

NOTES FROM A BRIEF VISIT TO CLELLAND ISLANDOCTOBER 9TH, 1992

Purpose of Visit: To investigate a report received October 8th, 1992, of a possible seabird dieoff at Clelland Island Ecological Reserve.

Response: On October 9th, 1992, Dennis Fraser, Dave Foreman and Bill Merilees visited Clelland Island Ecological Reserve by helicopter. During our 1.5 hour stay we walked the perimeter of the island looking for any and all seabird carcasses and anything else of note.

Results: 77 dead seabirds were found. 76 of these were immature (1992 hatchlings/juveniles) Glaucous-winged Gulls and one was a Rhinoceros Auklet. The gulls, some in very advanced stages of decomposition, had been eaten and were assumed to be the result of predation. None of the above birds appeared to have been washed ashore most were well above the high tide line.

The Glaucous-winged Gull breeding population was counted in 1988 with 1622 nests being located (Campbell et al, 1990). A mortality of 76 from such a nesting colony does not appear 'out of order'.

Other Observations: Brant's Cormorant 55 on Clelland  
 151 on island north  
 Glaucous-winged Gull 87  
 Green-winged Teal 2  
 Bald Eagle - 2 adults  
 Common Raven 2  
 Northwestern Crow 2  
 Black Turnstone 3  
 'peep' 1  
 Fox Sparrow 15+  
 Song Sparrow 15+ (one partial albino)  
 Winter Wren 1

NOTE: no Black Oystercatchers were seen on either Clelland Island or its offshore islets.

Flowers in Bloom: Nootka Rose - many blossoms  
 Yarrow - a few with fresh blossoms  
 Aster sp. - many 'old' bloom

Cow Parsnip - 2 with fresh blooms  
Siberian Miner's Lettuce - many with fresh  
bloom  
Hedge Nettle - a few with old (4\*) bloom  
Monkey Flower - many with fresh bloom  
Water Parsley - 2 with fresh bloom  
Sea Rocket - 1 with fresh bloom  
Pineapple Weed - few with old bloom  
Senecio sp. - one 'cushion' with many  
fresh blooms

As indicated, many of the above species had 'fresh' recently open flowers, 'spring in October at Clelland Island'.

Bill Merilees,  
October 9th, 1992.