

training. He has spent much of his life studying owls in the field, in many countries, and he shares here his most interesting observations. He has also delved deeply into the byways of ornithological literature to unearth fascinating aspects of the specialized anatomy and physiology of owls.

Throughout the book, Lynch shares with us many amazing owl facts. I will give one example, the wing loading of owls, for readers who have given little thought to the topic. I was surprised to learn that the great gray owl, with a much smaller body than the snowy owl and great horned owl, has a wing surface area up to 3277 cm<sup>2</sup>, equal to the area of five sheets of typing paper. The snowy owl is second, with an average of 2574 cm<sup>2</sup> and the great horned owl is third, with 2503 cm<sup>2</sup>. Yet the snowy owl is much heavier, with an average weight of 1.81 kg, compared to the great horned at 1.45 kg and the great gray at 1.09 kg. Hence the wing loading, the amount of body weight carried by each unit of wing area, is larger in the snowy owl. The lighter great gray, with lower wing loading, can fly more slowly: it has adapted to its special niche—catching smaller prey, chiefly voles.

Owl species that nest in the Arctic receive special attention because of their remarkable adaptations to a hostile environment with boom-and-bust cycles in the numbers of prey. Two species, the snowy owl and short-eared owl, nest upon the ground in tundra. The northernmost recorded nesting in the world of any owl, a snowy owl, was at 82°40' N, on Ellesmere Island. Adolphus Greely found a nest there in the 1880s, and Lynch found another nest, on the same island, in 1996! The northernmost short-eared owl nesting recorded to date, in 2000 and 2001, was in Aulavik National Park on northern Banks Island, at 73° N. Snowy owls normally lay three to five eggs, and short-eared owls, five to six: double the average number laid by a female great horned owl. Yet when lemmings or voles are numerous, single females of both short-eared and snowy owls have been known to lay as many as 11 eggs. In a year when prey is scarce, neither species attempts to nest.

The three large owl species that nest in far northern and montane forests (as far north as the Arctic Circle in Alaska) are the better-known great horned owl and the two most beautiful owls, the great gray owl and the northern hawk owl, high on the “most wanted” list of the average birder on this continent. When vole numbers drop, every three to five years, the great gray and northern hawk owls irrupt, leaving the boreal forests and appearing in greater numbers far to the south. In Minnesota in January and February 2005, it was possible for one observer to see over a hundred great gray owls in a single day! Northern hawk owls and boreal owls may participate in such irruptions but in somewhat smaller numbers.

There are a few minor errors. Lynch uses the antiquated spelling of widgeon for wigeon and the surname of evolutionary biologist J. Alan Feduccia is misspelled in the otherwise excellent bibliography. I do take issue with one preposterous statement on page 97, based on extrapolation from a Johnsgard reference, that a single barn owl might

eat 11 000 mice in a 10-year lifetime and thus save 13 tons of grain crops! Barn owl expert Carl Marti tells me that few barn owls live 10 years, their average life span being just under two years.

This is a truly beautiful book, filled with near-perfect photographs, all but two by this expert wildlife photographer. Despite a large printing run, after six weeks of selling like hotcakes, the book is already being revised in preparation for a second printing (in which the very few detected errors will be corrected). I predict more printings in years to come.

In summary, this book is a perfect blend of fact and beauty. The high-quality photos, almost one per page (three habitat photos are two-page spreads), are easily worth the price. But don't stop there, because the text will provide much interesting information about what to me are the most interesting and beautiful of all birds. This book is an ideal gift for anyone even remotely interested in nature and especially for anyone who appreciates superb photography.

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#### THE ARCTIC PROMISE: LEGAL AND POLITICAL AUTONOMY OF GREENLAND AND NUNAVUT.

By NATALIA LOUKACHEVA. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-8020-9486-5. xiv + 255 p., maps, notes, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$27.95; £18.00.

In recent years, Inuit peoples of the circumpolar North have made significant progress towards self-government and autonomy. *The Arctic Promise: Legal and Political Autonomy of Greenland and Nunavut* by Natalia Loukacheva charts the evolution of two of the most important outcomes of this process: the establishment of a home rule government in Greenland in 1979 and the creation of the territory of Nunavut in 1999. Although separated by two decades and embedded in two different domestic contexts, these regions share many similarities, both in their internal characteristics and in their relationships with external actors and governments. They also reveal a unique system of governance that is dynamic in nature and “inclusive of Southern modes of governance, indigenous knowledge and values, and flexible legal imagination on the scope of autonomy” (p. 9). This is the “Arctic Promise” to which the author refers in the title of the book.

In many respects, this book is a significant contribution to our understanding of the political development of the circumpolar North. Although there have been a number of excellent English language studies of politics and governance in Nunavut and, to a lesser extent, Greenland, very few, if any, have systematically compared the legal, political, and jurisdictional features of these two regions. In addition

to providing a comprehensive overview of the existing political and jurisdictional dimensions of the Greenlandic and Nunavut governments, the author explores new and relatively uncharted areas by considering the prospects for and consequences of expanded autonomy in the future.

The book should appeal to a wide variety of scholars. For students of Arctic and circumpolar affairs, it offers a thoughtful and enlightened discussion of some of the most important political events to occur in the Arctic in the last three decades, as well as some relevant insights on the future prospects for enhanced regional autonomy. For students of comparative federalism, it outlines the unique territorial and jurisdictional dimensions of these two examples of Inuit multi-level governance. For students of Canadian government and politics, as well as aboriginal politics and societies, the book provides an interesting perspective on the evolution of public government in predominantly aboriginal regions, and on the question of aboriginal-state relations in Canada and in the circumpolar North. For legal and constitutional scholars, it provides an overview of the unique jurisdictional characteristics of Arctic governance, an area that, in the author's opinion, "is not addressed adequately by international or comparative constitutional law" (p. 3).

The book begins with a general overview of the evolution of these two regions in the period prior to and since European contact. It briefly charts the impact that colonization had on the Inuit societies in Greenland and Nunavut and, in particular, the political mobilization that occurred among the Inuit in both regions during the post-war period. These topics, which have been studied in detail by other Arctic scholars, provide a necessary backdrop to the book's primary investigation into the constitutional dimensions of governance in Greenland and Nunavut and the specific institutional features and jurisdictional issues that will confront these relatively new regions and their home countries in the future.

The real value of this book lies in the author's exploration of jurisdictional issues that are not normally associated with subnational regions: the incorporation of indigenous values into the Greenlandic and Nunavut juridical-legal systems and the participation of these two regions in international relations. Although these are areas in which national governments are reluctant to share sovereignty, they are increasingly important to the future of the regions in question. Blending the customary legal traditions of the Inuit with the existing western legal traditions is, of course, a challenging task. Nevertheless, the author argues that "there should be further dialogue between Inuit and non-Inuit legal traditions so that the legal systems in Greenland and Nunavut can embrace the best of both worlds" (p. 102). Indeed, the development of a legal system that embraces Inuit values and culture and increases Inuit involvement in legal services and the judicial system could legitimize and facilitate the delivery of justice.

On the thorny question of international relations, the book focuses a great deal on issues related to the military

and to security. Although Greenland (and to a lesser extent, Nunavut) have had some involvement in international politics, they have had more success projecting their voice in the international arena through the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC), a transnational organization that has been actively involved in international and multi-lateral governance through the United Nations and the Arctic Council. This influence, however, has been limited to "soft-security" matters such as environmental issues; it is less obvious in the area of hard security, largely because the Arctic Council is reluctant to discuss hard security matters. The ICC, however, remains the most obvious means for Greenland and Nunavut to influence the international agenda, aside from the limited pressure they can bring to bear on their home governments.

Another important aspect of international relations that the book does not really touch on in great detail involves direct economic and trade relations between Nunavut and Greenland. Given the proximity and socio-cultural similarities of the two regions, there is great potential for future collaboration in this area. That said, it is also important to note that Greenland and Nunavut are competitors in an increasingly globalized economy. While for the most part their interactions have been overwhelmingly positive, trade competition and disputes (as evidenced by a recent Greenlandic ban on Canadian sealskin pelts) in the future could lead to rifts between the two regions that will also involve their home governments and organizations like the ICC.

These details aside, however, *The Arctic Promise* is an engaging comparison of two emerging models of Inuit governance. It offers a clear, well-written overview of the Greenlandic and Nunavut systems of government and draws our attention to the key issues that could shape their respective political futures. And finally, as other Inuit regions in Canada and the circumpolar North seek to expand and consolidate their political and legal autonomy, this book will serve as a useful structural framework and benchmark for future comparison.

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**HUMAN ECOLOGY OF BERINGIA.** By JOHN F. HOFFECKER and SCOTT A. ELIAS. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-231-13060-8. xi + 290 p., maps, b&w illus., notes, bib., index. Hardbound. US\$45.00; £29.00.

The timing of initial human migration to the Americas is a hot topic in North American archaeology, as documented by the intense level of research activity ranging from fundamental excavation results to the intricacies of molecular