BERRIES OF LABRADOR. By ELLEN BRYAN OBED. St. John's: Memorial University Press, 2024. 978199044279. 115 p., colour illus., glossary, index. Softbound. Cdn$26.95.

Ellen Bryan Obed's preface clearly describes her book: "a collection of over forty Labrador berries—some with an important part in Labrador history, some hidden and hardly known. Some with many names, some with only one name. Berries for food, berries for medicine. Berries for birds and animals, but not for people. Berries for everyone. Berries with a single habitat, berries that will grow anywhere. Some for beauty, some for play. Each berry with its own distinct character of root, leaf and stem, fruit and flower" (p. 1). She writes that she produced this book for "the people of the land," but she has also included information that will appeal to readers outside Labrador, and those with a technical interest.

This book is 20cm x 20cm and is printed in full colour. The cover is laminated and attractively designed. Each of the main berry-bearing plants in this book is illustrated with several watercolours. From a botanical point of view, the illustrations—by Valerie Powell (with several additions by Mavis Penney)—are excellent and are good enough to allow field identification to species. Each species of berry-bearing plant is introduced with its Labrador common name, its North American common name, its Inuttitut name(s), its Innu-aimun name(s), and its scientific name. Berries are grouped by plant family (e.g., black crowberry, alpine bearberry, bearberry, creeping snowberry, bog cranberry, mountain cranberry, blueberries bilberries, and hurts are all within the family Ericaceae), and each is well illustrated, showing leaves, flowers, and berries. Quotations from local people highlight memories, characteristics, and uses associated with each berry. The text is non-technical and charmingly chatty—almost like a walk in the woods with a naturalist or forager friend who is telling you about wayside plants. The book also includes a few short poems by the author. Within some of the descriptions, less-common related species are also mentioned, although not illustrated (e.g., uncommon rose twisted-stalk is included in the description of clasping-leaved twisted-stalk).

As well as culinary uses, the text includes information about other traditional uses for berry-bearing plants, including for basketry (red-osier dogwood), medicine (dogberry), and tea (bristly black currant), and as flavouring agent (juniper berries), sod for fly smudge and smoking char and salmon (crowberry), dye for hair and grasswork (crowberry), and febrifuge (maidenhair berry).

This book clearly fulfills the author's intentions. It is neither a technical manual nor a field guide—and it was never intended to be. It is an attractive book to pick up and browse, a record of local and traditional uses, and a paean to the bounty of summer and autumn in Labrador. The book includes a glossary, with illustrations to clarify a dozen botanical terms that did have to be used. The etymology of plant names is often included in the text, as an aide-mémoire for linking a name to a particular plant (e.g., crowberry's genus name, *Empetrum,* is derived from Greek, meaning growing on rocks).

I have only two quibbles with this book. The first is that the book includes common juniper (*Juniperus communis*) for its berry-like cones, but there is no mention of ground juniper (*J. horizontalis*), which also grows in Labrador. These two shrubs often grow side by side and their berries are indistinguishable, although their growth forms are very different.

My second quibble is printed at the bottoms of pages 54 and 55, where a minor proofreading oversight has placed bluebead lily in the Ranunculaceae/buttercup family instead of the Liliaceae/lily family.

This is a well-produced book. The writing is clear and friendly, a tribute to both author and editor. The paper stock is bright, and it is thick enough to prevent show-through from the other side. Illustrations are clear, colourful, and technically accurate. Design and layout are well considered and unpretentious, and the illustrations have lots of white space around them. This book has a solid perfect binding and a laminated cover that should withstand many years of handling.

At a price of Cdn$26.95, this is a useful reference book for anyone interested in traditional plant use, foraging, or natural history. It contains historical and ecological information about various species, where to find those species, and what else eats them. If you are interested in finding out about the edible, inedible, and toxic berries and berry-like fruits that grow in Labrador (and in nearby Newfoundland), this will be a useful book for you. As the author writes (p. 2), this book is "a literary mixed-berry jam. Store it on the bookshelf. Open it in winter to have a good read. With this little book, we can have our berries all year long."

Michael Burzynski
retired Parks Canada ecosystem scientist
Box 258, 21 Pond Road, Rocky Harbour,
Newfoundland and Labrador A0K 4N0, Canada
burzynski@nf.sympatico.ca

ARCTICOLOGIES: EARLY MODERN ACTIONS FOR OUR WARMER WORLD. By LOWELL DUCKERT. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2025. ISBN 9781517913588. xiv + 369 p., b&w illus., appendices, index, bib., notes. Softbound. US$30.00. Also available in ebook format.

Arcticologies immerses readers in early modern Northern European experiences of cold and changing environments—what its author Lowell Duckert defines as a "cold studies" approach of "cold-infused early modern environmental humanities" (p. 44). Duckert builds historical depth for future projects in Arctic environmental humanities. His historical ethnography is drawn from

"Arcticologies," 16th- and 17th-century accounts which chart engagement with "cold's inhuman agency" (p. 5).

Duckert analyzes the dynamic role of cold in Northern European culture through narratives of the Little Ice Age, the iced-over Thames, icebergs on the English and Dutch coasts, Shakespeare's plays, the emergent science of temperature and snowflakes, and tales of overwintering on Arctic shores. Duckert provincializes the early modern experience, shows its specificity, and unsettles our common categories of cold and winter through historical moments of encounter with the Arctic—before climate had its current meanings and before the measurement of temperature (or even the nature of cold as a lack of heat rather than some other force or material) was common knowledge. Tracing recordings of these encounters, the book allows us to understand deep-seated Euro-American cultural meanings of the Arctic, and thus to more deeply understand its power in the present. Duckert aims to encourage new ways forward in the climate crisis, to see pre-modern ways of relating to the Arctic, and to conceptualize cold as a vital force, as possibilities for recentring the Arctic (p. 20) and encouraging counterapocalyptic thinking (p. 25). He leans into an essentially Latourian logic of "we have never been modern" (Latour, 1993), in that more-than-human approaches to cold have always been a part of Euro-American cultural humus. "There has never been an exit" (p. 90); we must face and experience environmental changes.

The book's five main chapters alternate with short, thematic winterludes that highlight reflections on specific themes such as flake, err, and slide. For example, the winterlude "Ask" is all about the predicative force of cold in a scene in *King Lear*. The first chapter tours early modern explanations of the nature of cold as frigus or a frigorifick force or entity. The second moves through geographic concepts of Arctic portals, whirlpools, and vortexes that could influence Europe, emphasizing the Arctic as a site of change and exchange. The heart of the book lies in the third chapter, Slippery Things: accounts of London frost faires on the frozen-over Thames in 1608 and 1683 that show the "relentless pressures of ecological adaptation" (p. 37). These tales of both fun and fear contextualize the Little Ice Age in concepts of adaptation and instability; an unexpected "new normal" that forces people to figure out how to help each other and how to plan for strange occurrences (p. 175). Chapter 4 analyzes accounts of wintering over in Hudson Bay, Iceland, and Svalbard, emphasizing the evolution of the term winter from a holding pattern into its current definition as a season. The final chapter centres close reading of references to cold in *Hamlet* and an analysis of a Saami-language production of *Hamlet* in an ice-theatre in Finland, again emphasizing the immersive empathy of cold.

Duckert aims at immersion, beginning the book with a description of a polar plunge, creating an embodied experience of cold. This forces a sympathetic "feeling with" (p. 91) that allows the reader to experience the world of others and to feel empathy for the loss of cold: "A cold world is one that primarily Indigenous communities are losing at present" (p. 91). One of Duckert's ongoing strategies of immersion is to use the vocabulary of his early modern authors; it's effective in destabilizing the reader but verges on confusing them. Duckert explains that "words like "frigorifick" are not just antiquated terms worth adding to ecological lexicons for their historical sake alone. "I highlight them in order to change how we speak, think, and act about cold … My wish is for readers to depart with an open-ended glossary, and an impetus of their own for re-storying cold" (p. 37). However, the new terms pile up and drift. He ends each chapter by recycling terms from previous analyses, which may leave all but the most focused reader feeling snowed-in. Confusion is not beyond his aim of immersion, however, as he outlines that "North as [a] disorientiation" with an "aesthetic unmooring" (p. 2) characterized by opacity and unknowability.

Duckert's stylistic choices reflect his immersive goals, though less advanced or lay readers may find them trying. He revels in wordplay, leaning into cold-related puns such as his cold-open introduction. His own vocabulary is dense beyond his arcane revivals, and his sentences difficult to parse. "But, in this 'ocean' of mine, we will meet the occasional eccentric whose icy idiosyncrasies and nonnormative permutations of desire fractured the conventional and permissible" (p. 4). Elsewhere, his penchant for backslashes and parentheses to highlight parallels or dissonances—"un/likely permutations," (p. 3) "winter(ing)," and "North as [a] disorientation" (p. 2)—can challenge readers' continuity of thought. Chapter introductions often include long, bullet-pointed paragraphs to outline his main points, losing the effectiveness of their offset due to their length.

Duckert frequently connects his historical analysis to modern concerns, parrying those who would consider *Arcticologies* obscure, niche work. He discusses melting ice-art at COP 29, contemporary climate politics, and even begins the book with a polar plunge. He also aims to connect to Indigenous scholarship, referencing Watt-Cloutier's *The Right to Be Cold* and including critiques of wintering narratives' engagements—or lack thereof—with Indigenous Peoples. He also analyzes, in Chapter 5, narratives about Arctic explorers' kidnapping of Inuit individuals (and the role of these tragedies in producing ideals of Arctic pure wilderness) and the politics of Indigenous language. These discussions aid in contextualizing Duckert's research in contemporary academic conversations.

Arcticologies is a successful discursive archaeology of European attitudes toward the Arctic, written to both extra(pole?)ate on underlying cultural logics for current politics on climate change action and to find alternatives to current bottlenecks in ecopolitical action. For readers interested in Arctic environmental humanities, especially early modern concepts linked to the Arctic, Arctic Indigenous Peoples, health, or the Little Ice Age, the book will be a highly detailed source. *Arcticologies* is an exciting

example of interdisciplinary methodology, both of archival ethnography and literary approaches to history. Readers interested in pushing toward the "instrumentalist list of 'doings,'" which Duckert hints at but admittedly omits (p. 293), will find this book an extensive foundation on which to build possibilities for Arctic futures.

Hannah Bradley
University of Virginia
Department of Engineering and Society
Thornton Hall, 351 McCormick Road
Charlottesville, Virginia 22904, USA
Vbv9zu@virginia.edu

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