

Appendix 3

Species Cards



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Black Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Range: Breeds from Alaska east across Canada to Newfoundland. Winters along Pacific Coast from Alaska south to Mexico and along Atlantic Coast from Newfoundland south to Carolinas

Status and Distribution in Alaska: Common in Southwestern Alaska, Western Alaska (except in winter) and Southcoastal Alaska (except in summer). Breeds in Southwestern, Western and Northwestern Alaska. Uncommon in Southeastern Alaska. Not known to occur in Northern Alaska

Population Trend: Suspected decreasing. Possible decline in the Atlantic Flyway and in breeding areas in Alaska although more precise surveys are needed to determine status

Concerns: Contaminants in the food chain, potential for overharvest, habitat loss from resource development and other activities

Nesting Habitat: Breed near shallow tundra lakes in Alaska, or tundra and boreal forest lakes in eastern Canada, nest is a hollow of grass and down, clutch of 6-8 eggs, 1 brood/year

Feeds on: Primarily molluscs (mussels, limpets and clams) also crustaceans (barnacles) and vegetation

Predators: Bald eagles (winter), mink and foxes (nesting)



Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*

Range: Breeds from Alaska south to Oregon and Wyoming and from eastern Canadian Arctic south to Gulf of St. Lawrence. Winters along the Pacific Coast from Alaska to northern California, and along Atlantic Coast from Gulf of St. Lawrence south to Georgia

Status and Distribution in Alaska: Common in Southeastern, Southcoastal, and Southwestern Alaska. Breeds in all regions of Alaska except Northern. Uncommon in Central and Western Alaska. Rare sightings in the summer in Northern Alaska

Population Trend: E. North American population listed as Species of Concern in Canada, Threatened in Maine, Designated Species of Special Concern in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming

Concerns: Contaminants in molting areas, loss of breeding habitat, vulnerability to oil spills and low recovery rate, potential for local overharvest

Nesting Habitat: Nests along fast-flowing streams on the ground, on small cliff ledges, in tree cavities, and on stumps. Nests are of conifer needles, mosses, leaf litter or small stones and lined with down, clutch of 6-8 eggs

Feeds on: Aquatic invertebrates such as amphipods, molluscs, small crabs and some fish and fish eggs

Predators: Mink, bald eagles, coyote

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Tim Bowman, USFWS

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Range: Breeds in Alaska and Canadian Arctic. Winters along Pacific Coast from Alaska south to n. California, and on Atlantic Coast from Newfoundland south to Carolinas; also on Great Lakes.

Status and Distribution in Alaska: Common in Southeastern, Southcoastal, Southwestern, and Central Alaska except in summer. Common in Western Alaska all seasons. Common in Northern Alaska except winter. Breeds mostly in tundra areas, less frequently in Interior forested areas.

Population Trend: Long-term decline in western Alaska, stable on the Arctic Coastal Plain. Audubon Watchlist

Concerns: Predation in nesting areas, lead shot poisoning, heavy metal contamination

Nesting Habitat: Breeds on islands, offshore along the coast or inland in tundra ponds and lakes, clutch of 5-9, 1 brood/year

Feeds on: Aquatic invertebrates such as mussels, clams, in freshwater: larvae of crane flies, caddisflies and other insects

Predators: Foxes, weasels, gulls, ravens, jaegers



Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*

Range: Breeds from Alaska, Manitoba, and Newfoundland south to n. California, Arizona, South Dakota, Great Lakes region, and n. New Jersey. Winters along coasts and on interior lakes and rivers north to n. California, Great Lakes region, and s. New England

Status and Distribution in Alaska: Common in Southeastern, Southcoastal and Southwestern Alaska. Rare in Central Alaska. Breeds in all regions of Alaska except the Western and Northern regions.

Population Trend: Probably increasing

Concerns: Vulnerability to oil spills in coastal wintering areas

Nesting Habitat: Nests in cavities in trees near rivers, lakes or estuaries, or in cavities on ground in tundra areas; clutch of 7-12 eggs.

Feeds on: Primarily fish, a few aquatic invertebrates such as snails, insects and leeches

Predators: Foxes, weasels and gulls

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Steller's Eider *Polysticta stelleri*

Range: The North American population is restricted to the Pacific, where it breeds in eastern Siberia and in northern Alaska and winters in Pacific waters off the Alaska Peninsula.

Status and Distribution in Alaska: During breeding season, they are common in coastal areas of northern Alaska, particularly Barrow area, and are now rare in western Alaska where they once bred commonly. In winter, common in southwestern Alaska and Aleutians, with few in Kodiak and lower Cook Inlet.

Population Trend: Threatened Species as of 1997 due to declines in western Alaska and possibly northern Alaska

Concerns: Potential for overharvest, increased predation in nesting areas, decline in availability of preferred foods, lead poisoning on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta (now banned, but remains in soil)

Nesting Habitat: Nests on nearshore coastal wetlands adjacent to shallow ponds or within drained lake basins, nest is lined with grasses, sedges and lichens. Down is added once eggs are laid, clutch size of 6-8 eggs, 1 brood/year

Feeds on: Primarily mussels in winter, but also polychaete worms, gastropods and brachiopods, insect larvae in freshwater ponds during breeding.

Predators: Gulls, jaegers and foxes, Snowy owls and Peregrine falcons



Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Range: Breeds along coast from Alaska and arctic Canada, in the east to Maine. Winters from Alaska south along coast, rarely as far as British Columbia; in east, from Labrador south to Long Island.

Status and Distribution in Alaska: During breeding season, they are common in coastal areas of western and northern Alaska, and Aleutians. In winter, common in southwestern Alaska and Aleutians, less common in Kodiak archipelago and lower Cook inlet, and rare to the east or south of there.

Population Trend: Populations have exhibited a sharp decline in western Alaska

Concerns: Particularly vulnerable to oil spills because they congregate in large, dense flocks during winter, molt and migration; potential competition for food on wintering grounds, disturbance by human activities, potential for overharvest

Nesting Habitat: Builds nest on the ground, sometimes in small colonies.

Feeds on: Molluscs and crustaceans

Predators: Foxes, gulls, weasels

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Photo by Dan Rosenberg

Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata*

Range: Breeds in boreal forest areas of Alaska and Canada, Arctic to Labrador. Winters along Pacific Coast from Alaska to Mexico, and along Atlantic Coast from Newfoundland to Florida; also along Gulf Coast.

Status and Distribution in Alaska: Breeds in boreal forested areas of central, western, and southcentral Alaska. In winter, common in most coastal areas from Alaska Peninsula through southeast Alaska.

Population Trend: Population estimates are poor, although the Alaska population is thought to be declining.

Concerns: Not much is known about this species of Scoter, causes of the apparent decline are unknown.

Nesting Habitat: Not well known, but probably like other scoters, i.e. freshwater ponds, lakes, rivers with shrubby cover or woodland nearby. Builds nests with weeds and sparsely lines with down, clutch size is 5-7, 1 brood/year

Feeds on: Mussels in winter, herring roe in early spring and insect larvae in freshwater ponds during breeding.

Predators: Bald eagles (winter), mink & foxes



Barrow's Goldeneye *Bucephala islandica*

Range: Breeds from Alaska south through British Columbia to Oregon and nw. Wyoming, and in n. Quebec and Labrador. Winters along Pacific Coast from Alaska south to n. California, and in eastern North America, winters from Gulf of St. Lawrence to Long Island.

Status and Distribution in Alaska: During breeding season, they are common in coastal areas of southcentral and southeast Alaska. In winter, common from Kodiak archipelago eastward through southeast Alaska.

Population Trend: Western population is believed to be stable.

Concerns: Impacts of logging on nests sites, particularly in British Columbia where 60-90% of the world's population breeds, wintering population vulnerable to oil spills

Nesting Habitat: Nests in tree cavities or, if not available, may nest in holes in rocks and cliffs, nests lined with down, clutch size 6-15, 1 brood/year

Feeds on: Molluscs, crustaceans, insect larvae and seeds