A Library at the Heart of an Institution

by Ivar Stokkeland, Head Librarian, Norwegian Polar Institute, Tromsø, Norway

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The Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI) is co-hosting the next PLC in Tromsø, June 9-14, 2024. This gives a welcome opportunity to introduce the Bulletin’s readers to our history. A good place to start is this photograph, featuring the institute’s founder in what was the beginning of a much larger, modern collection in which I spend my working days.

Geologist Adolf Hoel participated in his first expedition to Svalbard in 1907. The expedition was led and financed by Prince Albert I of Monaco, who was a keen oceanographer. Hoel was taken by the archipelago’s sparsely surveyed landscape. He returned to Svalbard on scientific expeditions almost every year from then on. Soon he got Norwegian politicians interested and managed to get official support.

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From the Editors & Welcome to Cecilie!

In the last issue you met incoming co-editors Christie Ericson (University of Alaska Anchorage) and Susanna Parikka (University of Lapland). In January 2023, Member at Large Cecilie Tang Møldrup joined Christie and Susanna on the Bulletin’s Editorial Team.

Cecilie is a librarian at the Polar Library at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. She has studied History and Arctic and Greenlandic Studies. Cecilie has been a part of the PLC since 2018 and attended her first colloquy in Rovaniemi. In 2019, she joined the Steering Committee and is now excited to join the two other Bulletin editors.

The Editorial Team has met several times by Zoom and is looking forward to working together on future ideas for the Bulletin. Watch for a series of articles from our colleagues in Tromsø in this and upcoming issues. A small taste of what you can look forward to at the 2024 Colloquy!

Also, your fellow members want to hear about your institutions and how you do things at your libraries! We are looking for submissions related to “How to Be a Polar Librarian” and “About my Library.” Is there something interesting/strange/rare in your collections that you want to highlight? Are you trying something new? What’s an “average” day like at your library? We look forward to hearing from you!

~ Christie, Susanna, and Cecilie

Send Us Your Webinar Ideas!

What topics would you like to see offered as webinars? Do you have expertise you would like to share? Send your ideas and suggestions to the editors at the contact information listed above.

Tromsø, Norway (Image by Sharon Ang from Pixabay)

PLC on Social Media

Want to keep up with your PLC colleagues? Join us on Facebook or Twitter!
Facebook: PolarLibrariesColloquy
Twitter: @PolLibColloquy

Please send submissions for the Bulletin to all three co-editors:

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Back then Svalbard was terra nullius. Several promising coal seams had come to light. With no national authority in the archipelago, people from several countries ventured to Svalbard and made claims. Violent encounters occasionally occurred in the midst of conflicting claims. Hoel himself was involved in some of the claims, and in the image from 1920 we see his collection of claim signs (now kept at the Svalbard Museum).

Hoel needed a library to support his work. His official budget was in no way sufficient, and he spent a substantial amount of his private money to build up the book collection. Even today most of our old books have his ex libris in them.

After WWI, international peace negotiations were held in Paris. The Svalbard issue was on the agenda, and a treaty was signed in February 1920. Norway was given sovereignty, with certain guarantees to the signatories. Hoel developed his plans further, and in 1928 the Norwegian Parliament decided to establish Norges Svalbard- og Ishavs-undersøkelser (NSIU). It would translate as Norway’s Svalbard and Arctic Ocean Survey.

Hoel was not only a scientist and institution builder, he was also an ambitious polar imperialist. In the wake of the Svalbard Treaty, Norway occupied more remote polar islands, Dronning Maud Land in continental Antarctica, and even tried to occupy a portion of East Greenland – with Hoel in important roles. Hoel’s ideology spurred him to join the Norwegian nationalistic party (NS) which collaborated with Hitler when German forces invaded Norway in 1940.

When Germany surrendered in May 1945, Hoel was immediately arrested and stripped of all his positions. The Norwegian government needed to do something about the NSIU, and in 1948 the institution was reborn as the Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI). The world-renowned oceanographer Harald U. Sverdrup was asked to come home from Scripps Institution, in California, and become the institution’s first director.

Over the following decades NPI’s focus shifted from coal and geology towards biology and environmental matters. We are in fact both a directorate under the Ministry of Climate and Environment and a research institute. As a directorate we have a main task of supplying the Governor of Svalbard and the ministry/government with polar environmental advice.

In the 1990s the parliament decided to move the institute from the capital up north to Tromsø. This long, fraught process ended up giving the NPI a boost. Not many of the old staff wanted to move from Oslo, and the institute recruited a relatively young, international crew of polar scientists, who were keen to relocate to the Arctic and to grapple with the climate-related issues that were now at the top of the scientific agenda.

The library is a part of the institute’s Communications Department. Our resources are used to supply our scientists with access to research databases and journals and inform the public about polar matters. Independent researchers and those affiliated with other institutions who are writing on issues related to polar history often seek help from this library.

We have unique archives and collections, such as a registry of more than 1500 polar vessels and a collection of biographical files on more than a thousand polar historical figures. Integrated with the library is a digital photo archive comprising more than 900,000 historical and modern images, of which journalists, film-makers, book authors and researchers make frequent use.

For more information, see https://www.npolar.no/
Decolonization of Arctic Library and Archives Metadata (DALAM) Thematic Network Update: April 2023

by Sandy Campbell
Liaison, University of the Arctic

Since our last update, DALAM has been very active.

First, all University of the Arctic Thematic Networks begin with a provisional approval for their first year. DALAM, which is led by PLC, will be presented for final endorsement at the upcoming UArctic Assembly in Quebec in May. In preparation for this event, we have forwarded information about DALAM’s activities to Dr. Kirsi Latola, UArctic Vice-Present Networks, who will present our case.

Second, since the New Year, DALAM has sponsored two educational activities. In January, Sharon Farnel reprised her PLC workshop as an online DALAM workshop. The session was attended by 44 participants, many of whom indicated an interest in attending future workshops.

DALAM’s second learning activity of the year was April 18, with 14 members viewing and discussing the video Transforming Big Data for Indigenous Futures: The CARE Principles of Indigenous Data Governance, which featured Dr. Stephanie Russo Carroll and Talia Anderson of University of Arizona. Participants agreed that this video is a good introduction to questions around Indigenous data sovereignty.

In terms of members teaching activities about decolonization of metadata, Susanne Brilliant, of Universite Laval, is the DALAM superstar for this quarter, having presented 6 online sessions to various library and librarian groups in Quebec, with a total of 300 attendees. Check out the list of members’ decolonization-related presentations and publications on the DALAM website.

For members who have the opportunity to present DALAM through a poster session, Shannon Christofferson created a generic DALAM poster, which all members can use. Many thanks to Shannon for her work on this. DALAM members wishing to use the poster should contact Shannon (shannonv@ucalgary.ca) for details.

The poster has already been proposed to several venues, and Susanna Parikka’s proposal to present it in August at the World Library and Information Congress in Rotterdam has been accepted!

In another area of activity, DALAM members Sandy Campbell, Shannon Christoffersen, Sharon Farnel, and Susanna Parikka have been working with an impact assessment group within University of the Arctic, examining potential visualization software choices. Various software options are available, with the potential to find linkages among researchers (e.g., co-authorships, citation patterns, etc), using published bibliographic information, and then to create visual representations of those linkages to make them easier to understand. Work on this is ongoing. Most of these kinds of software rely on authors having signed up for ORCiD numbers (a unique author identification number), so that their publication information can be harvested.

Finally, DALAM members have been meeting with the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections and Archives at University of Alaska Fairbanks to create an archival deposit for DALAM’s records. This archive, which has a strength in Arctic materials, also holds the fonds for the Polar Libraries Colloquy.
Rariora in Ultima Thule: Special Collections at Tromsø University Library

by Andreas Klein, PhD
Senior Academic Librarian, Tromsø University Library

Part 1: Early printed maps of the Arctic

UiT The Arctic University of Norway, politically established in 1968 and enrolling its first students in 1972, is a young university. It was preceded by a number of institutions, amongst them Trondenes seminar (1826), Tromsø museum (1872) and Tromsø geophysical observatory (1928). As of 2023, UiT offers study programmes to close to 18,000 students on eleven campuses in Northern Norway and on Svalbard. UiT’s strategy towards 2030 is summarized by the Northern Sámi notion eallju meaning ‘eagerness to work’.

Tromsø University Library’s ten branch libraries reflect the university’s unique history and development. Part of its holdings are several considerable special collections. The more than 20,000 combined volumes of the Seminar collection, the Kolsrud and Odland collections, the Qvigstad room and Ultima Thule collection form the bulk of its rare books holdings. While the Qvigstad room contains numerous fine and rare books owned by the larger-than-life politician and expert on Sámi philologies, Just Knud Qvigstad (1853–1957), Ultima Thule is a collection of older printed materials on the High North and the polar regions. Common to many of our collections is a focus on materials relating to Fennoscandia’s indigenous Sámi population. Descriptions of their way of life can be found both in the various editions and translations of Olaus Magnus’ Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus (1555) and Johannes Schefferus’ Lapponia (1673), of which the library holds complete sets.

In 2019, UiT acquired a virtually complete collection of the earliest printed maps of Northern Europe and the polar regions. Among its many rarities, the Tabula Moderna Prussie Livonie Norbegie et Gottie by German Benedictine monk and cartographer Nicolaus Germanus (d.1486) stands out. Printed in Ulm in 1482 and magnificently handcoloured, it is the first printed map of Scandinavia.

First included in the fourth edition of Ptolemy’s Geography compiled by Germanus, the map represents Europe’s northernmost region in a novel way. Although the geographic depiction appears erroneous to today’s viewers, there are several details that make this map indeed modern: the inclusion of a coordinate system, a red line representing the polar circle, the mentioning of a mare congelatum (frozen sea) in the extreme north, and a distinct trapezoidal projection.

When the famous Dutch seafarer and explorer Willem Barents died on the Arctic Ocean in 1597, geographic knowledge about the polar regions had already reached new heights. Shortly after the survivors of Barents’
Rariora in Ultima Thule  continued

third expedition arrived back in Amsterdam, a map showing their discoveries was printed. It depicts their sailing route from the Netherlands to Bear Island and further north to the Svalbard archipelago, and from there to the coast of Novaya Zemlya where they were forced to overwinter.

Barents’ map depicts the Arctic as a region steaming with life, full of resources and landmasses awaiting discovery. Seals and whales embellish the ocean; both the geographic and the magnetic North Pole are depicted. On the Siberian mainland close to Novaya Zemlya, a reindeer sleigh symbolizes the presence of indigenous people in the Far North. Unlike Nicolaus Germanus who only built upon previous manuscript maps and written material, Barents could make use of a significantly larger body of cartographic knowledge and even first-hand accounts. Coast lines of new lands explored during the journey were only shown according to observations by the crew, and thus, plenty of discoveries were left for future expeditions.

Similarly, the presence of those two and many more maps in our collections is a reminder to students, researchers and citizens alike to pursue and explore new knowledge in and about the Arctic.

To browse through our digital map collection, see https://ubdigital.uit.no/handle/10037.2/30
To read more about all special collections, see https://en.uit.no/ub/specialcollections
For general information about Tromsø University Library, visit https://en.uit.no/ub

As co-host of the 27th PLC, June 9–14 2024, Tromsø University Library is looking forward to welcoming you to Tromsø.

JOIN US! Become a PLC Member

Polar Libraries Colloquy provides an international forum through which librarians and others concerned with the collection, preservation, and dissemination of information dealing with the Arctic and Antarctic regions discuss issues of mutual interest and promote initiatives leading to improved collections and services.

PLC membership provides opportunities to foster greater international collaboration and is open to any interested person or institution. Dues are £20 or US $35 for two years. For queries about membership or payment methods, please contact Andrew Gray, Treasurer. To join PLC, please complete the form here and send payment as directed.
The Polar Library in Copenhagen is Finally on Instagram
– Some Thoughts on Being a Research Library on Social Media

My intention with this announcement:
My intention is to make you all aware that you are welcome to follow us on social media if you want to learn more about our library, but it is also to open a conversation about online presence with you all.

Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/polarbiblioteket

Instagram
https://www.instagram.com/polarbiblioteket_kbh/

I often feel like SoMe is a part of librarianship that I have no training for and often do not have many conversations with my colleagues about. I would love to hear what some of you are doing at your respective libraries. Maybe I can inspire some of you to write something for the next bulletin.

Some facts:
The Polar Library at the University of Copenhagen has been on Facebook for five years. We have been on Instagram for a few months now. We are often a bit late to the “internet” party.

We post the same posts on the two social media platforms, and we write two posts a week, Tuesday and Thursday. If we have an event coming up, we tend to post more frequently. On Instagram we also often do a story/reel every week.

Being on Facebook has been a fun experience and many of the books we post there are actually lent out during the week. We do not have a huge group of subscribers on Facebook; just over 600 people follow our feed. On Instagram we have about 150 subscribers as of January 2023. We spend no financial resources on social media, and we try to spend only a very limited amount of time there.

Our strategy:
I want to start this part out by saying that we do not have a perfect strategy. So what I describe here is not a recipe to follow. See it more as an attempt at transparency.

Our strategy is to have a presence on social media for our core audience. My bosses have been very kind to agree not to chase explosive growth or try to get a million followers.

So we actually follow the same strategy on social media that we have for the library as a whole. We want to support the students at the University of Copenhagen who study the Arctic. We also want to serve the part of the Danish population who have a more than average interest in the Arctic.

Our motto is, roughly translated: “We don’t want to mean a little to a lot of people; we want to mean a lot to a little group.”

We do that by posting mostly high quality books that our students can use in their assignments. We do not participate in debates online; we don’t post controversial or political content. We try to stay close to the role of being a research library and not imitate the general libraries, who participate a lot in discussions of culture and politics (and luckily so).

What do we get out of it?
I actually feel like we get a lot out of very little effort on SoMe.

It spreads the word that the library exists. We often lend out the books we post on SoMe. We get a lot of interest around our in-person events.

These are just some reflections I want to share, together with my announcement, that we are finally on Instagram.

Sending you all the best from Copenhagen,

Cecilie Møldrup, Polar Librarian
University of Copenhagen

(Polarbiblioteket Instagram posts)
New People, New Knowledge:
UArctic Thematic Network Leads Meeting in Rovaniemi

by Susanna Parikka, Library Director
Lapland University Consortium Library

UArctic Thematic Networks (TN) Leads and UArctic Institute leadership had their annual meeting in Rovaniemi 25-27 April. PLC is in charge of one of the new thematic networks of University of the Arctic, DALAM (Decolonization of Arctic Library and Archives Metadata). The current chair of the PLC Steering Committee is always the technical lead of DALAM. So I was lucky now to participate in this meeting.

The first day of the meeting focused on presenting University of Lapland Arctic research under four themes: 1) geopolitics and law, 2) climate change and human impact, 3) alternative approaches on economic growth, and 4) education and social justice. Along with TN Leads, the participants were ambassadors, researchers, and members of the lead of UArctic and University of Lapland. The very thought-provoking day ended with a joint dinner on the Arctic Circle.

ICARP IV

The second day was only for TN Leads. We were almost 30 persons present in the University of Lapland Arctic Centre with some distance participators in certain issues. The day included five main issues, with ICARP IV being the most important one. ICARP [International Conference on Arctic Research Planning] is a long process with a lot of community input. The survey sent to TN Leads this spring was a starting point for collecting UArctic input for ICARP IV. It had gotten 46 responses. According to the results, the major worry of respondents was climate change.

For UArctic, the next steps after the survey were the workshop in this TN Leads meeting and then some actions in the coming Quebec meeting in May. Kirsi Latola told about ICARP which happens every ten years. It defines the Arctic research priorities for the future. It includes both poles. More information about the process can be found at: https://icarp.iasc.info/

The workshop in the meeting had eight tables with special topics: 1) cultural issues (e.g., digitalization of Indigenous peoples, data, metadata, archives), 2) climate change, 3) scientific cooperation (e.g., ownership of data), 4) socio-economic challenges, 5) energy and environment, 6) geopolitical challenges, 7) demographics-health-education, and 8) other challenges.

In my opinion the most important outcome from the workshop was that Indigenous knowledge must be combined with Western science. Also the multi-disciplinary approach and more holistic view of research is needed. The importance of One Health (humans, fauna, flora, environment) was pointed. And these questions must be answered: What kind of living standards do people need for a good life in the future? How to save our planet?

Thematic Networks’ Research Profiles and Networking Visualizations

Scott Forrest talked about the TNs’ Research Profiles and Networking Visualizations. The idea is to link profile data on researchers from external sources to profiles and visualize connections in thematic networks. Benefits would be reducing duplicate reporting and updating when using ORCID as a source, better promoting what thematic networks are doing, demonstrating value of collaboration, and discovering new insights. ORCID provides a persistent digital identifier that you own and control, and that distinguishes you from every other researcher.

DALAM is one of the four pilot networks. The other three are: Smart Societies in the North, Northern Tourism, and Teacher Education. UArctic persons would be connected via ORCID and integration.
evaluations could be done with some software. Test applications will try to make basic research profiles, create keywords and concepts across the network, and show co-publications across the network. We will hear more about this pilot quite soon.

In the discussion it was pointed out that to get results from the pilot everyone should update their ORCID profiles. Also TNs differ very much from each other in ways of publishing. Big journals and natural sciences are favored in databases like Scopus. Many Arctic publications are not covered in those. All Arctic publications are not scientific peer-reviewed articles. Also, publications are just one dimension of TNs’ work. It would be interesting to get links to research infrastructure, also to course and program information.

Other issues

Some networks told more precisely how they had used Citizen Science in their projects.

Heli Niittynen told about renewal of reporting which will be easier and quicker. We will get an online form to fill in every three months with networks’ activities. The annual report will be done according to them. Also networks’ news can be sent with the form.

The last issue of the meeting was information on the 2024 Bodo Arctic Congress in Norway. It will be a unique event that combines the International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS) XI, UArctic Congress 2024, and High North Dialogue 2024. The congress takes place from 29 May to 3 June 2024, hosted by Nordland Research Institute and NORD University. Bodø will also be one of the 2024 European Cultural Capitals. The Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) will also have a conference in Bodø from 5 June. More information: https://www.arcticcongress.com/

The third day of the meeting was a fundraising workshop led by an expert from the US, Bob Ramin. That was a new area for a Finn because in the Nordic countries the universities are mainly financed by the government, and the role of other financers is quite small.

Our beautiful DALAM poster designed by Shannon Christoffersen was on display during all three days. It was placed so that ordinary Arctic Centre visitors could also see it.

Arctic Congress Bodø 2024

Join us at Arctic Congress Bodø 2024 for a unique event that combines the International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS) XI, UArctic Congress 2024, and High North Dialogue 2024.

The congress takes place from 29 May to 3 June 2024 in Bodø, Norway, hosted by Nordland Research Institute and NORD University. Bringing three conferences together in Bodø – one of the 2024 European Cultural Capitals - will be an extraordinary showcase of Arctic cooperation.

The congress includes high-level plenary sessions, several parallel sessions, network activities, and social and cultural events. It is an excellent opportunity for researchers, policymakers, businesses, and students to exchange knowledge and meet and connect across the Arctic. IASSA and UArctic will also hold their General Assemblies.

Arctic Congress Bodø 2024 takes place on Sami land. The congress’ logo honours the local cultures and we welcome you to Bodø in Lule Sami, Pite Sami, Norwegian and English!

—Adapted from the conference website
New Publication from University of Alberta Press


Edited by Leslie Main Johnson and Janelle Marie Baker, this collection takes a holistic view of well-being, seeking complementarities between Indigenous approaches to healing and Western biomedicine. Topics include traditional healers and approaches to treatment of disease and illness; traditional knowledge and intellectual property around medicinal plant knowledge; the role of diet and traditional foods in health promotion; culturally sensitive approaches to healing work with urban Indigenous populations; and integrating biomedicine, alternative therapies, and Indigenous healing in clinical practice. Throughout, the voices of Elders, healers, physicians, and scholars are in dialogue to promote Indigenous community well-being through collaboration. This book will be of interest to scholars in Indigenous Studies, medicine and public health, medical anthropology, and anyone promoting care delivery and public health in Indigenous communities.

—Adapted from the publisher’s announcement

**Book Talk & Panel Discussion: Walking Together, Working Together**

by Christie Ericson
UAA/APU Consortium Library
University of Alaska Anchorage

On May 25, 2023, the Anchorage Museum in Anchorage, Alaska hosted a reading and panel discussion to celebrate the publication of *Walking Together, Working Together: Engaging Wisdom for Indigenous Well-Being*.

Led by Tlingit Traditional Healer Meda DeWitt, with book editors Leslie Main Johnson and Janelle Marie Baker, the panelists discussed the contributed chapters by Elders, healers, physicians, and scholars from Western Canada and Alaska, which focus on exploring collaborative ways to improve Indigenous well-being.

Editors Leslie Main Johnson, Professor Emerita of Anthropology at Athabasca University in Alberta, Canada, and Janelle Marie Baker, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, also at Athabasca University,
discussed the compilation of the collection and the challenges encountered in editing the volume, particularly during a pandemic. Many of the chapters in this work and in the earlier volume *Wisdom Engaged: Traditional Knowledge for Northern Community Well-Being* (2019) came about as a result of the 2015 Wisdom Engaged conference at the University of Alberta, co-organized by Johnson.

Contributing author Meda DeWitt, whose Tlingit names are Tśa Tsée Naakw, Khaat klaat, discussed her chapter “Southeast Tlingit Rites of Passage for Women’s Puberty,” which includes a review of the literature on southeast Tlingit women’s rites of passage. DeWitt also discussed the Women’s Rites of Passage Pilot Project, a participatory action research event, and how the intergenerational transfer of deep cultural knowledge strengthens physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Another contributing author, Ruby Morgan, Luu Giss Yee, of the Gitxsan Nation in western Canada, joined the panel discussion via Zoom. Morgan discussed her chapter “Dim Wila Dil dils’m (The Way We Live): Gitxsan Approaches to a Comprehensive Health Plan” and how traditional concepts of health, food sources, and medicines support the community’s well-being.

Panelists also discussed the need to decolonize academic publishing and the importance of providing spaces for Indigenous peoples to share their knowledge without stifling their voices.

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**Arctic Connections: 29th Polar Libraries Colloquy**

The 29th Polar Libraries Colloquy will take place in Tromsø, Norway, 9-14 June 2024. Conference themes will include:

- Sami and indigenous peoples in the north
- Polar library, archives & information matters
- Polar research data management & open access publishing
- Polar ecology, climate and environment management
- Polar politics & history

Information on program, registration, call for papers, etc., will follow. For further information contact Ivar Stokkeland: ivar.stokkeland@npolar.no
New Publications

Both titles reviewed by Cameron J. R. Machinski and Sandy Campbell


This picture book is about Tanna, a young girl who is earning a little money by collecting lemmings for a researcher. She finds one tiny lemming that she decides to keep as a pet. She calls it “Fluffi”. She takes care of Fluffi by giving it fresh water and oats to eat. It makes a nest behind the stove. When it gets older, it makes a new nest in her mother’s sewing box, which holds beautiful silk cloth from China, that was a gift. Fluffi chews the cloth and ruins it. Tanna’s mother is very sad. Tanna decides to let Fluffi go free. Winter passes and when Tanna goes out in the summer, she sees all the lemmings, and wonders if one of them is Fluffi. Then she realizes that all the lemmings she sees were not given oats, water, and a warm place to live. She realizes that the very good care she gave Fluffi was not necessary. The lesson that Tanna has learned, that wild creatures should be left in the wild, applies to everyone.

Tamara Campeau’s artwork is realistic and detailed. She uses colour and lighting well. Campeau is very good at capturing facial expressions. From the expression on Tanna’s mother’s face, readers know exactly what she is feeling when she realizes that the silk cloth has been ruined.

The images in this book can be enjoyed by children of any age, but the reading level is upper elementary. Highly recommended for children’s collections and elementary school libraries.

Sammurtok, Nadia. 2022. To my Panik: To my Daughter. Illustrated by Pelin Turgut. Iqaluit, NU:

The title of this pretty book tells us that the word “panik” means “daughter” in Inuktitut. There are also other Inuktitut words in this book, explained in the glossary. This is a children’s book, but there are complex words such as “courageous” and “saxifrage”, which would need to be read by an adult.

Author, Nadia Sammurtok, writes about the things that a mother loves about her child. The text is a conversation between the mother and daughter, in which the girl asks what her mother loves about her and the mother responds. The mother’s answers are all presented in terms of the environment. For example, she says, “I love your humour. It’s refreshing like the smell of fresh tundra air after a rainy day”. The text sometimes rhymes, and sometimes does not, but always communicates love.

Turkish Illustrator, Pelin Turgut creates a fanciful environment, using pastel colours and soft lines to make the whole book look warm and comforting. The images are mostly of the girl in the tundra environment, which reflects the themes in the text. In this environment, the flowers are represented by splashes of colour and the animals, even polar bears, are cute and cuddly.

Overall, To My Panik is highly recommended as a bedtime book for small children, that would also be a good addition to public and school libraries.
New Publications continued

Reviewed by Cameron J. R. Machinski and Sandy Campbell


This volume is another in the non-fiction Animals Illustrated series from Inhabit Media. The book follows a structure, similar to earlier books in the series, including description of ringed seals, their range, skeleton, claws, blubber, diet, babies, predators, intelligence, and traditional uses of the seal.

Sara Otterstätter’s illustrations are realistic. The background of every image shows the Arctic sea ice in shades of soft blues, mauves and white. Her illustrations include detail that will help readers learn about the seals and their environment. For example, in the image of the polar bear hunting seals, she shows how the polar bear puts its head down the seals’ hole in the ice to find its prey. The end papers show a selection of images from all of the sections of the book.

Arctic conservation officer, William Flaherty, who also wrote several other books in this series, has done a great job of describing the seals. The reading level of this book is grade 4-6, with few difficult words. The most difficult word is “circumpolar”, which children in non-polar areas might not know. The text is easy to read and flows nicely. Like the images, the text includes details that would help the reader learn about seals. For example, the text section on blubbers is short, but covers the facts about what blubber is and how it helps the seals survive.

This book is highly recommended for all libraries with children’s collections and for anyone interested in seals.

New Publications continued