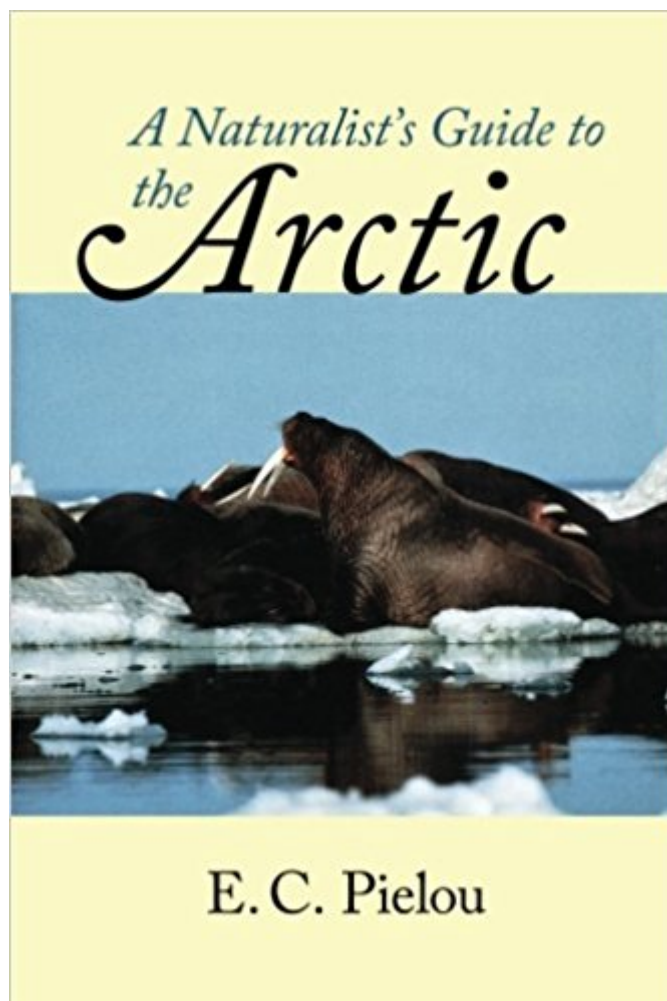


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A Naturalist's Guide To The Arctic



Synopsis

This book is a practical, portable guide to all of the Arctic's natural history—sky, atmosphere, terrain, ice, the sea, plants, birds, mammals, fish, and insects—for those who will experience the Arctic firsthand and for armchair travelers who would just as soon read about its splendors and surprises. It is packed with answers to naturalists' questions and with questions—some of them answered—that naturalists may not even have thought of.

Book Information

Paperback: 344 pages

Publisher: University Of Chicago Press; 1 edition (January 1, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0226668142

ISBN-13: 978-0226668147

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #529,035 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #75 in [Books > Travel > Polar Regions > Arctic](#) #114 in [Books > Travel > Specialty Travel > Travel with Pets](#) #300 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Nature Travel > Ecotourism](#)

Customer Reviews

Pielou (After the Ice Age, LJ 3/1/91) again focuses on the far North in this guide to the natural history of the Arctic. While broader in scope than Bryan Sage's *Arctic and Its Wildlife* (LJ 4/1/87), her book is not as easy to read and lacks photography. Pielou sets the stage with opening chapters on the sky, climate, sea, and earth formations. The remaining chapters cover plants, birds, mammals, fish, and insects. A map in the plant section codes the locations for all the life forms, while charts and line drawings by the author have sufficient detail to help the reader recognize the physical formation or life form. Pielou intends this guide to be taken into the field, and the book's arrangement encourages that use. Generally recommended for libraries in Canada and Alaska and where the Arctic is of interest. Jean E. Crampon, Hancock Biology & Oceanography Lib., Univ. of Southern California, Los Angeles Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Whether planning an arctic journey, doing one, or enjoying memories of one, this book is

indispensable. Designed as a compact source of information for those who must limit their load--hikers, kayakers, canoeists, rafters, photographers, and naturalists of all kinds--this guide will ensure that naturalists in the Arctic miss nothing.

This book is a "must have" for the advanced undergraduate, beginning grad student, or serious amateur naturalist interested in the North. While a combination of other books may be more comprehensive, if I had to trek north to the Yukon, this is what I would throw in my backpack. Pielou's knowledge and love of the high latitudes bursts through every page, and the pen and ink illustrations convey a real sense of both fauna and flora.

A great guide, only marred by the lack of color illustrations and photographs.

I have backpacked on the arctic plain on numerous occasions. Having this book along helps one appreciate the beauty and inter-related nature of the terrain. This is a book to be read more than once; read it on the flight to Alaska. Reading about how the insects torment the caribou makes one appreciate that one has repellants along, and a tent to be inside of. Of the various guides I have been with, this is almost a standard reference book to have with them.

Written in a very readable, enjoyable style with lots of fascinating details on the land, sea, and critters that live there. I can hardly wait to visit, and look for all the pieces of this intricate ecosystem.

This is an informative read, but not very practical for someone visiting the arctic of Europe or Asia. It's just about Canada and Greenland, although nothing in the title or description provides a clue of this. If you are visiting Svalbard, for instance, some of this information applies, but most of the book won't apply. You'll end up leaving the book at home.

I will be traveling to the Arctic this June; this is an excellent book to inform on the natural history of this unique landmass.

The book is an extremely well written piece on a complex subject that doesn't require one to have degrees in meteorology, botany, and zoology. The book lays out the landscape of the air, sky, water and land giving you a "touch and feel" sense of the arctic from the warmest to the coldest spots. Then the book populates this landscape with flowers, insects, animals and fish. As each piece is

added you are able to understand how the bits all work together; and more amazingly, survive. The author also writes with the knowledge of people. Many people who read this book will most likely be people who are not living in the arctic. She writes knowing that many people live in places like cities and suburbs. For example, she makes observations on how one may find an animal charming until one is startled by the reality of its wild side. When I read these I feel she is trying to ground you in reality, without being dismissive. I feel she is trying to really sit, side by side with you, and lead you through a world in a very compassionate way. The book, for me, seems to have two purposes. 1. to give a reader a picture of the world one will see and hear as well as what you can't see! 2. to prepare people for the raw and sometimes startling harsh aspects that you probably will see if you go there, so you are in a sense, prepared mentally for the experience. She paints a thousand pictures with her words! I would highly recommend this to anyone who is planning on going to this part of the world, or to someone who wants to get more information than is usually available in a single documentary.

This is a great handbook for the North American Arctic, and probably should be labeled as such. For Svalbard, or the Russian Arctic, not so much. See *Spitsbergen: Svalbard, Franz Josef, Jan Mayen, 3rd: The Bradt Travel Guide* instead. The coverage is quite broad, meteorology, ice, wildlife, climate, the sea, and the plants are all discussed. From my limited knowledge and experience, I've seen no errors. With ongoing climate change, the Arctic is an increasingly important location with more visitors and renewed interest. This book serves well.

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