

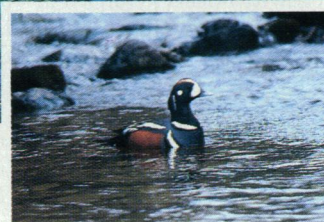
## U.S. to Grab Land for Alaskan Bird Sanctuary

Gridlock isn't a problem only for Washington, D.C.; it also affects remote places such as Alaska's Prince William Sound, where environmentalists have been trying for 3 years to create an oil-free refuge for harlequin ducks and marbled murrelets (a kind of diving bird). Environmentalists claim these birds' habitats were degraded by the 11 million gallons of oil spilled when the Exxon Valdez ran aground in 1989. Groups like the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club fruitlessly tried to persuade the Bush Administration to use money from fines levied against Exxon to buy Alaskan land and set it aside for habitat restoration. Nothing happened.

But the Clinton Administration has now responded to their pleas and is preparing to break the deadlock. Last week, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown announced that the federal govern-



**For the birds.** Clearcut swath on Alaska's Afognak Island, part of which may get restored as habitat for oil-spill refugees like the harlequin duck.



PAMELA MILLER/THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

ment plans to buy \$25 million worth of Alaskan real estate to create a new wildlife sanctuary.

Perhaps as early as June, the U.S. government will begin to purchase about 200,000 acres of land still in private hands within Kenai Fjords National Park, Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, and sev-

eral other protected regions for the new refuge. Environmentalists long have feared that private land in these parks might fall to developers. "The deal here is that a lot of these lands were going to be logged," claims Sierra Club's Pam Brodie. Now the Interior Department may prevent that.

## Russian Arctic Dumps Hotter Than Realized

It's hard to exaggerate the environmental wreck left behind by the Soviet Union. A new report just released by Alexei Yablokov, environmental adviser to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, shows that the Soviet Union dumped hot reactor cores from submarines into the ocean on an unprecedented scale—depositing a quantity of high-level waste that one U.S. scientist claims is "an

order of magnitude greater" than Western experts had estimated.

The Yablokov report, released in Russia in March and imported to the U.S. by Greenpeace, became hot reading in Washington, D.C. Bruce Molnia, a U.S. Geological Survey scientist and chair of a technical group that's been looking into Soviet dumping under the U.S. Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC), passed a copy to the CIA and another to Russia's

embassy in Washington, neither of which had seen it. According to Molnia, the report contains two key revelations: Official confirmation that the Soviets dumped two reactor vessels in the Northwest Pacific (several hundred kilometers from the Aleutian Islands), and disclosure of the locations of 16 reactor dump sites near the Arctic island of Novaya Zemlya, along with technical descriptions of the cores. The tally of radioactive isotopes involved comes to about 2.3 million Curies—nearly 10 times the amount assumed before, Molnia says.

Some U.S. agencies are gearing up for a deeper investigation, beginning with an international workshop in Anchorage on 2 May, sponsored by IARPC. The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution will cover some of the same ground in a conference on ocean radiometry scheduled for June. The U.S. Navy is getting in on the action, too: It's now sifting through 100 proposals to carry out a \$10 million research program with the Russians in the Arctic.

## Protest Fails to Avert Mirzayanov Trial

Vil Mirzayanov, a Russian chemist accused of illegally revealing classified information about chemical weapons development in the former Soviet Union, is going to trial, Russian sources have told *Science*—despite protests filed by several scientific societies, including the AAAS.

Last October, Russian police arrested Mirzayanov, a former employee of the State Union Scientific Research Institute for Organic Chemistry and Technology (SIOCT), on charges of "disclosing a state secret" when he revealed details of a SIOCT program to develop a new binary nerve gas. Then in February, a second military scientist, chemist Vladimir Uglev, publicly corroborated many of the details that got Mirzayanov in trouble (*Science*, 19 February, p. 1111).

But Uglev's show of support appears to have done little to help Mirzayanov, and has imperiled himself as well: *The Baltimore Sun* reported on 19 March that Uglev has been barred from his work at a SIOCT facility in Volok, just as Mirzayanov was shortly before his arrest.

## Feder and Stewart, Historian Trade Charges

The inventors of a "plagiarism detector"—fraudbusters Walter Stewart and Ned Feder—are being challenged by one of their targets, historian Stephen Oates of the University of Massachusetts. Oates not only rejects a charge of plagiarism the duo has leveled against him but claims the same analysis applied to an article by Feder and Stewart would brand them as plagiarists too.

National Institutes of Health researchers Stewart and Feder use three Macintosh scanners and some fancy software as a plagiarism machine. They got involved in the Oates case after the American Historical Association (AHA) began investigating allegations that portions of Oates' biographies of Abraham Lincoln, William Faulkner, and Martin Luther King were lifted from earlier works.

AHA chose to rule on "more detailed charges" relating to Oates' 1978 Lincoln biography, *With Malice Toward None*, and a 1952 biography. In May 1992, AHA didn't find merit in the plagiarism charges, but it did find that "...Oates' account of Lincoln's early years...is derivative to a degree requiring greater acknowledgement of Benjamin Thomas' earlier biography of Lincoln."

Feder and Stewart joined the fray a year after AHA began its inquiry. They analyzed the three biographies as well as 60 source books, and just last February submitted a complaint to AHA alleging that Oates "repeatedly plagiarized the work of other writers."

In a statement Oates rejected the charges, arguing that the repetition of short phrases does not constitute plagiarism. Moreover, Oates says Feder and Stewart "violate their own idea of plagiarism" in a 1987 article in *Nature*, in which phrases from earlier articles are repeated.

Stewart dismisses Oates' analysis as ridiculous. Oates, meanwhile, has written members of Congress to complain about Feder and Stewart's use of federal resources to investigate a private citizen.