

domestic economy of the future. However, it is necessary that all parties involved in wildlife management work together to develop relationships that foster community-based management initiatives.

This book provides an excellent overview of the current roles of wildlife in the northern economies. I would strongly recommend the book to any university student studying in the field of northern resources management.

Rick Riewe is a Professor of Zoology at the University of Manitoba. His fields of interest include northern wildlife management, aboriginal land use, land claims, and the skin clothing of Circumpolar peoples.

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*Bolt from the Blue: Wild Peregrines on the Hunt* by Dick Dekker. Hancock House, 1999. 192pp., colour plates, appendices, references. ISBN 0-88839-434-9. \$19.95 CDN. Reviewed by Dave Mossop.

This is one of those refreshingly untroubled little books that teaches you so much, while you were sure you are just being entertained. What a great idea: celebrate the adventure and pleasure of the art of field observation in nature and juxtapose it with the pursuit of one of the planet's most superlative natural species.

The book's focus is the charisma of the "hunting strategy" of the peregrine falcon, a bird close to the hearts of many northern residents and probably the best scientifically researched bird-of-prey in the world. Yet the tale—for that is what it mostly is, a captivating story of the author's life-long pursuit—maintains its vision firmly planted in the uncluttered realm of the art of Natural History.

To Dick Dekker the peregrine falcon is much more than just a bird; the charisma of the species has him firmly in its talons. *Bolt from the Blue* is drawn entirely from his first-hand field observations. Skills honed almost beyond belief (he confesses to below standard eyesight at the outset) draw the reader in, following along in his old vehicle, crouching in the hedgerows, freezing in the coastal winds, and enduring muscles aching to hold binoculars steady for hours and hours on end. Dekker observed over 2,000 hunts by wild peregrines! Most enthusiasts might only see one or two.

Expect to be spared the coldness of scientific jargon. A graphic designer by trade, an artistic bent has clung to Dekker from his first peregrine encounters in his native Holland to a lifetime progressing from southern Alberta's Red Deer River valley, to central Alberta's Beaverhill wetland, and finally to coastal British Columbia and the Queen Charlotte Islands. The language is artistic. Dekker chronicles the "visceral hunting instinct. . .," the "bolts from the blue," the "source of doom" for their prey, and describes the ultimate predator strategy of this fastest thing on the planet: the "numbing excitement" of a peregrine stoop. His excitement and enthusiasm pulls the reader along. Berating the "sneaky," "thieving," "klepto-parasites"—bald eagles and red-tailed hawks

in particular—that dare to “pirate” prey from Dekker’s beloved subjects speaks more to his passion for this species than anything else.

But expect much more. A figure explores some of the key scientific questions that have been asked of this species for literally thousands of years. Most of us are unaware that very basic issues are still unknown about this species. Why are females of the species larger than the males? What exactly is the speed of a stoop? How is prey selected and why is there so much individuality in this species’ behaviour? How does food caching fit into their lives? Does night hunting occur? A dozen other classic predator-prey “strategies” are questioned and given wonderfully insightful interpretations purely from a naturalist-in-the-field perspective.

Northerners need to read this book for no other reason than to buoy up their pride in the species. It is here that the majority of their breeding occurs (and therefore where most of those “bolt-from-the-blue” stoops also occur). I suspect the scientific community is already picking up future thesis topics from the ideas expressed in this long-overdue book. It was time to back away from dry science and have a fresh look, and Dekker was the perfect person to do so. A sample chapter of this book is available online at <http://www.hancockwildlife.org/test/bolt.htm>.

Dave Mossop is an enthusiastic bird person himself. He’s studied ptarmigans, raptors and songbirds in the Yukon. When he’s not talking about birds to schools, community groups and visitors, he teaches biology at Yukon College.

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*Secrets of Eskimo Skin Sewing* by Edna Wilder. Fairbanks, Alaska: University of Alaska Press, 1998. vii, 133 pp., photographs, diagrams, index. ISBN 1-88963-12-7 (pb) \$12.95 us. Reviewed by Rick Riewe.

This book is a second edition; the original was published in 1976 by Alaska Northwest Books in Anchorage. The only change in the second edition is a new cover and the addition of a 4 1/4 page index. This pocket-sized book (13.5 cm X 20.5cm) is illustrated with two black and white photos, thirty-two colour photos, and thirty-nine drawings. Many of the colour photos are quite small and are lumped together with two to six images on the same page.

Edna Wilder is a well-known Native artist and seamstress from Rocky Point—an Inupiat community about 120 kilometres east of Nome, Alaska on the north shore of Norton Sound. She has written this book for seamstresses who have little or no experience working with skins. She briefly describes the traditional preparation, tanning, storage and use of skins from some of the local animals including caribou, arctic ground squirrel, and haired seal. She also includes ethnographically interesting discussions on the use of bleached seal skins, dehaired seal skins, bearded seal intestines and windpipes, caribou leg skins, bird skins, and caribou and beluga sinew.