



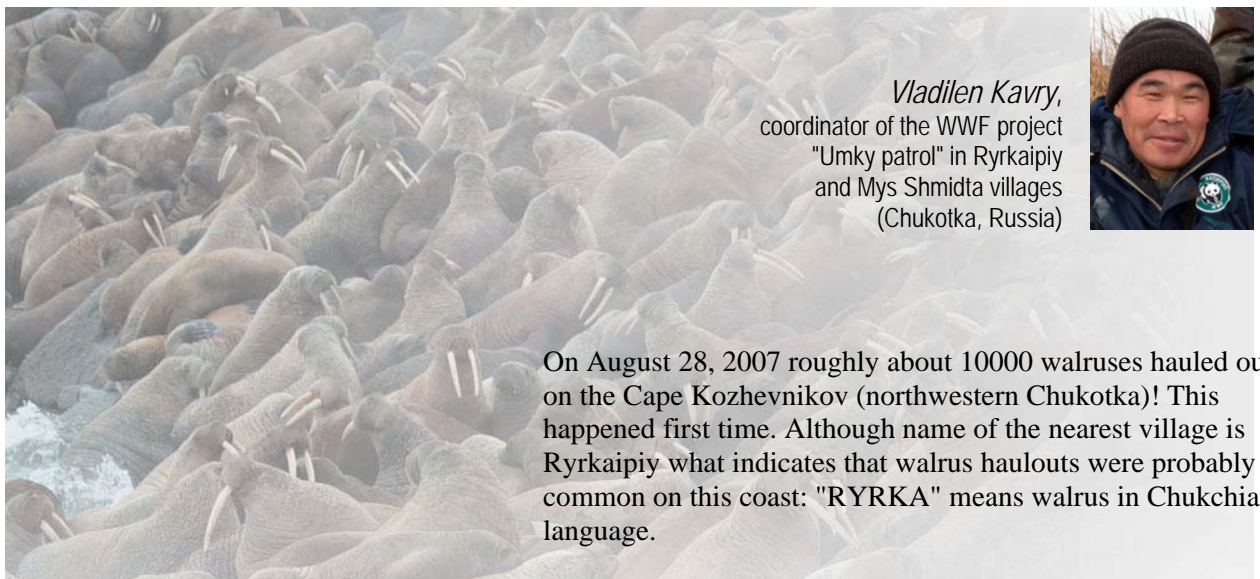
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THE POLAR BEAR PATROL NEWS, # 3

September, 2007

Ancient walrus haulout has revived



Vladilen Kavry, coordinator of the WWF project "Umky patrol" in Ryrkaipiy and Mys Shmidta villages (Chukotka, Russia)



On August 28, 2007 roughly about 10000 walrus hauled out on the Cape Kozhevnikov (northwestern Chukotka)! This happened first time. Although name of the nearest village is Ryrkaipiy what indicates that walrus haulouts were probably common on this coast: "RYRKA" means walrus in Chukchian language.

Due to climate warming recent 5 years the sea in summer gets free of ice and walrus have no platform for rest as they used to have on their way from northern part of the Chukchi Sea to wintering area. Because of that it is very important that walrus exhausted after long swimming in stormy ocean had possibility to rehabilitate on shore before long way to the Bering Sea. Disturbance is main factor preventing formation of coastal haulouts in suitable places (capes first of all). About 10 years ago we (hunters) have started to protect cape Vankarem and as a result one the biggest in the world haul out of walrus appears there each summer/autumn.



As part of the WWF project "Umky patrol" this year we organized "quiet" regime on the Kozhevnikov Cape near Ryrkaipiy village. And now our hopes have justified!



And I would like to share one secret with you... I remember Apo – elder in Vankarev, told me many years ago: "Some times walrus approach a place but for some reasons do not haul out there... If you wish to bind walrus to this place bring there a pebble from place where walrus form haul out..." I understand, it looks like magic or shamanism. But I tried this in capes Vankarem and Kozhevnikov– it works!

Gifts from Knut



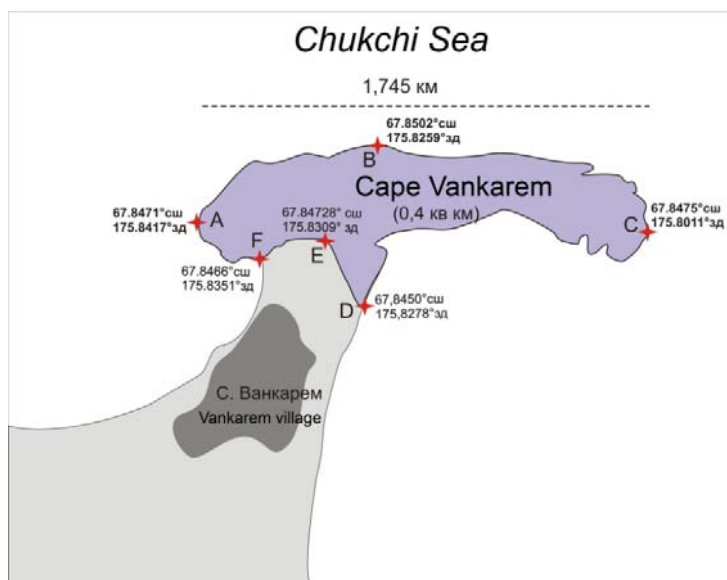
We already told story about Umky-kai (*polar bear cub* in Chukchian language). He nearly died caught by fox trap (see UMKY-Patrol NEWS# 2, 2007). Fortunately Umky-Patrol managed to save life of this baby-bear.

World-famous polar bear cub Knut from the Berlin Zoo decided to help his wild brother on the other side of the World. We received good news from Director of the Berlin Zoo *Dr. Blaszkiewicz*: Knut Fund donates 15,000 Euros to support the Umky Patrol work in Russia.

The Umky Patrol deeply appreciates this help!

© Zoo Berlin

“Cape Vankarem” – walrus and polar bears are under protection

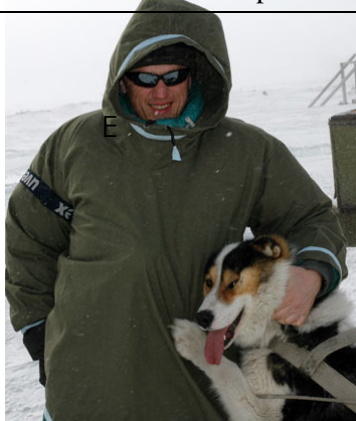


Regulation of the Chukotka Government #109 of August 20, 2007 approved creation of new regional protected area Nature Monument "Cape Vankarem".

Creation of this protected area becomes possible due to initiative of citizens of native Chukchian village Vankarem. For the first time in the history of Russian Arctic settlements all adult citizens of the village were questioned and 83% of them supported the idea to protect the place where people, walrus and polar bears coexist for over 1000 years.

Organization of new protected areas is important part of the UMKY Patrol project.

Besides in this season (September 2007 – April 2008) the UMKY Patrol will continue monitoring of the polar bear population in the area where it was done last year and expand this activity to new coastal villages and areas in Chukotka and eastern Yakutia. Moreover it is important to improve environmental education of local people and especially children. People have to be aware that polar bears are in trouble because of global warming, and people living next to these arctic icons are responsible in great extent for giving them a chance to survive in current difficult time.



Andrei Boltunov and Viktor Nikiforov

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