

Alagnak

Aniakchak

Katmai

Kenai Fjords

Lake Clark

2014 Spring Update: KEFJ

Nearshore Marine Black Oystercatchers and Sea Otters

Year two of a black oystercatcher study at Aialik Bay begins this summer. Park staff and a UAF graduate student will return to Aialik Bay to estimate rates of chick provisioning and how this affects fledgling success and productivity. The crew will also determine sources of mortality to breeding adults, eggs and chicks.

This spring kicks off the first year of a new sea otter study in partnership with USGS. We will examine sea otter dependency on mussels as a food source. Our previous work showed that mussel abundance and sizes across the Gulf of Alaska vary considerably from year to year. If sea otters depend on mussels as a primary food source, fluctuations in mussel populations may adversely affect sea otter populations in KEFJ.

Caring for Climate Stations

To continue tracking weather and climate conditions of KEFJ, weather stations there require regular maintenance. This April the phenocam at the Exit Glacier SNOTEL (weather station) will receive maintenance. In late May, we will visit McArthur Pass weather station and in mid August, the station at Pedersen lagoon.

Bald Eagles

Eagle-eyed observers will take to the air this May to survey the KEFJ coastline for bald eagle nests. We will conduct two surveys (May 6-8) to improve estimates of nest occupancy and availability for bald eagles in KEFJ. Surveys this spring will implement lessons learned from last year's pilot effort and allow us to refine the Network-wide protocol. The goal of the bald eagle monitoring program is to develop rigorous survey methods to track nest occupancy and productivity across SWAN.

March 2014

<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/swan/>



Black oystercatcher in KEFJ, June 2013.
Photo: J. Paszalek, USGS.



Seasonal composite of images from KEFJ automated weather station near Exit Glacier. Left to right: May 14, June 2, July 17, and Sept. 30, 2013 KEFJ. Camera shoots one photo/hour between 7am and 7pm.



SWAN and KEFJ staff get acrobatic in KEFJ to measure the diameter at breast height (DBH) of a Sitka spruce. The coast of KEFJ has some of the largest trees in SWAN. Photo: E. Heck, NPS.



2014 SWAN Field Plans in Kenai Fjords

All dates are flexible and subject to change based on weather and other conditions

April

Harding Ice Field Weather Station Maintenance
Dates: April 21 - May 2
Contacts: Chuck Lindsay, Deb Kurtz

Sea otter foraging and mussels sampling
Dates: Short trips, TBD
Contact: Heather Coletti

May

McArthur Pass Climate Station Maintenance
Dates: May 19 - 30, TBD
Contact: Chuck Lindsay, Deb Kurtz

Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring
Dates: May 6 - 8 and May 17 - 30
Contact: Tammy Wilson, Laura Phillips

Sea otter foraging and mussels sampling
Dates: Short trips, TBD
Contact: Heather Coletti

June

SWAN Nearshore Monitoring
Dates: June 9 - 18
Contact: Heather Coletti, Laura Phillips

July

Sea otter foraging and mussels sampling
Dates: Short trips, TBD
Contact: Heather Coletti

August

Pederson Lagoon Climate Station Maintenance
Dates: August 11 - 15
Contact: Chuck Lindsay, Deb Kurtz

Sea otter foraging and mussels sampling
Dates: Short trips
Contact: Heather Coletti

Water Quality: Vertical Lake Profiles
Dates: August 1 - 15
Contact: Krista Bartz

Recent Publications

Chuck Lindsay. 2014. Climate Monitoring in SWAN. 2013 Annual Report.

Heather Coletti. 2014. Nearshore Marine Monitoring Report. 2013 Annual Report.

J. Walton, M. Hutten, and S. Torigoe. 2014. Inventory of Mosses, Liverworts, and Lichens of Kenai Fjords National Park. Natural Resources Data Series Report.