

101-103 and p. 153-155), this activity is not included in the chapter on "behaviour" but rather in "the polar bears of Churchill" chapter. Since this is a ritualized form of social interaction, it cannot be clear whether there is indeed a "loser" (p. 103) in these interactions, as the caption suggests. The figure caption for the adult male fight sequence (p. 153) refers to "... posture taken when two adult males fight," while the figure caption on p. 154 refers to this "ritualized behaviour."

It is unclear whether these sequences represent play fighting, ritualized play behaviour, or fighting. Or perhaps these are one and the same. I assume that two males fighting over access to a female in oestrus would be more than a ritualized behaviour. Again, more detailed figure captions would have been useful.

In the final chapter the author points out the economic benefits than can occur when polar bears become a "tourist attraction." No mention is made of some of the negative impacts that can accompany this type of undertaking, specifically, the consequences of using baits to attract bears in order to obtain "close-up" photographs or to encourage social interactions between bears. There also remains the question of bears habituating to humans and the unknown long-term effects of this. These issues deserve mention.

Although more detail could have been included in each chapter, the reader is provided with a well-rounded bibliography if further information on a specific topic is required.

Regardless of these small flaws, this well-written, handsome volume, with ample well-reproduced colour photographs, will provide the student, naturalist, and anyone interested in polar bears a unique view of this species and the world it inhabits. Although the price of this book is substantial, it is a work that will long be at the top in this field and therefore a valued edition in any library.

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SLEEPING ISLAND: THE STORY OF ONE MAN'S TRAVELS IN THE GREAT BARREN LANDS OF THE CANADIAN NORTH. By P.G. DOWNES. Foreword and notes by R.H. COCKBURN. Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1988. 330 p., 17 black-and-white photos, 6 maps, bib. Softbound. Cdn\$18.95.

Sleeping Island, first published in 1943, is the story of an annual vacation — a vacation very different from that taken by the average person, because this one takes place in the wilderness and the barrens of northern Manitoba and the Northwest Territories by a person whose approach was that of going home. The North, of course, was not Downes's home, as he was not a native to the area, but over a period of years he took many trips to the northern prairie provinces and the Northwest Territories and he learned to love the land, its barrenness and its wilderness. And he learned to love the people, both the Indians and the Inuit. His preparations for these journeys were based on his experiences from previous journeys and his extensive reading on the area. The outfit he prepared for himself was boastfully small and inadequate but resulted from much hard discipline from previous years. "The North is vast, distances are great. To travel at all, a person must travel fast as the Indians do. To do this — by oneself or with Indians — one must travel light."

Downes had a unique approach to making preparations for his journeys to the North. There was none of the weeks and months of "painstaking plotting and planning to defeat the great empty spaces." With gradual warming days of June, he "became daily more restless and at last picked up my packsack . . . and set off."

The years that he spent roaming in the various parts of Canada's vast northland prompted the question among his acquaintances: "Why?" He could never find an answer to that question that was satisfactory to the logical and kindly questioner. He just liked it

there in the land of the little trees, he was happy there, but to any reasonable person this answer was inadequate.

His destination for the trip in 1939 was not known or even seriously considered when he left home. Ideas sprang to his mind from trips of previous years when he had visited Great Bear Lake and cast his mind toward the East. There were friends in that area that he had met on other trips and he wanted very strongly to visit with them once more.

He travelled from his home in Boston to Winnipeg, which provided a good jumping-off spot. It was here, while in conversation with one of the northern commissionaires that he determined to travel to Nueltin Lake. This involved canoeing on uncharted rivers from The Pas in Manitoba, through the Reindeer Lakes and on over unmapped but intriguing areas leading to Nueltin Lake. He knew that on such a trip he would once again meet many native friends from earlier journeys in the North.

It was in Brochet, in northern Manitoba, that Downes reached the point in his journey where he would commence his real trip by canoe. He needed a partner and his preference was for an Indian who knew the land, knew the dangers and would be a real asset even though he may not know the land in which they would be travelling in detail. On this trip he was unable to find an Indian willing to travel where he wanted to go. But he did find a non-native familiar with the North — a large man reputed to be an excellent canoeist. They set out from Brochet, following a long series of rivers, making observations along the way, ultimately reaching Nueltin Lake. Here they came upon Sleeping Island. Sleeping Island, itself, does not play a big role in this story, but it was indicative of the many islands where the natives camped on their traverses across the country. Most of the story is taken up with this canoe journey. His return home from the North involved commercial ships and aircraft from Nueltin Lake. It was a much quicker return than the trip to Nueltin Lake, but much less interesting.

Everywhere that Downes and his partner travelled and met people, there was someone in the group of natives whom he had met on previous occasions and with whom he had formed a close kinship. Meeting these people again provided great satisfaction for Downes. It is this feeling, permeating the whole story, that is particularly appealing and provides the unique aspect of this book.

The account of the trip taken by Downes is taken directly from the daily diary he kept throughout the trip, from the time he left until he once more returned home. He carried out limited mapping, made observations and notes on the trees, birds, animals, and geology of the area, and followed other scientific interests as well, as he had in all of his several trips to the North. On top of these activities, he did what was most appealing to him — he frequently stopped during the day just to enjoy his surroundings. He was in tune with the environment!

Most books on the North deal with the activities of people who work there, be they game wardens, hunters, trappers, miners, visitors or whatever. Downes went to the area because he loved it. That care and concern for the North is expressed in this story. The trip took place in 1939, before much of the technical development had made serious incursions into the North, spreading the white man's sense of values and his technology throughout the North. Downes appreciated this area for what it was and had been over the centuries. He would probably be very unhappy with what has happened to the land he loved.

This book is well written. The story moves along very quickly and keeps the reader interested at all times, particularly when Downes and his companion had to fight many dangerous rapids on their journey. This book will appeal to anyone who appreciates the North and can enjoy the value of "going back to nature."

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