

Canadian Wildlife Service
Arctic Ecology Map Series
Critical Wildlife areas

Descriptive report

Dubawnt River

DUBAWNT RIVER
(Sheet #2112)

This map sheet includes about 82,000 square miles of the southwestern Keewatin and southeastern Mackenzie Districts. About three quarters of the region is treeless or lightly treed tundra of variable topography while the remainder is typical northern coniferous forest.

The region includes a large number of lakes of which the most important are Dubawnt, Nueltin, Ennadai, Yathkyed, Snowbird and Kasba Lakes. There are, however only two large rivers, the Kazan River which drains into Baker Lake and the Dubawnt River which drains the western region northward toward the Thelon River.

Present settlements are found at the Department of Transport station at Ennadai and the Eskimo Camps at Ferguson Lake. Chipewyan Indians from Brochet Manitoba and Black Lake Saskatchewan still travel into the southwestern area for trapping and caribou hunting. Eskimos from Baker Lake and Eskimo Point hunt and trap in the northern and eastern regions of the sheet. Sport fishing camps have also been established at one or two locations, primarily at Nueltin Lake.

A considerable amount of mineral exploration has been carried out in the map area in recent years.

The most important wildlife species on the sheet

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are Barren-Ground Caribou, Arctic Fox and Marten. Barren Ground Grizzly Bears are found throughout the map sheet. Fish species include Lake Trout, Grayling and Arctic Char, the later being limited mainly to the Kazan and Maguse River systems. Extremely important Barren-Ground Caribou habitat includes both winter and summer range of the Kaminuriak and Beverly Lake Herds.

The following is the descriptive text for units mapped on this sheet.

UNIT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
1	This unit is part of the Maguse River and Lake system which extends to adjacent map sheets. It is an important area for Arctic Char. A commercial fishing quota of 20,000 pounds of char has been set for this system. (Hunter)
2	These three units are critical summer nesting areas for Gyrfalcons and Peregrine Falcons. (Kuyt)
3	This unit encompasses the westernmost part of the Kaminuriak Caribou calving grounds which is duplicated on the Maguse River sheet. The following comments apply to the entire calving area which is critical. Calving varies within the delineated area. A herd of approximately 70,000 animals are dependent on this area and approximately 20,000 cows use it at any one time. This herd sustains a kill of approximately 3,000 caribou per year. Hunting occurs from Eskimo Point to Rankin Inlet, Brochet Manitoba and Black Lake, Saskatchewan.

UNIT NUMBER

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3
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Calving and post calving staging areas are critical. The construction and use of roads with respect to the migration route is critical since the herd must attain the calving ground within a critical time period in the spring. Interference with herd movements in any manner could seriously affect the calving success of this herd if it is deflected from the key calving areas. (Macpherson, Loughrey)

4

Whitefish and Lake Trout are the most important species in the Kaminuriak and Kaminak Lake systems. Both of these are important systems. Harvests of 330,000 pounds of Whitefish have been taken from these systems. This unit extends to the Maguse River sheet to the east. (Hunter)

5

An important migration route for Barren-Ground Caribou. The east side of Yathkyed Lake is important for caribou migrating south during August. These animals calve in the Baker Lake region. (Loughrey)

6

This unit contains a small breeding population of medium size Canada Geese.
Note: This area has been delineated as an important breeding area since it is one of the few areas where Canada Geese were seen in vast areas of barren country. Such populations stood out even though relatively small numbers of breeding birds were observed. (Sterling)

7

The Maguse River system is an important Arctic Char area. Annual recommended harvest quota is 20,000 pounds. (Hunter) This unit extends onto the Maguse River sheet.

8

A critical caribou migration route. Herds crossing between South Henik Lake and North Henik Lake. The animals funnel into this channel to cross between the lakes. The movement occurs in the spring from mid-May to mid-June. (Loughrey)

UNIT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
9	Several Canada Goose broods have been observed on the Kognak River. The extent of the breeding population is unknown. (Sterling)
10	This unit is part of the spring migration route of the Kaminuriak Caribou herd. A critical area which extends onto the Maguse River sheet. (Loughrey)
11	Caribou migration, a spring migration May 20th to June 10th. (Loughrey)
12	This is a wintering area for several hundred caribou. The unit is considered critical. (Loughrey)
13	The entire southern region of the map sheet (generally south of treeline), constitutes a wintering area for Barren-Ground Caribou (Beverly Herd). The location of wintering herds varies throughout the area, annually and within any given winter. Therefore, no specific key areas have been delineated. This general wintering area extends to the Lockhart River map sheet to the west. (Thomas, Kelsall, <u>et al.</u>)
14	This is a general caribou migration route in May depending on the snow melt. Eskers are important routes for migration. (Pruitt)
15	The narrow between Nowleye Lake and Kamilukuak Lake is a critical caribou crossing route both ways during spring and fall. (Loughrey)
16	A molting area for large Canada Geese. 2,000+ geese have been observed in the area. It may have a higher potential since this unit contains good habitat (Sterling). Breeding geese have been observed in the vicinity of Boyd Lake to the south of this unit but no further information is available.

UNIT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
17	The two units delineated are critical summer nesting areas for Gyrfalcons and Peregrine Falcons. (Kuyt)
18	Barren Ground Grizzly range and probably den within this area. (Loughrey)
19	A critical area. Gyrfalcons and Peregrine Falcons nest at Granite Falls on the Thelon River. This unit occurs primarily on the Lockhart River map sheet. (Kuyt)
20	Large numbers of Barren-Ground Caribou (the Beverly Herd) frequent the area through May and June and migrate southward from early August until early winter (Banfield, <u>et al.</u>). Herds move along the Thelon River and between the Thelon River and the Dubawnt River towards Aberdeen and Beverly Lake. The Beverly Lake Herd calve all around Beverly Lake. There are some very critical water crossings along the Thelon River, between Beverly and Aberdeen Lakes and Aberdeen and Schultz Lakes. In the spring migration, herds are more concentrated and animals pass through the region in large numbers. The fall migration is more leisurely, and the animals are scattered more widely (Kuyt and Loughrey). This unit extends to adjacent map sheets to the north and west.
21	This region is generally bounded by the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Approximately 100 muskoxen were observed in 1958. Caribou are numerous in this region. (Pruitt)
22	This is a Barren-Ground Caribou migration and calving area. Herds move along the Thelon River and between the Thelon River and the Dubawnt River towards Aberdeen and Beverly Lakes. This is commonly known as the Beverly Lake Herd since

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22
(continued)

these animals calve all around Beverly Lake. Some very critical water crossings occur along the Thelon River, between Beverly and Aberdeen Lakes and between Aberdeen Land and Schultz Lake. The area should be considered critical. (Kuyt)

23

This unit is duplicated on the Lockhart River map sheet. During the fall caribou move down along the Back River and south through this area. This movement takes place July 20th to 30th and the animals move into the Alymer Lake region. (Kuyt)

REFERENCES

Personal Communication

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