

White Bears and Other Curiosities: The First One Hundred Years of the Royal British Columbia Museum

By Peter Corley-Smith. 1989. Crown Publications, Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria. 148 pp., illus.

Taking his cue from the axiom that people make an institution, Peter Corley-Smith has written a history of the Royal British Columbia Museum which is more of about the individuals who worked there than it is about the museum itself. After briefly outlining the circumstances behind the establishment of the provincial museum in 1886, the author proceeds to tell the story of the institution through the terms of its various directors and scientific staff and how each left their own particular imprint. Corley-Smith also takes time from the main narrative to describe the development of the museum's facilities and programmes, as well as its more notable collecting activities, such as the search for the elusive Dawson Caribou (*Rangifer dawsoni*) on the Queen Charlotte Islands. The text itself is richly illustrated by a num-

ber of fascinating photographs — albeit at times too small — and sketches of personalities associated with the museum.

White Bears and Other Curiosities is intended as a popular account of the provincial museum, and the book's style is easy and engaging — although there is a tendency at times to jump from topic to topic. The author also places greater emphasis on the natural history side of the museum's work at the expense of ethnological activities. Finally, the title is deceptive; although the book is supposed to examine the museum's first century, it deals only with the period from 1886 to 1968.

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The U.S. Outdoor Atlas & Recreation Guide

By John Oliver Jones. 1992. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York. 191 pp., illus. + maps. U.S. \$16.95.

Outdoor recreation is a very big business in the United States. It is difficult to comprehend the immense size of this industry, until confronted with the scale as portrayed in this book.

John Jones has assembled an almost comprehensive inventory of wildlife and outdoor recreation areas in the United States. The goal of the book is to present, in one volume, a listing of all sites along with the critical information that a potential user needs. Maps are included of each state, with coded site information. The book lists all federal agency sites, a selection of state parks and wildlife areas, and a very useful compendium of private reserves. Each site has information on 44 categories, such as: the presence of a visitor centre, handicapped services, wildlife checklists, campsites, permitted activities, and food services. A total of 3987 locations are documented across the United States. All states, including Alaska and Hawaii, are included. Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are not.

A very useful section outlines the availability of maps from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forestry Service (USFS), and the U.S. Geological Service (USGS). Some state map services are also documented.

I am unable to verify the accuracy of the data. The listing of telephone numbers for hundreds of local offices is a gold mine, but one that is sure to become out of date quickly. Given constantly changing circumstances, the book will have to be updated

frequently. I decided to check the map for the State of Washington against the 1983 edition of the Canadian Automobile Association-Reader's Digest excellent book of road maps, *Drive North America*. A few questions arose. Why is Kaniksu National Forest not included? Why is the large Mt. Spokane State Park left out? Why is the office for Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area listed as Clarkston, Washington, when the recreation area is found in Oregon?

The author states that there are far too many state parks and wildlife areas to be included in a single book. I question if this is a real limitation. The author has chosen, quite arbitrarily, to include some areas and leave out others. The omissions are sometimes striking. Presque Isle State Park, in Lake Erie off Erie, Pennsylvania, hosts several million visitors a year in a well-managed, sand spit locale. It was missed in the book. How many other significant state facilities are not included?

The maps are schematic in form. If one wants to actually find these sites, a more detailed road map is needed. The map symbols used to represent sites are little triangles and circles. They give no indication of the size of the site, and only a general indication of its location. A million-acre national forest gets the same size symbol as a 100-acre Audubon nature reserve.

An information source like this would be even more useful if placed into the context of a computerized Geographical Information System and a data base manager. Imagine having the ability to ask



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