

Canadian Wildlife Service
Arctic Ecology Map Series
Critical Wildlife areas

Descriptive report

Eclipse Sound

ECLIPSE SOUND
(Sheet #2037)

The major land areas included on this map sheet are the northeast tip of Baffin Island and Bylot Island. Some eighty miles north of Bylot Island lie Philpots Island, the eastern tip of Devon Island and Coburg Island. Together these areas constitute about one-fifth of the total map area most of which is covered by Baffin Bay.

The Islands on the sheet contain extremely rugged terrain and are dominated by permanent ice fields which cover approximately three-quarters of their surface. Despite this, several important wildlife areas are found within the sheet. For example, the ice free western side of Bylot Island contains a critical nesting area for Greater Snow Geese for nearly one-third of the world population of this species. Huge colonies of cliff nesting birds such as Murres, Kittiwakes, and Guillemots are located on several of the capes and cliffs. Polar Bear den at Cape Coutts and other points and thousands of Harp Seals, Narwhal and other marine mammals summer or migrate through the inshore marine areas. Muskox and caribou are not found on the areas within this sheet, but have been reported at the head of Tay Sound just off the sheet.

The village of Pond Inlet is the only settlement

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in the region, and is inhabited by a number of hunting Eskimo families as well as being a major outpost of the Eastern Arctic.

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

UNIT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
1	Glacier Strait is an important summering and migration area for Beluga Whales and Walrus numbering in the hundreds. These species also occur in Lady Ann Strait. (Mansfield)
2	The shores of Coburg Island are important for Polar Bear. This area is hunted by Grise Fiord Eskimos and Greenland Eskimos.
3	This important area is the most northerly known Murre colony in North America. (Tuck 1960) No population estimates are available, however numbers are thought to exceed 40,000 in this colony.
4	Migrating Harp Seals travel through Lady Ann Strait to Jones Sound in the tens of thousands. Harp Seals may number in the hundreds of thousands in this area and adjacent marine areas to the west. Narwhal also occur within this unit in the summer months. (Mansfield)
5	This is considered an important breeding area primarily for Atlantic Brant. Greater Snow Geese, numbering in the hundreds, also nest in this unit. (Boyd)
6	An important large Murre colony is found about 5 miles west of Cape Hay in this unit. The colony contains a total population of ±1 million individual birds of which 400,000 pairs breed. The main concern regarding this colony is oil pollution of the marine breeding grounds. (Tuck 1960)
7	Narwhal migrate in both directions along the north side of Bylot Island during the summer. This area is extremely important for migrating Harp Seals that move down the east coast of Baffin Island. Harp Seals number in the tens of thousands during this migration. (Mansfield)

UNIT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
8	Murre and Kittiwakes colonies are located at Cape Walter Bathurst. (Cooch)
9	The whole of Bylot Island is a Migratory Bird Sanctuary established by Federal Order in Council.
10	The area designated by Unit 10 is a critical nesting area for Greater Snow Goose populations. They nest from the shore to the edge of the ice sheet at higher elevations. Approximately 20,000 Greater Snow Geese nesting here out of a total North American population of some 75,000. (Cooch, Boyd)
11	Pond Inlet is a very important area for Harp Seal and Harwhal during June and July. (Macpherson) Narwhal numbering in the thousands are found in Eclipse Sound and Pond Inlet during the summer. (Mansfield)
12	Cape Graham Moore on Bylot Island is a hauling out area for Polar Bear. (Jonkel) The Cape contains a Thick-Billed Murre colony with an estimated population of 40,000 birds. (Tuck 1960)
13	This area contains an important Arctic Char run, including Utuk Lake. This population is probably utilized by Pond Inlet Eskimos. (Hunter)
14	Cape Coutts is a denning and hunter area for Polar Bear. (Jonkel)
15	A Fulmar colony of undetermined status is located on Nova Zembla Island. (Boyd)

REFERENCES

Personal Communications

H. Boyd
F. G. Cooch
C. J. Jonkel (Canadian Wildlife Service)
A. H. Macpherson

J. G. Hunter (Fisheries Research Board of
A. W. Mansfield Canada)

Reports and Publications

TUCK, LESLIE M., 1960. The Murres - Their Distribution, Populations and Biology, a Study of Genus Uria. Dept. of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Canadian Wildlife Service Series 1, Ottawa.