

widely accepted. It is also stated that some turtles can hibernate for 2-3 months, a gross understatement of the 6+ months that some turtles spend in hibernation.

The species accounts are also fraught with errors or misleading information. For some North American species, the author lists individual U.S. states where the species is present, yet the list is rarely complete. The Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) account omits any mention in the text or the map of the Nova Scotia population. The author accepts the Mississippi Map Turtle (*Graptemys pseudogeographica kohni*) as a species (*G. kohni*), even though the species account

suggests it is a subspecies. There are also some curious omissions. There are six species accounts for members of the genus *Graptemys* yet the most wide-ranging species, the Northern Map Turtle (*G. geographica*) is not included. Overall, one has the sense that the text was assembled quickly, or by using outdated reference materials, and that it was not reviewed by a scientific expert. Enjoy the photos but don't believe everything you read.

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### What Good are Bugs? Insects in the Web of Life

By Gilbert Waldbauer. 2003. Harvard University Press, 79 Garden Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. 384 pages. U.S.\$29.95

Waldbauer has written several other popular books about insects, and these have been met with high acclaim; I have not read those tomes, and so see his most recent work with unbiased eyes.

*What good are bugs?* focuses on the interactions insects have with other animals and plants, both living and dead. Several chapters in each category illustrate the myriad ways in which insects, wittingly or unwittingly, are key to earth's ecosystems as we know them today. Topics range from seed dispersal to recycling dead animals and the control of animal and plant populations. Truly, the scope of this book is close to all-encompassing, and is written in a style that will not be condescending to the informed naturalist or biologist, but will be readily consumable by the budding naturalist, too.

There are a few factual problems, as well as some opinions that are more typical of the entomophobic

component of the public, that were surprising and disappointing to see in a book which promotes insects. Several times Waldbauer has insects "attacking" plants, when he really means "feeding on" plants. No one would ever say that deer or rabbit attack plants, it's no different with insects; they are just feeding on the plants, a point that naturalists, biologists, and surely this author should understand. "Attacking plants" is an expression used by certain people or industries to incite action, to justify eradication, to gain sympathy from the uninformed, and should itself be eradicated from our vocabulary.

The book ends with a chapter-by-chapter listing of selected readings. I like this method of listing references since the reader can readily choose among works only in the topic of interest. Overall, this is a book well worth having.

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### Belugas in the North Atlantic and the Russian Arctic

Edited by M.P. Heide-Jørgensen, Ø.Wiig, and D. G. Pike. 2002. NAMMCO Science Publication 4, The North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission, Polar Continental Centre, N-9296, Tromsø, Norway NOK 150. 270 pages.

The greater part of this symposium is devoted to those beluga whales that migrate through Baffin Bay and Davis Strait between the eastern part of the Canadian Arctic and West Greenland, and are difficult to follow across the deep water (and impossible in the dark season). Moreover, it is a difficult publication to review because it represents "work in progress", the results of which are not yet fully understood by the authors themselves. Three main techniques of study were (1) mitochondrial molecular genetics from tissue sampling of restrained or dead animals; (2) aerial photographic surveys; (3) tracking individuals by means of satellite radio tags attached to implants in the dorsal ridge of temporarily trapped belugas. The results are

too tentative to summarize easily. Many groups of belugas observed in summer in arctic estuaries are essentially matrilineal, that is, adult females with young animals of both sexes, while most adult males may move independently in different ways. There is also the practical concern that catches of belugas at southwest Greenland, where there is most open water and the largest catching boats, appear to exceed recruitment. The exact area from which these animals come is unknown.

After this it is a pleasure to move on to simpler studies! An overall survey of Russian and Siberian arctic waters from the mainland was carried out in the course of ice studies for belugas, narwhals and Greenland or Bowhead whales, plus the few Grey whales that enter the Arctic Ocean. There is now little hunting for them in this half of the Arctic.

Lastly, a summary is given of up-to-date knowledge of the numerical status of belugas that inhabit, year-round, the less than 200 linear km of the St. Lawrence