



ARCTIC TRUTH

Celebrating 50 Years of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

~ January 26, 2010 ~

Each week leading up to the **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's 50th Anniversary** on December 6, 2010, we will be sending you an Arctic Truth newsletter highlighting an **Arctic Hero** – someone who has gone above and beyond to protect the natural treasures of the Arctic Refuge – an **Arctic bird** that migrates from the Refuge to other states in the US – and other news about why the Arctic Refuge deserves the strongest possible protections.

Arctic Hero



This week's hero is long-time Arctic wilderness activist and leader **Vicky Hoover** of San Francisco. When Hoover began leading national outings for the Sierra Club, Richard Nixon was duking it out with Hubert Humphrey for the presidency and the Wilderness Act was a mere four years old. More than forty years later, Hoover is still leading national outings and championing the wild places she holds dear. Vicky recently retired from the Sierra Club, but she continues her tireless work to protect the Arctic as a volunteer leader!

"I don't deserve a lot of credit for wilderness activism because I've done it selfishly, for fun," she says with characteristic modesty. "It doesn't feel like work going to wild, beautiful places, advocating for them, and taking other people there." Hoover's many decades of conservation activism, however, stand as indubitable proof of her vigor, vision, and commitment to the cause.

Arctic Bird

Birds migrate from the Arctic Refuge to every state in the US. This week's bird is the **Mallard**, which breeds in the Refuge and then travels down to Arkansas and throughout the lower 48 states for the winter. The Mallard male's iridescent green head makes it the most well-recognized duck. Mallards are common across the country—even in urban areas. The Mallard is the ancestor of nearly all domestic breeds of duck.



Photo: E & P Bauer, USFWS

Arctic Action

A recent study highlights why an estimated **20,000 gallons of crude oil remain in Prince William Sound** nearly 21 years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The study, published by Professor Michel C. Boufadel of Temple University, concludes that the gravelly beaches of the Sound trap the oil between two layers of rock, with larger rocks on top and finer gravel underneath. Seawater moves very slowly through the dense gravel, and once the oil reached this lower layer, conditions were right to keep it trapped there without biodegrading. This oil continues to impact wildlife like sea otters, ducks, and sea birds.

Prof. Boufadel's study points out that this finding has implications for the susceptibility of beaches all over the world to long-term oil contamination, especially at higher latitudes where beaches tend to be gravel or a mixture of sand and gravel.



Don't let this happen to the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge — **cosponsor HR 39-the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act!**

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