

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF EXTREME NORTH-EASTERN LABRADOR

By **BERNHARD HANTZSCH**
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[P. 245]

COMMUNICATIONS concerning the mammals of the district now follow. Eskimo hunters could not exist at all without the mammals. The Eskimos travel about and change their habitations according to the occurrence of the different species, in order to hunt with the greatest possible success. In these districts the flesh of animals serves as the most important supply of food, incomparably more than that of birds and fish. The Eskimos use their fat as the most important material for lighting and heating, their skins for clothing, tents and other objects, their sinews for thread, even their bones and teeth for certain tools and weapons, quite overlooking what significance the dog has as the only tame animal. Even if at present because of closer association with the whites, many tools formerly fashioned patiently from parts of the bodies of animals are being acquired by trade, the mammals still furnish to the Killinek Eskimos the bulk of the articles accepted by the station in trade, such as seal skins, which are salted or dried for export, boots made from these, that are worn by the Newfoundland fishermen especially, seal blubber, which they try out for oil, all kinds of skins, which are suited for fur work, occasionally even hides and teeth of walrus and other things besides. [246] The value of the other products of the country traded at Killinek, such as stock-fish, salted trout, fish-oil and eider-down is a great deal less in comparison with these products. Compared with the other Moravian mission districts of Labrador, Killinek has the reputation of being quite a good hunting place, while the more southern stations show more favourable returns in fishing. Since careful investigations in respect to the mammals have never been carried on in the district, it remains a question, whether all the smaller species cited by me, especially where they are not considered as fur-bearing animals, go up northward in this district or find the regular limit of their distribution area in the more favourable parts of Ungava Bay. In like manner, material for many of the

whale species is lacking from this restricted area. I give very careful descriptions only in the case of species of animals, which are of unusual significance for the domestic use of the population. The table of prices, perhaps of interest, which are paid by the stations of the Moravian missions, applies only to skins in winter, and is subject occasionally to even greater changes than I indicate. In the systematic arrangement and nomenclature, I am guided with a few unimportant exceptions by *A List of Land and Sea Mammals of North America, Supplement to the Synopsis of the Mammals of North America* by D. G. Elliott, Columbia Field Museum, Chicago, 1901.

List of the mammals identified for this district which occur there in all probability.

Balæna glacialis Bonnat. Schwarzer Walfisch. Arvek. [*Eubalæna glacialis* (Bonaterre)].—NORTH AMERICAN RIGHT WHALE.—At the present time this whale and the following right-whales have become exceptionally scarce. A dead individual is driven up on the beach only in exceptional cases, though this apparently happened often in earlier times. The ribs of the animal are still to be seen as rafters of old Eskimo houses. No regular hunting of the whales on the part of the whites is pursued in these waters. The whales are said to swim into Hudson Strait in April and May, and they pass by again on the return journey in the autumn.

Balæna mysticetus. L. Grönländischer Walfisch. Arvek.—RIGHT WHALE. BOW-HEAD.—At the present time an adult has a value of 60,000 to 80,000 marks [\$15,000 to \$20,000].

Balæna australis Desmoul.¹ Südlicher Walfisch, SOUTHERN WHALE.—Only in exceptional cases goes up into North Atlantic.

Megaptera nodosa (Erxl.)². HUMPBACK WHALE. Keporkak ? Rare.

Agaphelus gibbosus (Erxl.) Knotenfisch.³

Balænoptera acuto-rostrata Lac. [Lacépède] Sommerwal.—PIKE WHALE. Tigagulik ? Rare.

Balænoptera physalus (L.) Finnfish.—COMMON FINBACK WHALE. Pauniuligarsuvak. Not frequent.

¹ This species is now considered as synonymous with *E. glacialis* (Bonaterre). See Miller, N.A. *Recent Mammals* U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 128, 1924, p. 504.—R. M. Anderson.

² *Megaptera nodosa* (Bonaterre) Tabl. *Encyclop. et Method* Regnes Nature, Citologie, 1789, p. 5.—R.M.A.

³ Considered as synonymous with *Balænoptera acutorostrata* Lacépède. See Miller, N.A. *Recent Mammals*, 1924, p. 506.—R.M.A.

⁴ This species is now placed in genus *Sibbaldus* Gray, 1864, as *Sibbaldus musculus* (Linnaeus). See Miller, 1924, p. 506.—R.M.A.

Balaenoptera borealis Less.—POLLACK WHALE.
Balaenoptera musculus (L.) Blauwal.—SULPHUR-BOTTOM. Tunnilik?⁴

Physeter macrocephalus L. Pottfisch.—SPERM WHALE. Tiggagollik? . Not frequent.⁵

Hyperoodon rostratus (Müll). Dögling.—BOTTLENOSE WHALE.⁶

Mesoplodon bidens (Sow.) SOWERBY BEAKED WHALE.

Monodon monoceros L. Narwal.—NARWHAL, Aglangoak. Rare. During my presence south of Killinek a large, but broken tusk was found there.

Delphinapterus leucas (Pall.) Weissfisch.—WHITE WHALE. Kellellugak.—Frequent at many times. Observed by me also several times. Caught in nets by the inhabitants (in the fall of 1906 about 60), or shot. They eat the flesh, and relish the cooked skin particularly. The oil is prepared at the station.

Phocæna phocaena (L.) Braunfisch.—HARBOUR PORPOISE. Nisa. Nisarsuk.—Not very rare

Orcinus gladiator (Bonnat) Schwertfisch.—ATLANTIC KILLER WHALE.—Pauniuligarsuk. Not very rare.⁷

Globocephalus melas (Traill) Grind-Delphin. BLACKFISH; PILOT WHALE; CA'ING WHALE.⁸

Gramphus griseus (Cuv.)—GRAMPUS.⁹

Lagenorhynchus acutus (Gray).

Lagenorhynchus albirostris Gray.—WHITE-BEAKED DOLPHIN.

Tursiops tursio (Fabr.) Tümmler.—BOTTLENOSED DOLPHIN.¹⁰

Prodelphinus eufrosine (Gray).—NORTH ATLANTIC DOLPHIN.

Rangifer tarandus arcticus (Rich.) Renntier.—CARIBOU. Tuktu.¹¹

The caribou which occur in these districts might belong to this tundra form, in spite of their desire to travel as a rule in small numbers. On rare occasions small herds or scattered individuals lose their way, and come up as far as the Killinek Islands, crossing frozen parts of the Ikkerasak during the winter or swimming across at other times. Farther to the south and farther in the interior of the country the caribou become more

plentiful. The Eskimos travel by sled in the later part of the spring to those districts, also on foot in late summer to hunt the valuable game. The small herds are usually quite shy. As far as the Eskimos are able to do so, they bring to the coast skins and meat of the caribou that are killed. The broad back sinew is especially prized. It is dried, pulled apart like thread, moistened and smoothed with the fingers, and then used as exceedingly strong thread for sewing on leather and fur material. Such sinew has to be imported into Killinek from the more southern stations, where there are more caribou. The natives use the skins as covers for beds, only rarely for clothing. Flesh, tallow, liver, etc., also the stomach contents, are relished. [P. 248] To carry out the repeatedly agitated proposal of introducing reindeer into these districts, and to get rid of the dogs for this purpose, I consider a very hazardous interference with old habits and customs in the life of the population.

Arctomys monax ignavus Bangs. Murmeltier.—LABRADOR WOODCHUCK.¹²

Peromyscus maniculatus (Wagn.)¹³ Avingararsuk.—WHITE-FOOTED MOUSE.—This pretty mouse is rather frequent in places; I observed it repeatedly and also collected it. Their holes in the ground are noticed more frequently than the creatures themselves. They seem to dig down very deep and thus escape the winter's cold. They often come into the houses and nibble at meat and bacon. They keep a cat at Killinek which hunts the intruders diligently, but has to be carefully watched to protect it from the dogs. Mice and rats are said to reach the coast occasionally on ships, but apparently they soon perish.

Evotomys rutilus (Pall.)¹⁴

Evotomys ungava Bailey.

Microtus pennsylvanicus labradorius Bailey. Labrador Kurzohrmaus. Nunivakak.—LITTLE LABRADOR MEADOW MOUSE.¹⁵

Microtus enixus (Bangs).

Synaptomys innuitus medioxinus Bangs.

¹² Now listed as *Marmota monax ignava* (Bangs) type locality Black Bay, Strait of Belle Isle. "Known only from vicinity of type locality; probably south to Hamilton Inlet." Miller, 1924, p. 174.—R.M.A.

¹³ Undoubtedly true *Peromyscus maniculatus maniculatus* (Wagner), which ranges from north of timber line to border of Canadian zone. This is probably the only form of the species which ranges north of the timber line.—R.M.A.

¹⁴ The generic name *Evotomys* Coues (1874) has been shown to be antedated twenty-four years by *Clethrionomys* Tilesius ("Glirium species in Bavaria nonnullae," *Isis*, No. 2, 1850). The type form *rutilus* is restricted to the Old World, and *C. ungava* is only known from Fort Chimo, Ungava Bay. Hantzsch has no actual records of specimens, and as *C. gapperi proteus* (Bangs) has been taken at various points on the Labrador coast, it is probably the prevalent form of Red-backed Mouse.—R.M.A.

¹⁵ The only authentic records we have for *labradorius* up to the present time are from Fort Chimo, Ungava Bay, the type locality, and a few points on east shore of Hudson Bay. *Microtus enixus*, large Labrador vole, has been taken at various points on eastern Labrador coast.—R.M.A.

⁵ *Physeter macrocephalus* is now considered a synonym antedated by *Physeter catadon* Linnaeus. See Miller, 1924, p. 507.—R.M.A.

⁶ *Hyperoodon rostratus* is now considered a synonym antedated by *Hyperoodon ampullatus* (Forster), 1770. See Miller, 1924, p. 516.—R.M.A.

⁷ Synonymous with and antedated by *Orcinus orca* (Linnaeus). See Miller, 1924, p. 511.—R.M.A.

⁸ Species now stands as *Globocephala malæna* (Traill). See Miller, 1924, p. 512.—R.M.A.

⁹ Listed as *Grampus griseus* (Cuvier). See Miller, 1924, p. 511.

¹⁰ Now stands as synonym *Tursiops truncatus* (Montague), 1821. See Miller, 1924, p. 509.—R.M.A.

¹¹ The Ungava form of Barren Ground Caribou has been described as *Rangifer arcticus caboti* G. M. Allen. Proc. New England Zool. Club, Vol. 4, p. 104, with type locality "Thirty miles north of Nachvak, Eastern Labrador."—R.M.A.

Lemmus trimucronatus helvolus (Rich.).—These later species apparently rare or as a rule only in the southern part of the district.¹⁶

Dicrostonyx hudsonius richardsoni Merriam.—RICHARDSON'S LEMMING. Avingak.¹⁷

In the vicinity of Killinek this rodent is by no means rare, but in many years is said to be quite frequent, even if not occurring in bands. The creatures dig rather deep, broad tunnels and have undermined the ground in places to a wide extent. They are shy and are not easily caught in spite of a certain awkwardness. When wounded, they are said to bite viciously. You see them running about most frequently toward evening and in the morning, and hear their squeaking voice. The Zoological Museum in Dresden has secured from me a number of the summer skins which are rare in collections.

Fiber zibethicus aquilonius Bangs. Bisamratte. LABRADOR MUSKRAT. Kivgaluk.¹⁸—Rare in this district; the farther south, the more frequent. Paid fifteen cents for skin.

Zapus hudsonius ladas Bangs. Springmaus.—LABRADOR JUMPING MOUSE.

Lepus arcticus bangsii Rhoads. Polarhase.¹⁹—ARCTIC HARE. Ukkalek.—Quite rare north of the Ikkerasak; towards the south in varying numbers according to the years; on the whole not particularly common. Paid at most for winter skin ten cents. Whether the Labrador hare from the south of Ungava Bay (Fort Chimo) described *L. a. labradorius* Miller, is really to be placed with the above form, and whether it occurs in this district, must be investigated more carefully.

Canis occidentalis Rich.—WOLF. Amarak.²⁰—Is killed rarely, not even annually; seems to inhabit the high plateaux of the interior of Labrador

which have an abundance of caribou. I secured the skull of a young wolf taken by Julius Lane, now in the Zoological Museum in Dresden, which [P. 249] shows scarcely any difference from the skull of an Eskimo dog. Crosses between male wolves and female dogs are said to occur in exceptional cases, although there is generally enmity between the creatures. As was told me, male wolves occasionally follow sleds for many hours without especial fear, before which there are female dogs in heat.

Canis familiaris borealis Dism. Eskimohund.—ESKIMO DOG. Kingmek.—This one domestic animal of this district deserves a detailed description. From outward appearances the resemblance of many Eskimo dogs to wolves is so great, that without further information you are inclined to the view that this race of dogs represents only a tame product of that beast of prey. The manifold variation of the original wild colour into black, white and brown, occurs in all the domestic animals; spotted dogs are seen most frequently. The Eskimo dog possesses much that is like a wolf in his characteristic inclination for companionship with his own kind, combination of cowardliness and wild courage in his nature, desire for hunting and bloodthirstiness toward other creatures, and, above all things, a thoroughly wolf-like, long drawn-out howling or whining voice, of which he gives evidence in horrible concerts especially during bright nights; the creatures do not utter a peculiar baying but at the most, short, yelping sounds. All dogs of an owner who is liked by them, so that they apparently get along well together, stay of their own free will in the vicinity of the house or tent, and know one another and know that they belong together. A good dog team is composed of eight to twelve dogs. Even more dogs are occasionally added though the number often dwindles down to two or three; with such a weak team nothing much can be done. They occasionally build the dogs a shelter out of snow. The creatures also like to seek shelter in summer during rainy and stormy weather. But once in a while they are seen lying in the front room of a house in evil-smelling heaps, over which you stumble easily in the dark, as in the southern mission stations, because the poorest Killinek people live in houses. They tie newly-acquired dogs, or such dogs as wander too far away, by fastening a fore-foot to their neck, or they hang a big stick of wood on them, to hinder them from quick movement. A regular feeding of the dogs takes place when they use them for sled trips. During the rest of the time they give the dogs the leavings from the game and the house-keeping, but otherwise trouble themselves very

¹⁶ Hantzsch is undoubtedly in error in attributing this form to Labrador. *L. helvolus* is known only from northern British Columbia, possibly extending into northwestern Alberta and southern Yukon. *Lemmus trimucronatus*, the Back Lemming or Brown Lemming is known to occur commonly on Southern Baffin Island and on west side of Hudson Bay. Considering the known tendency of this species to periodical migrations, even out on the sea ice, it is not improbable that specimens have come across to the Ungava Peninsula, but I know of no records of such occurrences.—R.M.A.

¹⁷ The Labrador Collared Lemming has generally been considered as a distinct species. *Dicrostonyx hudsonius* (Pallas). The species found on the west side of Hudson Bay is *Dicrostonyx rubricatus richardsoni* (Merriam). The former is of a generally grayish colour and the latter more brownish but not nearly so reddish as the Alaskan form, *D. r. rubricatus* (Richardson).—R.M.A.

¹⁸ The Labrador Muskrat is now known as *Ondatra zibethica aquilonia* (Bangs).—R.M.A.

¹⁹ The status of *Lepus arcticus labradorius* was in doubt for many years, but Allen and Copeland, *Journ. Mammalogy*, 1924, 11, have examined new material and consider it a valid subspecies, recording specimens from Pamialuk, Makkovik, Rama, and Hopedale.—R.M.A.

²⁰ D. G. Elliott in 1900 referred Quebec wolves to *Canis occidentalis*, but as now understood *occidentalis* is confined to the northern interior forests west of the Mississippi River and Hudson Bay (Miller, Smiths. Coll., 1912), and the name *Canis lycaon* Schreber (1775) must stand for the wolves of Eastern Canada and the United States. Wolves intergrade so freely that the tendency of American naturalists is to consider all the large North American wolves as subspecies of the Mexican wolf, *Canis mexicanus* Linnaeus (1766).

little concerning them. Therefore some of the dogs, or whole bands of them, often take long journeys to hunt food on their own account. They find bodies of animals washed up on the seashore, mussels, etc., and since they are not particular they soon dispose of their finds.

They eat everything eatable in hard times, and in this way take care of the hygienic cleaning up of the Eskimo dwelling places. They even eat human fecal matter greedily [P. 250], and lurk often in the background, when an unarmed person secretly leaves the tent. The zoologist, who is collecting skulls of animals, might make great finds near the Eskimo camp, but scarcely ever does he find a thing that is not gnawed and damaged by the dogs. The creatures even hunt up human graves and rob them, if the stone work is not fitted on firmly. In spite of the fact that they can stand hunger for many days, they are able to consume an astonishing amount of foodstuffs; it is not so easy to satisfy their gluttony. If you feed the same beasts several times, they soon come up and hang around you, whenever you show yourself. I had some favourite dogs, especially a fine male dog by the name of Tiger, that was a fine, good fellow; also a timid, suckling female, and lastly a lean, impudent young dog.

I gave them the remains from my bird preparation and thus won their confidence. When I opened my door on mild evenings to let fresh air into my room, big Tiger soon announced himself by a joyous, whining, fawning and wagging of his tail, lay down before the door, and put his beautiful big head with his confiding eyes on the threshold; thus he waited patiently, until something fell down for him.

The dogs were never permitted to enter the room; they might do great damage and are not clean enough for a room. They knew the prohibition quite well, and were afraid of the blows they would get, if they were caught inside. You close the tent entrances carefully when you have to be away only on account of the dogs. Indeed it is not advisable to leave the camp for any length of time without a guard. Whenever I stepped out of the house alone, a whole pack of dogs often surrounded me, jumping up on me with good-natured growling, and pushing me with their muzzles. Often they tried to lick my hand, a thing I sternly forbade. But I never observed that they wished to bite. If a dog does this in a bad humour, the owners almost always kill him. Many times they snap at your hand from mere friendliness and desire to play, as if they wished to make plain their desire to get something. This might turn out badly of course. If you wish to give them something to eat, they try to tear it out of your hands, and can hardly be controlled.

If you throw the bit at them, they plunge upon it, everyone pounces on it in a moment's time, and as a conclusion of this feeding of these beasts of prey, the whole band tear loose upon each other, so that the onlooker becomes anxious. Their raging battles which now and then lead to severe wounds in spite of their shaggy coats, especially if a female is concerned, are just as frequent as disgusting and would make it impossible to permit Eskimo dogs to run loose in this country. Toward human beings the dogs usually act in a cowardly way and quite like other dogs. If they become troublesome, as a rule you only need to bend [P. 251] down as if to pick up a stone, and they slink away at once with hanging head and tail. They are cunning enough to watch to see whether you are in earnest about throwing the stone or not. When the dogs belonging to the mission jumped about me in play, and I would keep them at a distance by picking up a stone, they would retreat a few steps, but crowded against me with sly looks on their faces and playful noises, as if they knew they would get along all right with me, the dog's friend. Paksau acted differently; he caught hold of the first stone in reach and threw it among the dogs with all his strength, quite indifferent where it would strike, so that the dogs soon retreated.

Little children have to be watched on account of the dogs. They say the dogs would jump on a child if one fell to the ground. They are said to do this with grown-up people too, and different reports tell how people have been injured by dogs, indeed even eaten by them.

The female dog gives birth to six, eight and even more young in a secluded place, and protects them from the male dogs, which occasionally show toward their progeny the nature of the beast of prey. Often a strong male dog will voluntarily give her assistance. The splendid "Tiger" was the knightly guard of a growing litter and plunged at once on other dogs that came near the little creatures with bad intentions. Otherwise he was not quarrelsome for his one and a half years, but he knew how to procure respect here by his strong bite. When the pups are larger, the owners have to take care of them, and this is the special task of the Eskimo children. They drag the little whining creatures around and play with them in such a careless way, and so treat them that we would call it torture. If they do not become familiar with human beings in this way, the young dogs are said to be so wild and timid that they cannot be caught or even approached within gunshot, and taming them is out of the question. The Eskimos usually take the dogs with them on very long journeys in the summer; in the winter they use their

strength and endurance as animals to draw the sleds. They hitch the dogs before the sledges with simple walrus hide harness with traces two to five meters in length; guide them by shouts and a long whip with a short handle, and in this way accomplish the quickest and safest travel across the country, that is possible in those districts. In this neighbourhood they use the dogs only in exceptional circumstances for hunting and carrying packs, as is the custom elsewhere in different Eskimo bands.

The price for strong sled dogs is regulated according to quality, age and appearance, the number of animals available and the demand, which varies considerably. The price averages four to five dollars; for good lead dogs, which pull steadily and willingly, double that amount. When the dogs become old, sick or when they bite, they are killed, usually by hanging.

The flesh is not particularly relished, especially at the present time, and not at all if the animal was sick. Epidemics occur occasionally among the dogs, which often cause the loss of a whole team [P. 252]. Young animals often die of distemper. The skin is worth twenty to fifty cents, sometimes as much as a dollar. The skin of young dogs is most prized and serves as trimming for the edge of hood, sleeves, etc.

Vulpes pennsylvanica (Bodd.) Fuchs.—Fox. Terrienniak.—Not rare, even if here on the northern border of its range. The red phase is the most common, the skin having a value of four to five dollars; the Cross Fox (Eskimo, *Akkonavtok*) is more rare, valued at about six dollars, occasionally even more. Rarest of all is the Silver Fox (Eskimo, *Kerneke*), the white tips of which now and then disappear completely, and the animal then looks entirely black. Its skin is worth fifty to one hundred dollars; in some black specimens as much as three hundred dollars. For such valuable skins the Eskimo receives the half of their value at once in his account book, the other part later according to the price which the skin brings in London. They catch at least one and sometimes several of the highly-valued silver and black foxes in this district every year. All three colour phases are said to occur as brothers and sisters in the same litter.

Whether the range of the smaller red fox species, *Vulpes deletrix* Bangs extends northward as far as this district is uncertain.²¹

Vulpes lagopus ungava Merriam. Polarfuchs. Terrienniak.—LABRADOR ARCTIC FOX.—The most frequent species of the larger wild land mammals of this district; also observed by me several times. Their tracks are to be seen anywhere in the snow. The White Fox (Eisfuchs; Eskimo,

Kakkortassuk), which is white in winter, is the most common, the skin is worth about four dollars. The blue-gray phase, The Blue Fox (Blaufuchs; Eskimo, Amgasek) is much rarer and is only caught occasionally, skin worth about six dollars. The abundance of the white foxes varies rather noticeably. The animals are so numerous in many winters, that they can be seen every where and fifty to sixty may be caught by one person. Since it is said that in such years there are also many ptarmigan and hares, the favourite food of the foxes, it is not improbable that these sharp-witted beasts of prey often go long distances, especially to the coast from the interior of Labrador, during the autumns in which there is little food and establish their winter quarters in such localities, where food is to be found. In other years the foxes are exceedingly rare, and the number of those caught drops to one-third of the usual number, and even less. The white fox always forms the most numerous and the most important material of the fur-trade in these districts, when the Eskimos themselves possess no traps. Traps are lent to them by the station authorities, mostly steel traps, more rarely fox-traps which are, of course, suited for other medium-sized animals. All the Company people are in duty bound to sell the skins of the animals caught at the station. The prices are set in London annually, according to the wholesale prices received during the preceding year, for all the mission stations on the Labrador coast, hence change according to the demand and the fashion. The Eskimos often try to sell the skins secretly at a somewhat higher rate [P. 253] though there is little opportunity in Killinek for that. This method of dealing is the regular thing in the more southern stations. For example, I was myself offered in Nain at least twenty fox-skins. This surprised me so much the more, as I had been told by the mission trade inspector for Labrador that every Eskimo who would sell skins elsewhere would be shut out from trade absolutely—the greatest punishment that can be held over the natives by the mission for any sort of grave offense.

I should have liked to take some things home

²¹ How far the mammalogists are justified in separating the closely allied geographical races of the common Red Fox into distinct species is still a matter which is unsettled. At any rate, *Vulpes pennsylvanicus* (Bodd.), for the Eastern Red Fox, is now considered a synonym of *Vulpes fulva* (Desmarest), which is recognized as the form inhabiting the north-eastern United States, Quebec, Ontario, and Northern Manitoba west of Hudson Bay. Geographically the Red Fox of the Labrador coast is presumably *Vulpes rubricosa bangsi* Merriam the Labrador Red Fox, stated by Outram Bangs (1910, p. 667) to be common throughout the whole of Labrador from the St. Lawrence to Hudson Strait. Probably *fulva* and *rubricosa* intergrade somewhere in the interior of northern Quebec, as it is well known that *Vulpes fulva rubricosa* (Nova Scotia), *bangsi* (Labrador), *deletrix* (Newfoundland), *alascensis* (British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska), and *kenaiensis* (Alaska) all interbreed freely on the fur farms.—R.M.A.

in an honourable way, as souvenirs, such as a well-prepared fox for our Dresden Zoological Museum. I was told however, that this would be possible only through the Mission agent in London at the trade price, which could not be determined until the skins were sold during the coming winter.

In marked contrast to the regulations quoted to me, which also made it impossible to secure some skins for scientific purposes, is the communication of Governor MacGregor: Report, 1906, p. 31: "The natives are at perfect liberty, at all the stations to sell to others than the mission if they choose to do so. They do actually dispose of a certain quantity of things, especially of boots and fur to fishing schooners and traders; but the great bulk of their produce they dispose of to the Missions." P. 26: "The natives may buy back anything they may have sold to the mission and at the same price they received for it."

The skins are secured by the natives in the following manner. From the end of October until the beginning of April when the coat of hair is "prime" the natives place out a rather large number of well-baited traps, which are looked over daily or weekly according to the extent of the trap-line and the weather. The best time is said to be the end of December and January. Summer skins have no value at all, autumn and late spring skins only a very small value. The

trapper has to put long distances behind him often in vain; then a fox will be caught but another beast of prey (wolverines are blamed in particular) or perhaps another fox has eaten the helpless fox, and destroyed the skin; at other times no fox or other fur-bearing animal, but a falcon or snowy owl has been caught, or the trap has been pulled away and lost. So trapping remains ever an uncertain calling, which demands much skill and hard work. A man's industry is judged according to the number of fox-skins secured during the winter. The captured animals are killed if necessary, then taken from the trap carefully, and the traps set again. They skin the animals at home by making an incision on the inside of the hind legs, also turning tail, ears and feet completely inside out. Then they scrape the skin carefully until it is clean, stretch it on a board for a few days until it is somewhat dried—quick drying in too great heat may injure the skin [P. 253] and cause the hairs to fall out in the later dressing. Finally they turn the skin right side out and hang it up by the nose for complete drying. It is easily understood, that this work is not too easy in the cramped, dark Eskimo houses, and also not conducive to the improvement of the air, already filled with odours. Luckily there are no moths nor other harmful pests in those districts which would injure the fur.

(To be continued)

AN ANNOTATED LIST OF VASCULAR PLANTS COLLECTED ON THE NORTH SHORE OF THE GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE, 1927-1930

By HARRISON F. LEWIS

(Continued from page 228, Vol. XLV)

MYRICACEÆ

Myrica Gale L.

Watshishu, June 8, 1927, damp, mossy hollow on granitic island. Kegaska River (mouth) June 10, 1927, top of sandy bank on mainland near shore. Wapitagun, June 17, 1927, damp bog hollow. At Natashquan this species in 1928 was observed in bloom at least as early as May 18.

BETULACEÆ

Betula papyrifera Marsh.

Seven Islands, September 7, 1928, face of steep wooded bank of sand and clay. Betchewun, August 25, 1928, old tree in dense woods, chiefly coniferous. Recorded by St. John as *Betula alba* L.

Betula papyrifera Marsh., f. *occidentalis* (Hook.) Fernald.

Net Island, July 4, 1927, precipitous south side of island, at about 100 feet elevation. Recorded by St. John as *B. alba* L., f. *occidentalis* (Hook.) Fernald.

Betula papyrifera Marsh., var. *cordifolia* (Regel) Fernald.

Sholiaban, July 23, 1928, in wooded hollow. La Tabatière, July 21, 1928, in woods that were chiefly coniferous. Recorded by St. John as *B. alba* L., var. *cordifolia* (Regel) Fernald.

Betula glandulosa Michx. x. *B. papyrifera* Marsh. (*B. microphylla* Bunge).

Eskimo Island, August 28, 1928, sunny slope. Bradore Bay, June 30, 1927, wooded thicket on pre-Cambrian formation at head of bay. Blanc Sablon, July 10, 1928, prostrate on sandy hillside, west side of river. Recorded by St. John as *B. microphylla* Bunge.

**Betula papyrifera* Marsh. x. *B. pumila* L. (*B. borealis* Spach).



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