

## **Dispersion, habitat selection and food of Barnacle Geese staging in Skagafjordur, in spring 2005**

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Every year geese migrate from their winter sites in Europe north toward their breeding grounds. The birds often have to travel long distances. Some species therefore stage on their way and restore their energy stores. Iceland is an important staging area for many geese travelling north to Greenland and Arctic Canada. One of these species is the Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*). Barnacle Geese stage for 3-4 weeks every spring in N-Iceland on their way to East Greenland. The dispersion, habitat selection and food of Barnacle Geese in that area during staging was studied by counting the birds in Skagafjordur in spring 2005. Counts were made three times in the period 20 April to 15 May. Sites used by Barnacle Geese were plotted on a map in the scale 1:50000 and their area measured. Bird dispersion in some areas was different over the period but the percent of area used did not change much. The birds were mostly in grassland where most of their time was spent grazing. Studies on their diet took place in two areas where droppings were collected for analysis.