

# Segula Island

By Joshua Hanson, 8 Green

Segula Island is situated in the Aleutian Island archipelago, around 1,200 miles off of the Alaskan peninsula. The island consists of a Holocene stratovolcano that is largely inactive. It is a relatively small island of only three to four miles in diameter which would account for it being one of the least populated places on latitude  $51^{\circ}$  north. What is interesting about this island is that it lies directly on the parallel separating latitude  $51^{\circ}$ N and latitude  $52^{\circ}$ N. Consequently half of the island is on a different parallel to the other. In addition to its intriguing latitude the island is also positioned on longitude  $178^{\circ}$  East, which makes it almost exactly on the opposite side of the world to Sutton Grammar School.

The Segula volcano, situated on Segula Island, has never erupted in the island's documented history. The volcano's flanks have altered little from when they were



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first formed. As a result of limited erosion we are able to document the consequences of the last eruption around one hundred years ago to the island's topography. As with all of the Aleutian Islands Segula Island is located in the Pacific Ocean and is prone to strong pacific storms. Winds can reach up to 100mph on the Segula islands and the amount of snowfall can be significant during the months in-between October and May.

Cold weather makes it hard for certain plant life to survive, nonetheless it has been documented that largely moss, lichens, and heath can survive in these harsh conditions. In addition, sedges, grass, fungi, various herbs, fern, and flowering plants such as Narcissus anemone, lupines, and orchids are also able to make this barren and unforgiving environment their home. Segula Island is home to one of nine auklet colonies on the Aleutian Islands. This colony is thought to be the largest out of all nine and consists of a variety of different Auks. Some can grow up to 50cm and weigh 1kg. Despite their weight and their small wings they *can* fly, but to overcome the forces of resistance, they must flap their wings quite fast. Despite looking very similar to penguins they are not closely related. It is thought that these auks once evolved from penguins but there is no evidence to back this up.

Figure 1 Razor Billed Auk

