off South Beach on 14 May and three together off South Beach on 18 May.

Histrionicus histrionicus. Harlequin Duck. Harlequins were common and ubiquitous along the rocky coastline. No counts were made, but several hundred birds were present.

Somateria mollissima. Common Eider. These eiders were common along the coast of the island. The species was less numerous than Harlequin Duck. Of interest were two pairs seen on Kay Lake on 21 May and three pairs (perhaps including the previous two) on Lower Lake the same day.

Melanitta deglandi. White-winged Scoter. We saw scoters only three times: three birds off South Beach on 10 May, five off South Beach on 18 May, and two off West End on 21 May.

Mergus albellus. Smew. We observed Smews regularly on Lower Lake, 10-19 May, and we also recorded them on at least one occasion each on Upper, Middle, and Laundry lakes. Maximum count was six, an adult male on Laundry Lake and five female-plumaged birds on Lower Lake, on 15 May, and all six together on Lower Lake on 16 May. This is a new maximum count for the state.

Mergus merganser. Common Merganser. We saw only a few Common Mergansers, 11-18 May, on Laundry, Middle, and Lower lakes: one female-plumaged bird on Laundry Lake on 11 May, two female-plumaged birds on Middle Lake on 12 May, three female-plumaged birds on Lower Lake on 15 May, five --one adult male, one subadult male, and three females-- on Lower Lake on 17 May, and five --two adult males and three female-plumaged birds-- on Lower Lake on 18 May.

Mergus serrator. Red-breasted Merganser. We only recorded Red-breasted Mergansers twice: an adult male and two females on Upper Lake on 10 May and one female there on 13 May.

Pluvialis dominica. American Golden Plover. Golden Plovers occurred in small numbers, 12-22 May. We saw three on 12 May, one on 13 May, 12 on 15 May, 16 on 16 May, one on 20 May, and one on 22 May. Maximum flock size was 12 birds.

Arenaria interpres. Ruddy Turnstone. We saw turnstones in small numbers, 14-21 May: one on 14 May, two on 16 May, one on 17 May, nine on 19 May, and five on 21 May. Maximum flock size was five birds.

Calidris subminuta. Long-toed Stint. Long-toed Stints arrived on 13 May, when we saw a total of 10 birds --in groups of 4,2,2,2-- on bogs in the old runway area and collected an adult male (UA 3356). On subsequent days we observed eight --3,2,3-- on 15 May, three on 16 May, three on 17 May, and two on 18 May. All of these birds were carefully identified, on the ground, by plumage, behavior, and voice criteria. No more than an additional half dozen 'peep' were seen during this period. These were seen in flight or on the ground too briefly for positive identification, but they were probably also of this species.

Calidris ptilocnemis. Rock Sandpiper. We observed one pair in the old runway area on 10 and 12 May, our only records.

Calidris alpina. Dunlin. We recorded very few Dunlin on passage: one on 13 May, two on 14 May, three on 15 May, three on 16 May, and one on 17 May.

Philomachus pugnax. Ruff. We observed a white-ruffed male with a flock of Wood Sandpipers on bogs in the old runway area on 14 May and collected it (UA 3357). It is the first Aleutian specimen of the species.

Tringa nebularia. Greenshank. We closely observed a single high-plumaged Greenshank on pools in the old runway area on 15 May and collected it, an adult female (UA 3358). It is the fourth Alaska record and the second North American specimen of the species.

Tringa melanoleuca. Greater Yellowlegs. We observed and carefully identified one loud individual on the marsh between Upper and Middle lakes on 12 May. We attempted but failed to collect the specimen. There is only one previous Aleutian record of the species.

Tringa glareola. Wood Sandpiper. Wood Sandpipers arrived on 13 May, when we observed about 40 birds, including one impressive flock of 31 tired, just-arrived migrants on a pool in the old runway area. Subsequently we saw 25+ on 14 May, 25-30 singing birds in flight on 15 and 16 May, 12-15 birds on 17 May, up to 15 on 18 May, 4-5 on 20 May, and one bird on 21 May.

Tringa incana. Wandering Tattler. Tattlers were recorded along the rocky ocean beaches, 16-19 May. We saw at least three on 16 May, 3-4 on 17 May, two on 18 May, and six on 19 May. All were scrutinized very closely and all were clearly of this species.

Tringa hypoleucos. Common Sandpiper. At least one pair of Common Sandpipers was observed among boulders and reefs along South Beach, 16-19 May. We collected an adult male (UA 3359) on 19 May, the fourth North American specimen of the species.

Limosa lapponica. Bar-tailed Godwit. We saw Bar-tailed Godwits only twice, a pair in the old runway area on 10 May and a pair on South Beach on 13 May.

Numenius tahitiensis. Bristle-thighed Curlew. We had excellent close studies of a rather tame pair of Bristle-thighed Curlews that fed on West End beach, 17-18 May. The first definite Aleutian record of the species was made only last year.

Capella gallinago gallinago. Common Snipe. Asiatic Common Snipe were observed in groups of up to seven birds on bogs throughout the areas we visited regularly. Winnowing courtship flights were heard and observed 12-18 May, and it was noted that the flight noise produced by these birds is several octaves lower-pitched than that of C. g. delicata. Observations were of one bird on 10 May, six on 12 May, 12+ on 13 May, 6-8 on 14 May, 18-20 on 15 May, four on 16 May, 6-7 on 17 May, 8-12 on 18 May, two on 20 May, and one bird on 21 May, this last an adult female that was collected (UA 3360).

Larus hyperboreus. Glaucous Gull. At least one second-year bird was seen along North Beach on 10 May.

Larus glaucescens. Glaucous-winged Gull. Common and ubiquitous.

Larus argentatus. Herring Gull. An adult and a third-year bird were seen along North Beach on 10 May, and an adult was noted along South Beach on 17 May.

Larus canus. Mew Gull. A second-year Mew Gull was closely observed on South Beach, at the Lower Lake outfall with Glaucous-winged and Black-headed gulls, 14-16 May. It is the first recent record of this species west of Adak Island.

Larus ridibundus. Black-headed Gull. Black-headed Gulls were seen daily, 10-18 May, at the Lower Lake outfall, where a pipe ruptured in the February earthquake was dumping raw sewage into the ocean. We recorded one full-plumaged adult 10-12 May, two adults 13-14 May, two adults and an immature on 15 May, four adults and the immature on 16 May, three adults and the immature on 17 May, and three adults on 18 May.

Sterna aleutica. Aleutian Tern. The only terns recorded were four Aleutians observed and readily identified by voice along South Beach on 19 May.

Synthliboramphus antiquus. Ancient Murrelet. We saw two birds on Shemya Pass on 17 May and one bird there on 18 and 20 May.

Lunda cirrhata. Tufted Puffin. We noted two birds on Shemya Pass on 17 May. Six to eight puffins seen there on 20 May were apparently nesting on Hammerhead Island.

Asio flammeus. Short-eared Owl. We observed one Short-eared Owl in flight over the heath above West End on 17 May. It was being harassed by longspurs.

Alauda arvensis. Skylark. We recorded two Skylarks during this period, one bird observed in the old runway area on 16 May and a singing male observed at length in the same area on 22 May. This species was recorded in spring 1973 and 1974 in the western Aleutians, and it may prove to be a regular migrant, perhaps a breeder.

Corvus corax. Common Raven. Ravens were ubiquitous. We saw at least 10 at the East End refuse dump on 11 May.

Troglodytes troglodytes. Winter Wren. One singing male wren seen on a slope above North Beach on 10 May was our only record.

Motacilla alba lugens. White Wagtail. We saw three White Wagtails at the Lower Lake outfall on 11 May, and a single very wild male was observed in the same area on 13, 14, and 16 May. We were unable to collect this black-backed male, the first recent identification of lugens in the Aleutians. Other White Wagtails seen in the Aleutians in recent years, but not well enough to ascertain subspecies, may also have been of this form.

Motacilla flava simillima. Yellow Wagtail. Single Yellow Wagtails were observed on 13, 16, 17, and 18 May, and five birds were seen on 20 May. These birds were recorded in the old runway area, along South Beach, or at West End. All were bright yellow ventrally including throat, brilliant green dorsally contrasting boldly with gray cap and white supercilium, and they had no hint of a dark pectoral band; thus we referred them to this subspecies rather than to tschutschensis, the Alaska breeding form.

Fringilla montifringilla. Brambling. We had close studies of separate single male Bramblings at West End on 20 May and at Upper Lake on 21 May. Bramblings are rare but probably regular on passage in the western Aleutians.

Leucosticte tephrocotis. Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. Rosy finches were seen almost daily in the vicinity of the aircraft hangars or other buildings. The species was not common.

Acanthis hornemanni. Hoary Redpoll. The only redpoll we saw was what appeared to be an old female "Hoary-type": immaculate dirty white ventrally, pale washed-out gray dorsally, with prominent immaculate rump patch. We watched it on 9, 10, 11, and 14 May in the old runway area.

Melospiza melodia. Song Sparrow. We heard or saw Song Sparrows daily along the perimeter of the island. Maximum count was 14 birds on 11 May.

Calcarius lapponicus. Lapland Longspur. Two singing males in the old runway area were the only longspurs observed 10-12 May. On 13 May six singing males and small flocks of 4-6 males were seen. On 14 May 10-12 males were seen, and on 15 May several singing males and the first arriving females were recorded. There was a big movement, 16-17 May, when many flocks of 15-30 birds of both sexes were seen, all moving West across the island. Thereafter the species was common and territorial.

Plectrophenax nivalis. Snow Bunting. We recorded Snow Buntings daily in small numbers, mostly paired birds or singing males.

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