

THE MAKING OF AN ECOLOGIST: MY CAREER IN ALASKA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION. By DAVID R. KLEIN; edited by Karen Brewster. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2019. ISBN 9781602233911. 516 p., maps, b&w illus., bib., index. Softbound. US\$34.95. Also available as an ebook.

Dr. David R. Klein is perhaps the most prolific and influential wildlife biologist living in Alaska today. He has an impressive record of seminal and classic research on ungulates in Alaska and the circumpolar region spanning over 60 years and including his 35-year tenure as leader of the Alaska Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. As unit leader, he supervised 67 graduate students, many of whom made significant contributions to wildlife science and conservation themselves. At age 92, he has written an autobiography that reviews highlights from his life and career, starting with his early influences and education, his pioneering work as an Alaskan wildlife manager and biologist, and his eventual evolution to an ecologist with a broader, holistic, and philosophical appreciation of the ecosystems he has worked in. The autobiography also includes selected essays on topics related to wildlife management, ethics, and philosophy.

The autobiography focuses on his professional career and experiences, with only passing references to his private life. This is intentional, as the explicit intent is to focus on his professional development and achievements. The text draws upon several interviews with him conducted by the editor, Karen Brewster, an oral historian affiliated with the University of Alaska. This approach has yielded a candid narrative style, which makes for an easy and enjoyable read with many interesting stories from his childhood and career.

As the title implies, his professional life has been a journey that mirrors, in many ways, the growth of the wildlife profession from that of cultivation and manipulation of wildlife and their habitats to a broader emphasis on ecosystem function and the interrelationships of soils, climate, plants and animals. The writings of Aldo Leopold, a great proponent of understanding the connection of land and people to the wildlife resource, was an important posthumous mentor for Dr. Klein throughout his career.

He discusses the influence of family members and important mentors who from an early age, kindled his interest in the natural world. He spent his formative years in the rural and semi-rural landscapes of New England, which served as both a playground and an outdoor classroom. He highlights the influences of his family during these formative years, with their love of nature, farming and gardening, as well as that of the Boy Scouts on his development as an outdoorsman. He served two stints in the military, including one year stateside in the Navy at the end of World War II and an additional year in the Army in the Territory of Alaska during the Korean Conflict.

He describes some early postwar adventures in the northern woods of Wisconsin and his first trip to Alaska, which whetted his appetite for the Last Frontier. After

completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology and Wildlife at the University of Connecticut, he headed north to attend the University of Alaska in Fairbanks to pursue a Master's degree in Wildlife Management, and was able to study mountain goats, which was fortunate, as he had become particularly interested in mountain ungulates and alpine systems. His description of the trip up the Alaska Highway and life in Fairbanks during the 1940's and early 1950's are fascinating. He describes life in graduate school and working at the university dairy and gives a nice overview of the early faculty and first graduate students in the nascent wildlife management program at UAF. It was not an easy time; he experienced a close brush with death from appendicitis, but managed to overcome this serious setback and graduate on schedule. For his Master's degree, he conducted some of the first research on mountain goats on the Kenai Peninsula, Alaska where he usually worked alone in rugged conditions.

From the beginning, Dr. Klein was keen on understanding plant communities and the habitats they comprise as a key component of wildlife ecology, starting with his undergraduate research in a cedar swamp near the University of Connecticut campus. This theme continues in his pioneering investigations on deer habitat use, which he conducted in as a federal biologist in southeast Alaska. He relates other assignments during his tenure as a US Fish and Wildlife Service biologist throughout Alaska prior to statehood, including ungulate surveys and goose captures. Most notably, he helped initiate a classic study on feral reindeer population dynamics and habitat relationships on St. Matthews Island.

At statehood in southeast Alaska, he became one of the first biologists with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. His deer work formed the basis of his PhD dissertation at the University of British Columbia under Dr. Ian McTaggart Cowan, where he compared the population dynamics of high- versus low-density deer island populations. During this time, he was also involved in a novel experiment to introduce wolves to Coronation Island, which became a classic case study in predator-prey relationships. The introduced wolves disappeared after eating virtually all the deer on the small island.

On the natural laboratory of St. Matthews Island, we witness the evolution of David Klein from wildlife biologist to ecologist. This work, which spanned 55 years, details research on reindeer population dynamics and the impacts introduced species have had on the flora and fauna of the island ecosystem. He details investigations on the relationships between reindeer and vegetation, the negative impact of red foxes on the resident Arctic fox population, as well as the subtle relationship between geology and seabird communities.

Dr. Klein has had a long history of pioneering collaboration with ecologists outside of Alaska. He details his experiences working with colleagues on circumpolar ungulate species in Canada, the Nordic countries, and the former Soviet Union. He was one of the first western

scientists to visit the latter in the 1970's. He also describes forays farther south to Portugal and South Africa, where he was able to gain new perspectives on wildlife management and ungulate biology and evolution. Throughout his autobiography, he relates interesting and humorous anecdotal accounts regarding research, personalities, and his involvement in important events. One field excursion in Siberia, where the entourage got lost, was particularly entertaining!

Klein often conducted field research over extended periods under challenging conditions with limited communication with the outside world. His extensive time in the field undoubtedly helped him to grow as an ecologist, through his prolonged observations of his study animals and the environments they lived in. In this age of digital technology, where a growing number of scientists base their careers heavily on desktop research derived from data collected remotely or by others, this book is a reminder that there is no substitute for the scientific insights garnered by living and working with organisms in their natural environments. Many field biologists will appreciate his humorous poem on the pitfalls of ecological modelling!

The essays reflect his current thinking on several topics, including wildlife management, ethics, and philosophy. He has revised some of the earlier published versions to reflect his modern thinking on these topics. His reflective nature, his broad and deep understanding of issues pertaining to ecology, science, ethics, and philosophy make for some stimulating reading. His strong criticisms of the recent political corrosion of science-based management in Alaska is noteworthy in this context. Readers will find his experiences and influences regarding Scandinavian eco-philosophy particularly novel and enlightening.

While this is an important legacy document of the extraordinary career and life of Dr. David Klein, it is much more than that. It provides important context and insights during a critical period in the history of Alaskan wildlife conservation that might otherwise be lost to time. His essays on ethics and philosophy are timeless and provide insights seldom encountered in the field of wildlife conservation. We can learn from his exemplary commitment to science-based wildlife and their habitats through thoughtful and balanced advocacy and public outreach.

The author and editor have done a thorough job of combining oral narratives and essays into a nice, readable format with minimal typographical errors, although some names were misspelled, most notably the mountain region of Rondane in Norway (not "Rondone" as it is repeatedly referred to in the book). In addition, in some places the sequence of events is a little hard to follow because of this oral storytelling format, such as when he alludes to a job offer with the Division of Subsistence around 1962 at the end of one chapter. He fails to mention explicitly that this never came about because he accepted the Unit Leader position instead, something that becomes clear as one reads on. I could find very few factual errors, although in reference to the work conducted by Dr. Ronald Skoog, the

narrative neglected to mention that Skoog later earned his PhD studying caribou. The black and white illustrations are interesting and add an important dimension to the book. The cover shows many of these same pictures in color and in tiny format, which is almost too small to appreciate. Color plates of these interesting color photos, particularly from his early career, would have enhanced the book, but this would have likely been cost prohibitive. I do hope that he will archive these historic, high quality Kodachrome photos and make them available to the public in the future. It is a long book, but there is much to tell! To cap it all, he provides an extensive list of works he cites throughout the text, including many of his own publications. This is invaluable to any scholar that may wish to delve deeper into his work.

Overall, Dr. Klein's book is a wonderful contribution to the history of wildlife science and conservation in Alaska and the Holarctic, and I particularly recommend it to budding biologists and ecologists who may follow the many paths that he has blazed. Likewise, it is well worth the price for those with a general interest in the history of science in the circumpolar Arctic.

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PEARY'S ARCTIC QUEST: UNTOLD STORIES FROM ROBERT E. PEARY'S NORTH POLE EXPEDITIONS. By SUSAN A. KAPLAN and GENEVIEVE M. LeMOINE. Camden, Maine: Down East Books, 2019. ISBN 9781608936434. 189 p., maps, b&w and colour illus., index, bib., index, endnotes, glossary. Hardbound. \$26.95 (US).

Susan Kaplan and Genevieve LeMoine say they spent a decade writing *Peary's Arctic Quest*, but this vibrant and insightful volume actually represents the fruits of two careers spent investigating Arctic exploration and life. Kaplan, an anthropologist at Bowdoin College and director of the Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum, and LeMoine, an archaeologist at Bowdoin and curator of the Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum, have mounted Arctic exhibitions, conducted archaeological research, and read all the relevant explorers' journals. Their *Peary's Arctic Quest* is a concise introduction to the brilliant yet controversial Robert Edwin Peary. It contains enough nuggets of new information to intrigue those familiar with the (possible) discoverer of the North Pole.

Kaplan and LeMoine open with a brief but informative biography of Peary, who emerges as a restless character bent on greatness from a young age. After attending Bowdoin College, Peary accepted a civil engineer post with