

Harriman expedition of 1899, the most important Alaskan expedition of all in terms of both the scientific research carried out and its strategic timing, following shortly after public and government interest in the potential of 'Seward's icebox' had been aroused by the Klondike and Nome gold rushes. Edward H. Harriman, an American businessman, organized and financed a two-month cruise along the Alaskan coast, during which 25 scientists carried out research, the results of which ultimately filled 11 volumes. These volumes are now not easily acquired, and it is good to have George Bird Grinnell's two important contributions, 'The natives of the Alaska coast region' and 'The salmon industry,' reprinted here with excellent introductions by Polly Burroughs (on Grinnell as a pioneer conservationist) and Victoria Wyatt (playing the Harriman expedition in historical perspective). In later life, Grinnell was instrumental in the establishment of Glacier National Park, in addition contributing to the nascent conservationist movement as the author of many books, publisher of *Forest and Stream* magazine, and founder of the National Audobon Society and *Audobon Magazine*. Whilst his scientific writings may not match those of some of his expedition companions — William Healey Dall or Grove Karl Gilbert, for example — Grinnell's work is certainly of interest, particularly in his concern for the depletion of fish stocks — even then — and for his descriptions, based inevitably on only the briefest visits, of life and customs among the native peoples of southeast and south Alaska. It is good that we now have this volume better to perpetuate his interest and concern for Alaska.

A NATURALIST'S GUIDE TO THE ARCTIC. E.C. Pielou. 1994. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. xv + 327 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-226-66814-2. £15.95; \$US22.95.

A better title for this book would be *A natural history of the North American Arctic*. The author's purpose, she says, is to simplify, for those embarking on an Arctic trip, the problem of taking numerous guides by providing a single book with chapters on plant life, birds, mammals, fish, and

insects. She augments this information with useful chapters on the sky (understanding astronomy), climate and atmosphere, terrain, and seas. The result is a good introduction to the area for someone with an armchair interest or for those wishing to pursue mild naturalist tendencies.

The ambitious undertaking of offering a 'one-book field guide' results in an uneven account that can be both too vague and too detailed. Most birders, for example, would expect range maps or specific geographic descriptions of range for each species; in Pielou's guide, often only a general geographic description is supplied. The range of various caribou herds, on the other hand, is delineated on a map. These guides are not for those interested in learning every bird, plant, or insect on their trip.

The illustrations consist of line drawings by the author, and are adequate for someone who has a familiarity with the flora and fauna but may not be useful for the novice. Many drawings are not always distinct, but include a scale bar, in centimetres, for animals ranging in size from Arctic hares to grizzly bears.

Despite the book's shortcomings in trying to do it all, it is an interesting and well-researched guide to the natural history of the North American Arctic.

THE VOYAGES OF THE DISCOVERY: THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF SCOTT'S SHIP. Ann Savours. 1994. London: Virgin Publishing. xvi + 384 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-86369-811-5. £16.99.

This is a paperback edition of the acclaimed 'biography' of *Discovery*, a work that earned the 'Best Book of the Sea' award for 1992, the year it was originally published. The story is highlighted by the ship's construction for and use in Scott's National Antarctic Expedition of 1901–1904, her career as a Hudson's Bay Company trading and supply ship, her role as the original research vessel in the Discovery Investigations, and her use on Mawson's British, Australian, New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition of 1929–1931. The size, format, and illustrations remain the same, apart from several amendments to the text.