

GREENLAND'S WINTER WHALES: THE BELUGA, THE NARWHAL AND THE BOWHEAD WHALE.

By MADS PETER HEIDE-JØRGENSEN and KRISTIN LAIDRE. Edited by BRITT-MARIE JESPERSEN. Nuuk, Greenland: Ilinnisiorfik Undervisningsmiddelforlag, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-87-7975-300-6. 125 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., further reading, index. Softbound. Available online at <http://www.atuagkat.com/>. DKK 149.00; Euro18.63.

This book, like an earlier volume, *The Walrus in Greenland*, by Erik Born, was written as part of a series intended to inform and educate the Greenlandic public on harvested wildlife species. It will be of interest, however, to numerous people outside Greenland. To that end, it has been published in English, in Danish (as *Grønlands Vinterhvaler: Hvidhvalen, narhvalen og grønlandshvalen*), and in Greenlandic (as *Kalaallit Nunaanni ukiumi arferit: Qilalugaq qaqortaq, qilalugaq qernertaq arfivillu*).

Few people would be as qualified as these authors to write a book on Greenland's whales. Over the past decade, Drs. Heide-Jørgensen and Laidre have published extensively on the cetaceans of West Greenland and the eastern Canadian Arctic, and these studies form the basis for this book. The subject matter covers three species of Arctic whales: the beluga whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*), the narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*), and the bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*). Around 15 species are found in Greenland waters; however, most are present in summer months only. The authors coin the term "winter whale" to refer to the three species that occur in Greenland during the winter months. The authors' stated objective was to provide a popular description of the state of knowledge about the three species in Greenland, their importance to Greenland and Greenlanders, and their role in the Arctic ecosystem. The book fulfills these objectives, providing a readable and thorough summary of the three whale species in Greenland. The geographic focus is mainly limited to West Greenland, for two reasons. First, this is where the majority of research has taken place, and second, all three species occur on this side of the country.

The authors provide a wealth of interesting information from ecology- and management-related studies in Greenland and eastern Canada. The book includes sections on basic ecology, biology, and movement and migration patterns, as well as a fascinating discussion of the ways in which scientists study Arctic whales, with material on satellite tagging, genetics, surveys, and aging whales. As one would expect, Arctic cetaceans are closely associated with sea ice, and the authors provide an interesting discussion of these relationships. One particularly important section summarizes new information recently collected on narwhal diving and feeding ecology. The book also contains small sections on whales in East Greenland and a history of the narwhal (including the fact that the narwhal tusk was once considered to be a unicorn horn), followed by a summary of the Inuit legend on how the narwhal got

its tusk. Of special interest, especially for cetacean scientists, is the section on several beluga-narwhal hybrids that have been discovered in Disko Bay, one of the few places where the two species overlap during the mating season.

The book finishes with sections on the management history and current status of the three whale species and suggests important directions for future research. There has been a long history of exploitation, and unfortunately overexploitation, of all three species in Greenland. Bowhead numbers have rebounded following near extermination at the hands of commercial whalers up until the early 1900s. The situation for both narwhals and belugas in West Greenland is considerably direr. Both species have been overharvested in West Greenland in recent years, and populations have declined significantly. Greenland's wildlife management practices have received a large amount of negative attention and criticism in recent years (e.g., Hansen, 2002). *Greenland's Winter Whales* ends with a plea for Greenlanders to practice sustainable management and improve this negative perception. It remains to be seen whether Greenlanders will follow these suggestions and improve their wildlife management practices.

I was surprised by the acknowledgements (or lack thereof) in the Preface. The authors note that "many biologists and students participated in the studies and are acknowledged for their contribution over two decades of field work and research" (p. 7). However, there is no mention of the large degree of Canadian collaboration in recent research, such as the significant role the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has played in both research and funding. In addition, there was no recognition of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) or the Polar Continental Shelf Project (PCSP), which have both provided financial or logistic support, or both, for virtually every one of Drs. Heide-Jørgensen's and Laidre's Arctic cetacean research projects. Also left out was acknowledgment of the important role that Canadian Inuit hunters have played in the successful completion of most of these research projects. It is understandable that the authors may not have wanted to start listing all the names of contributors, in the interest of space. However, not acknowledging the DFO, the NWMB, the PCSP, and the Canadian Inuit is a significant and regretful oversight on the authors' part, especially when they felt it was warranted to thank the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources, Greenland hunters, and the U.S. National Science Foundation.

The authors state that the book is based on their research over the past 10 years; however, they do not provide much in the way of documentation of sources. Four references ("Further Reading") are provided at the end of the book. In a general book for a lay audience, an exhaustive reference list is obviously not necessary. However, the book would be of more use to students and instructors if more references, particularly recent peer-reviewed papers, were included. Improvements to future editions would include such documentation of recent studies; acknowledgement

of all the Canadian participation and support; and information on the status of killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) off West Greenland in winter. While nowhere near as common as the three subject species, killer whales do occur in West Greenland waters during the winter months. The authors may have excluded discussion of the status of this species in light of recent criticism over Greenland's killer whale harvests (ACS, 2002; George, 2002).

Despite its lack of recognition of the large degree of Canadian involvement in recent research, I would still highly recommend this book. The editing and printing are of high quality. The book contains nearly 100 quality photographs and a number of maps showing the seasonal distribution and movements of all three whale species. Many of the photos were taken by the two authors. Most are in colour, with a smaller number of high-quality black-and-white shots. The book and information it contains are suitable for a range of readers, from laypersons with an interest in Arctic whales and ecology to junior students and instructors. More extensive documentation of sources and a corresponding list of references cited would make future editions of this book suitable for more senior students.

#### REFERENCES

- ACS (AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY). 2002. Killer whale slaughter in Greenland. <http://www.acsonline.org/issues/killerWhales/GreenlandOrcas.html>.
- GEORGE, J. 2002. Greenland launches campaign against over-hunting. *Nunatsiaq News* 26 April. [http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/nunavut020426/news/nunavut/20426\\_7.html](http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/nunavut020426/news/nunavut/20426_7.html).
- HANSEN, K. 2002. A farewell to Greenland's wildlife. Translated by Robin Worrall. Copenhagen, Denmark: Gads Forlag.

*Jeff W. Higdon*  
*Department of Geography*  
*University of Manitoba*  
*501 University Crescent*  
*Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada*  
*R3T 2N6*  
*higdonj@dfo-mpo.gc.ca*

CARVING FACES, CARVING LIVES: PEOPLE OF THE BOREAL FOREST. By TERRY GARVIN. 2005. Edmonton: Heritage Community Foundation, 2005. ISBN 0-9739892-1-1. 239 p., map, colour illus., glossary, appendix, index. Softbound. Cdn\$40.00.

The title of this book may suggest biographies of northern wood-sculptors, but it is the second phrase, "carving lives," that captures the focus on how Aboriginal peoples have hewn a life from the environment. This is a book of photographs, with accompanying text on aspects of the material culture and traditional knowledge of northern, primarily Cree, communities, showing how their material

needs are satisfied from the natural environment. The author, Terry Garvin, shares the results of his hobby of photography, undertaken over a period of 50 years in communities in the western boreal forest. Most of these photos are from northeastern and north-central Alberta, in the God's Lake–Trout Lake, Calling Lake–Wabasca, and the Fort MacMurray–Ft. McKay–Ft. Chipewyan–Ft. Fitzgerald areas; but some are from Grande Cache, in west-central Alberta, and from Trout Lake, Fort Rae, and Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories.

This well-presented book comprises an introduction followed by sections dealing with topics in material culture related to camp and home lifestyle, the forest, wildlife, travel, and arts and crafts. Raw resources and finished products are depicted with frequent illustration of details of construction or how they were used. After these main topics are two glossaries of bushland language, one in English and one in Cree; an appendix of bush resources, with items listed alphabetically with their uses; and an index.

Garvin is very careful to acknowledge the Aboriginal individuals who taught him. They appear in photographs, are named in the captions, and are listed in the index. Cree language (but not Dene) appears in one of the glossaries. The author's introduction stresses respect for the cultural diversity to be found in the boreal forest. Garvin articulates his qualifications for representing Aboriginal ways of life, including his time spent living in the North, relationships with elders and community researchers, participation in bush trips, and study of the Cree language. The manuscript underwent review by both Aboriginal elders and academics. One of the fruits of this cooperative work is the inclusion, by special consent, of a description of the sweat lodge ritual and—an amazing concession from a healer—a photograph of the carved image to whom offerings are brought at the entrance of the sweat lodge. Garvin's emphasis on process, however, does not extend to any assessment of the impact on the project of his own status in the communities, first as a member of the RCMP and later as a community worker.

That *Carving Faces, Carving Lives* is the result of a lifetime of work is evident in the combination of scope and detail in the presentation. "Camp and Home Lifestyles" includes not only the main structures associated with the camp (houses, cabins, tepees, graves, caches, smokehouses, and drying racks), but also the homely items of the wood chopping block, the bed and the fireplace. Photographs of trails are provided in the "Travel" section, as well as the usual skiffs, aluminum canoes, dog teams, and ATVs. Present in the "Arts and Crafts" section are not only the well-known rich textures and colours of beading on smoked moose-hide, but also the goose-gullet baby rattle and the hide-scraper made from the lid of a metal container. These details make it clear that this is not just another coffee-table book.

Selecting and classifying these photos must have been a challenge. I do hope that Mr. Garvin will donate the entire body of work to some institution at which the public