

Ecology and Aviation

Beyond The 78TH Parallel

(Dickson - Kara Sea - Dickson)

Each season, high-latitude air expedition "Sever" departs for the arctic seas to conduct oceanographic research. This year marks the 40th time the expedition has been organized. It traditionally has 2 flight detachments and is divided into western (main base - Dickson) and eastern (base - Cherskii) groups, each of which works aboard 2 An-2 aircraft.

...Dickson Airport. Red-winged aircraft take off for the north-east part of Kara Sea. On board is a group of arctic researchers from the Arctic and Antarctic Scientific Research Institute, lead by A. Zholudok, chief of the western detachment. This is his seventh research expedition.

He gladly acquaints us with the basic research goals, which consist of obtaining information about (a) ice and hydrological processes and their variability, (b) the transformation of water masses, and (c) pollution levels of seawater surfaces and ice and snow covers.

The small planes fly at a height of 200 m above the Kara Sea ice. Easily discernible from the plane's blister are the fleeting ice fields; visible at times are tiny patches of black-coloured ice-free water. These give way to chaotic accumulations of ice. Flat fields, which are necessary for landing