

The immense quantity of animal life which then existed on these islands, may be gathered from the fact that on one short expedition in 1750, the large numbers of 1781 sea otters, 720 blue foxes, and 840 young sea bears were taken, and their furs and skins carried back by one vessel to the Russian territories.

The inhabitants are described by the admirable and sagacious Steller, who accompanied Behring, as mostly young or middle-aged, of moderate stature, but tolerably well-proportioned; their arms and legs very fleshy, their hair straight and of a glossy blackness, the nose flat but not broad or large, the eyes black, the lips thick and turned upward; necks short, shoulders broad, and bodies thick but not corpulent. They wore shirts made of the intestines of whales; boots and breeches of seal-skin, stained a brown red with alder bark; and had long iron knives, apparently their own manufacture (though he throws some doubt on this point later in his narrative). They made hats of bark which were coloured red and green, and ornamented with feathers and grass; and bored holes in various parts of the face, in which they inserted bones and stones. They had little or no beard.

They seemed to migrate from island to island,