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Introduction

Ruled by all-wise laws, every animal fills its appointed place exactly, existing not alone for itself, but forming a necessary part of the vast system of Nature. One class of animals keeps in check certain plants; others prevent the too great increase of these, while those having few enemies are not prolific. Man interferes unwisely, and the border is broken.

—ROBERT KENNICOTT, *QUADRUPEDS OF ILLINOIS, INJURIOUS AND BENEFICIAL TO THE FARMER* (1856)

In the winter of 2020, Inuit hunters in Canada's Central Arctic came across the frozen carcasses of eleven bowhead whales. These enormous marine mammals have made a slow but steady comeback since they were driven to the brink of extinction by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century whalers. Unsure of what had killed the whales, the hunters contacted officials at Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Marine biologists working for the federal government agency were prevented from flying up because of the COVID quarantine. They instead examined photos and tissue samples the Inuit sent.

There was no smoking gun, according to scientist Jeff Higdon. But everyone agreed that the killers were very likely orcas, relative newcomers to this part of the High Arctic. What made this even more intriguing, according to scientist Steve Ferguson, who headed up the study, was that these killer whales were likely members of a previously unknown, but genetically distinct subspecies that migrated into the Arctic from as far away as Spain. They prey on large mammals rather than fish and seals, like orcas in other parts of the Arctic. If their numbers continue to grow, this new subspecies could upend the food web, affecting Inuit subsistence hunting and threatening endangered whale populations.

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FIGURE 0.1. In the winter of 2020, Inuit hunters in Canada's Central Arctic came across the frozen carcasses of eleven bowhead whales that had been attacked by a pod of killer whales. Killer whales had never been seen in this part of the world. Photo courtesy of Lenny Aqigiaq Panigayak.

But that was not the most interesting part of this story.

According to University of Manitoba evolutionary geneticist Colin Garroway, the genetics extracted from the tissues indicate that this “new” subspecies in the Arctic is not actually new. Its origins date back to the last Ice Age, or the last Glacial Period, which occurred between 120,000 and 11,500 years ago. It was the last of multiple periods of glaciation during the so-called Pleistocene epoch (2.6 million to 11,500 million years ago).

“The truth is [the killer whales] were likely always there and looking for an opportunity to get back to places they used to hunt before sea ice prevented them from doing so. They are relics of the last Ice Age that may be trying to go home,” Garroway told me when we spoke.

What triggered the movement of these whales? Genetics and environmental factors often compel an animal to move away from its original point of origin and then back to the same place. This must happen over and over again on a seasonal basis to fit the classic definition of migration. Dispersal, on the other

hand, occurs when animals move from one region to another without returning, at least in the short term. Drought, disease, major landscape changes, and warming water in rivers, lakes, and oceans can trigger this kind of movement.

Zugunruhe is a German word that typically applies to the singing, squabbling, flocking, and fighting that take place among migrating birds in spring. This migratory restlessness in birds and other animals is triggered by genes, light, temperature, and large-scale atmospheric disturbances called Rossby waves. Today, this restlessness is being amplified by sea and landscape changes due to a climate that is warming even faster than it did by the end of the last Ice Age when thirty-eight genera (groups of closely related species) of large animals in North America, and many others dwelling on other continents, disappeared. Five smaller species such as *Aztlanolagus agilis*, a two-kilogram rabbit, and *Capromeryx minor*, an antelope that weighed less than a Corgi, did so as well in the American Southwest and Mexico.

Most migrating species are either staking out new territory, altering their migrations, or simply returning to their old Ice Age habitat—as those killer whales may be doing.

It's not exactly new. Animals have been on the move since the last Ice Age, dispersing to new places or altering their migrations when surging glaciers, sea ice retreat, predators, vegetation changes, wildfires, or weather made the normal routes either too challenging or impossible.

The more opportunistic sometimes venture into new territory. The barred owl, not a typical migrant, has done just that over the past century and a half, as forests replaced grasslands following the near extinction of the plains bison and the rise of wildfire suppression, which allowed trees to take over. The big owl, often referred to as the “hoot owl” because of its “Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you?” call, first showed up in the Yellowstone region in the 1870s, likely coming from the American Midwest before moving into northern Montana around the turn of the century, west to Idaho, Oregon, and Washington in the 1970s, and then north to Alaska and the Northwest Territories.

Even more rare are long-distance dispersals, where a so-called vagrant appears well outside of its normal geographical range. This often happens to nocturnal migrants, usually inexperienced juvenile birds, that might lose sight of landmarks such as shorelines. It can also occur when variations in the earth's magnetic field disorient a bird that uses magnetoreception along with vision to know which direction to fly. Canadian national park biologist Mark Bradley has documented several examples of these unexpected visits in Jasper National Park in the Rocky Mountains of Canada. The most surprising was a crested caracara,

a medium-sized raptor rarely seen north of the Mexican border, that showed in 2015. It was not the bird's only visit to Canada. Another crested caracara was spotted in northern Ontario a decade later. The closely related yellow-headed caracara, which dwells farther south from Panama to Uruguay, does not even appear in North American field guides. It is also on the move showing up recently in states like Florida and Texas and as far north as Delaware.

Occasionally, vagrants manage to colonize new territory. For instance, 90 percent of all elegant terns nest in a single colony on Isla Rasa in the Gulf of California (Sea of Cortez), Mexico. "Screaming masses" of these birds are rarely found away from their range in the eastern North Pacific, but some colonies have been recorded along Atlantic shores in recent years, nesting in Spain and France on rare occasions.

While migrations and dispersals like these have been ongoing for millennia, what's been happening since the turn of the century is much more profound. *Zugunruhe* is playing out at warp speed as former ranges shift or diminish and as new ones open up. In places like the Arctic, warmer temperatures and less sea ice make the region more hospitable for many insects, fish, birds, and other animals.

I caught a glimpse of this in the High Arctic in the summer of 2000 when I was participating in a survey of raptors nesting on the tundra in Aulavik National Park on Banks Island. It was a year after the peregrine falcon had been taken off the endangered species list in both Canada and the United States. Parks Canada, the Canadian park service, was interested in knowing how many peregrines might be nesting there, so that a baseline for future monitoring could be established.

There were far more peregrines, as well as rough-legged hawks, snowy owls, and other birds than we expected to see. We found forty-eight species in all, and there were likely many more that we did not see. Not included on our list were the robins that were spotted on the southwest corner of the island. The Inuit had never seen them before in this area. The biggest surprise was short-eared owls nesting for the first time on Arctic islands.

As impressive as this was, the strange sightings continued. On the way home, I stopped to visit family in the Yukon. The discovery of a dead cougar and the fresh tracks of another earlier in the year confirmed reports of the big cat's unlikely arrival in the territory. It was not a one-off visit. Andy Williams, a pilot who has been ferrying scientists in and out of the mountains in Kluane National Park area for decades, told me he had seen one on a glacier—not hanging around, he joked, but clearly intent on finding a better place to be.

More surprises followed in the coming years with cougars moving east from Alberta and Montana into northern Ontario and Minnesota, testing the limits of their boundaries all the way to Connecticut in one remarkable case. The opportune sighting of a giant black witch, a moth rarely seen north of Texas, on the west coast of Hudson Bay in 2006, was so mind-bending that entomologist Chris Schmidt never fails to mention it to his students. The discovery occurred right around the time and not far away from where I was hanging precariously on a cliffside counting peregrine falcon eggs when I was attacked by yellowjacket wasps, another animal that one would not expect to see in this part of the Arctic.

With each year that passed, there was something new to marvel at: grizzly bears mating with polars bears and producing hybrids, such as the one that was shot off the coast of Banks Island in 2006; the gray whale in the North Pacific that somehow migrated east through the Northwest Passage before being spotted off the coast of Israel in 2010; the muskox that was found in Alberta in 2012. No one on record had ever seen one south of the 60th parallel.

Later that same summer, my companions and I sailed into the Inuit community of Arctic Bay looking to purchase fresh Arctic char. The Inuit there were not netting char, however, as I wrote in my book *Future Arctic* (2015). They were netting Pacific salmon, a fish previously foreign to the region. I thought I'd seen it all until a few years later when I saw a grizzly bear denning in the High Arctic and beavers venturing from the northern edge of the boreal forest onto the tundra in the western Arctic, building dams with thin branches of willow instead of spruce, pine, and aspen.

When I learned about the killer whales in the central Arctic, it was still a surprise, but it was no longer so shocking. I finally realized that these sightings were all part of a larger trend: the ranges of many animals were shifting.

In 2020, scientists from more than a hundred universities from seventeen countries began compiling three decades of terrestrial and marine animal tracking studies. This ongoing study makes it clear that at least ninety-six Arctic and sub-Arctic species are responding dramatically to warmer winters, earlier spring snowmelt and profound landscape changes by migrating earlier, farther afield, and in different directions.¹

These new migrations, especially those over long distances, may not be providing the same benefits as migrations have in the past. Biologist Myrna Pearman has learned through decades of observations that the mountain bluebird has advanced the timing of its migration north by almost three weeks in

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the past sixty years, arriving on the summer nesting sites when there is often still snow on the ground.² Clearly, there was no advantage in arriving early.

Geoff Holroyd, another biologist I have spent some time with over the past thirty years, reports that the least flycatcher in central Alberta is flying south two weeks earlier than it did three decades ago. Several biologists have confirmed that the migration routes of critically endangered southern mountain caribou herds have contracted or diminished over the past thirty-five years.³

Twenty-five studies conducted by another group of scientists identified some common themes related to these and other long-distance migrations: the journeys didn't always lead to more food as predictably as they had done in the past; they exposed the animals to more parasites and pathogens and put them at greater risk of predation than ever before; and they happened at a time when critical resting stopover sites like the Salton Sea and Owens Lake in Southern California were being badly degraded by drought and human developments.⁴

The current movement of these and many other animals throughout the world rivals those that occurred during the ice ages, the last of which ended about 11,500 years ago. During these periods, sea levels dropped by up to 360 feet, exposing a land bridge between Chukotka (eastern Russia) and Alaska. It allowed animals like woolly mammoths, steppe bison, the giant Yukon camel, and Beringian wolves to move from one continent to another in a vast ice-free refugia that came to be known as Beringia, the boundaries of which extended from Siberia and Chukotka into Alaska, the Yukon, and the Mackenzie Valley, and as far north as Banks Island. It was as big a game changer in evolution and biodiversity as the formation of the Isthmus of Panama three million years ago, which created a corridor for animals to migrate between South America into North America.

One might assume that the rapid spread of ice sheets that covered most of North America and other parts of the world would have been hard on these animals and the humans who hunted them. They often were. But Grant Zazula, a Yukon government paleontologist who knows as much about Ice Age animals as anyone, is quick to point out that during the peak of the last Ice Age between 27,000 and 19,000 years ago, not all was a "glacial hell" as most people assume. There was more biodiversity in Beringia than there is now. There were six large carnivores living there at this time: American lions, scimitar cats, cheetahs, Beringian wolves, grizzlies, and giant short-faced bears hunting mammoths, steppe bison, Saiga antelope, caribou, helmeted muskoxen, horses, and woolly rhinoceros, which migrated as far east as Chukotka 14,000 years ago and may have reached Alaska before it went extinct. Ancient black-footed

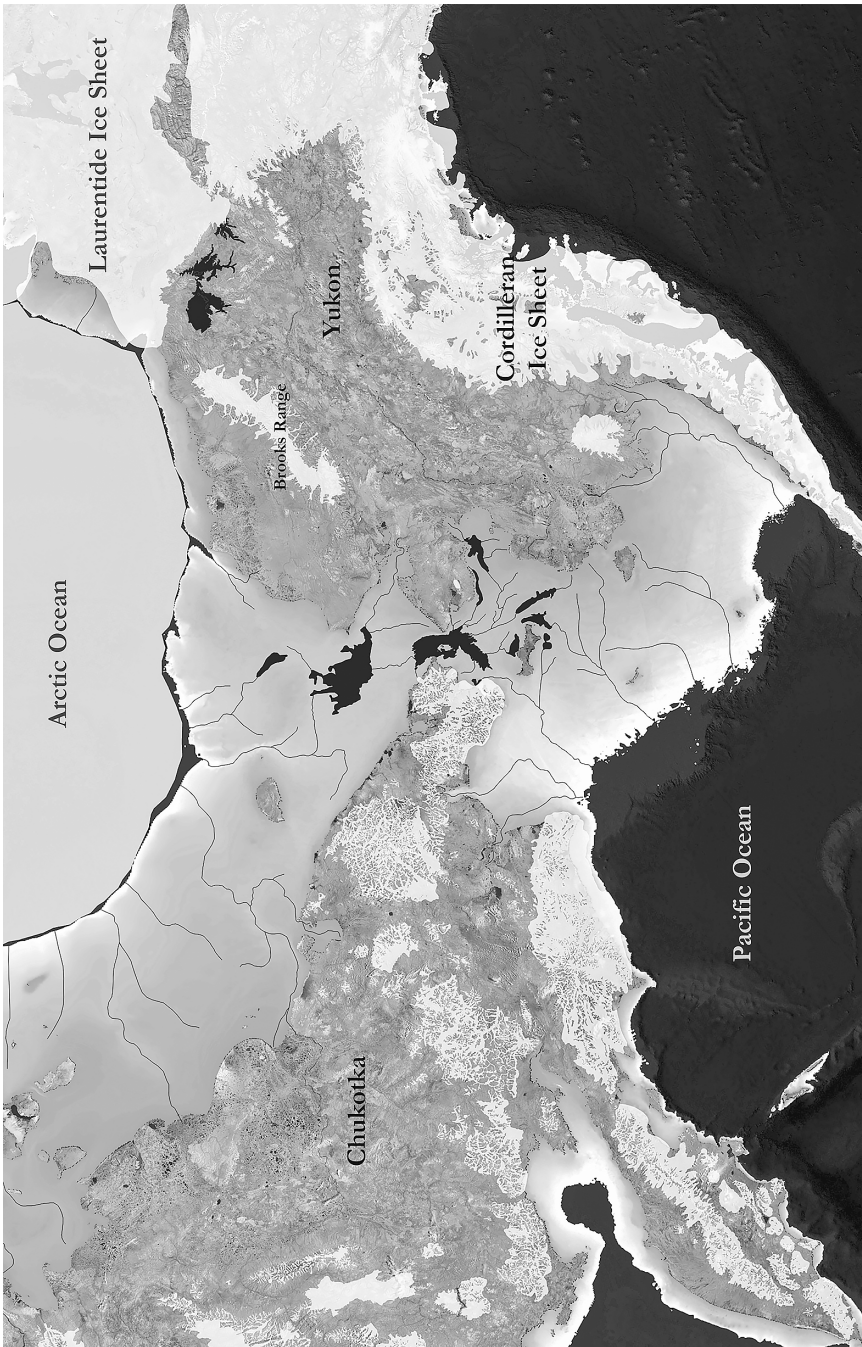


FIGURE 0.2. Map of Beringia. Courtesy of the Yukon Geological Survey, Government of the Yukon Territory and Jeffrey Bond.



FIGURE 0.3. *Beringia Winter Scene* by Rinaldino, © Government of Yukon, 1997. Original artwork by George “Rinaldino” Teichmann—Rinaldino Art Studios. Published by permission of Government of Yukon, Department of Tourism and Culture—Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre, www.beringia.com.

ferrets, one of Zazula’s obsessions, did not hunt prairie dogs as they do now. They hunted ground squirrels, which were plentiful at the time.

Most large Ice Age animals, like the woolly mammoth, steppe bison, scimitar cat, caribou, and giant short-faced bear persevered through the many violent swings in climate that occurred over the past 115,000 years. Some, like bighorn sheep, bison, and elk decreased in size through the last Ice Age.⁵ Curiously, many others did not undergo the rapid physical changes that modern animals like the Galapagos finch and the hermit thrush have been undergoing in response to drought and higher temperatures.⁶

Most of those animals that went extinct or began to decline before and after the last Ice Age ended with variations in the amount of sunlight that reached the northern hemisphere. These small variations, which are driven by changes in the geometry of the earth’s axis, triggered feedback loops that amplified the warming. Sea ice retreated and snow melted earlier, reducing the amount of sunlight that was reflected back into the atmosphere. As sea ice melted, the oceans warmed and released dissolved carbon dioxide, which trapped even more heat. As temperatures rose from 3 degrees to perhaps as much as 8

degrees Celsius (5–15 degrees Fahrenheit), permafrost thawed, releasing greenhouse gases that had been frozen in peat. In relatively short order, ecosystems were transformed by wildfire, floods, and by rising temperatures and a wetter climate that favored the growth of some trees and shrubs over the vegetation that thrived in drier, colder conditions.

Now that it is heating up even faster than it did at the end of the last Ice Age, there's good reason to believe that something as catastrophic will happen again.

Pinpointing the cause of these extinctions could provide vital clues into what might happen in the future as species continue to move, interact, and evolve in novel ways, and as the climate continues to warm dramatically. But that has been challenging because the fossil record of animals living and migrating during the Ice Age is scant and confined to a handful of treasure troves such as the Upward Sun River site in interior Alaska, Old Crow Flats and the Klondike gold fields in the Yukon, Fossil Lake in Oregon, the La Brea Tar Pits in Southern California, Pucuncho Basin in Peru, and Monte Verde in Chile. Some of the richest fossil sites are likely in coastal areas that are now underwater.

Ice Age science has historically suffered from neglect. The Pleistocene, the Ice Age period that began around 2.5 million years ago has been overshadowed in science and pop culture by the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods when dinosaurs ruled. Up until very recently, we knew more about T-rex than we did about the short-faced bears, American camels, and flat-headed peccaries (Ice Age pigs) that lived in the Beringian world. The existence of the Beringian Land Bridge connecting Siberia to Alaska was not firmly established until the mid 1960s, when humans knew enough about the Moon to plan and eventually land on it in 1969. A decent map of what Beringia looked like wasn't forthcoming until 2019, when the geography of many parts of the planet Mars had already been mapped in better detail.

Many other questions remain about Ice Age extinctions. For a long time, many scientists believed that humans were the main cause for these mass extinctions. Some still do.⁷ Others point to vegetation changes that came so quickly because of a rapidly warming climate to which many animals didn't have time to adapt. Disease has been implicated, as has wildfires that burned bigger and more often in some places. Flooding of biblical portions that followed the retreat of glaciers would not have helped those dwelling on the fringes. It may have also cooled the warming oceans. A few continue to believe that an asteroid may have caused these extinctions. It may well be that

rain-on-snow events like those occurring more often today made it impossible for some animals to dig through an icy surface to get to food below.

Paradox prevails in our understanding of this past for a number of reasons. We tend to think of humans as always having been at the top of the food chain, instead of hunter-gatherers who may have relied more on scavenging injured animals or animals killed by giant short-faced bears, American lions, and other Ice Age carnivores. We also assume that plants and animals thrive in a stable environment. Many do. But the genetic diversity most animals need for long-term survival depends in part on instability. All nature is at war, as Darwin liked to say. Instability that comes with war triggers migrations and dispersals, which, in turn allow animals to develop traits that help them to breed more successfully.

This may explain why mammoths, mastodons, and short-faced bears failed to endure in rapidly changing landscape while muskoxen, caribou, and cougars survived. Muskoxen, caribou, and cougars may have been better equipped to develop the traits needed to persevere through periods of instability like the one that ended the last Ice Age. It may also explain why butterflies, beetles, spiders, bees, and other insects demonstrated a remarkable degree of stability throughout the many climatic oscillations of the Ice Age.⁸

We still have a lot to learn about animal migrations, both in the deep past and today. Early on, our understanding was constrained by Greek myths, religious beliefs, and then later by the refusal to embrace Darwin's theory of evolution. Because there was no way of tracking animals and dating fossils from the prehistoric past up until the 1950s, scientists preoccupied themselves with the chronology of human and animal migration.

Still, a great deal has been learned about the Ice Age and modern-day animal as well as human migration in recent years thanks new tools such as environmental DNA, genetic material collected from samples of soil or other substrates. There has been an explosion of animal migration and movement studies in the twenty-first century. When I conducted a search of the Web of Science on February 28, 2026, for the words "animal migration," more than fifteen thousand open access entries were revealed. More than a third of the entries had been made since 2020.

We now know that with the advent of the last Ice Age many bird species were forced to abandon their northerly migrations or cut them short for thousands of years. Ice Age animals like the woolly mammoth traveled as much as seventy thousand kilometers in a lifetime searching for food in a harsh Beringian landscape where resources were likely scarce.⁹ Woolly mammoths may have staked

their claim in the northern half of the continent while the Columbian mammoth was content to dwell in the south from the Pacific to the Atlantic Oceans. And there now appears to be a third mammoth that inhabited Mexico.

Migrating animals refine their behavior as they get older and with each generation, suggesting that experiential learning is an important part of successful migration. It's as much cultural in some cases as it is genetic. Animals are moving distances two to three times shorter in areas disturbed by humans than in the wilderness. Many migrating animals have genes that appear to trigger their seasonal movements.

Despite many intriguing advances in science, the migration and movement of many animals remain a mystery for a variety of reasons.

As with all science, our knowledge is limited by our values and priorities. There is a strong bias in favor of tracking huntable and endangered species at the expense of those considered to be of least concern or undervalued. Studies of animal movement tend to focus on understanding "typical" movement patterns rather than understanding variation in movement.¹⁰ Long-term tracking of most animals has been spotty at best because of funding issues.

Even when we would like to track a species, we are sometimes limited by technology: tracking songbirds and insects was virtually impossible until recently because tracking devices were too cumbersome for them to carry. The elusive nature of some animals, such as birds like the yellow rail, poses a challenge because they are hard to find. I have heard but never seen one. Then there are those animals like the muskox, as quintessential an Ice Age survivor as there is, that have gotten little attention until recently because of massive die-offs. The number on Banks Island and Victoria Island in the High Arctic, where a majority of the world's muskoxen live, has dropped from nearly 100,000 in the 1990s to 16,500 in the 2020s.

It can also be challenging to study migration and movement amid all the other issues impacting animals. Identifying and opening up corridors that facilitate the movement of animals is problematic when there are so many people and so much industry on the landscape getting in the way. We are also just beginning to understand how wildfires and the massive plumes of smoke that come with them affect migration and dispersal, and how migration may spread disease from one species to another.

Even when we know a lot about migration of some animals like the northern saw-whet owl, which has been banded and tracked for more than century, they and many other animals continue to surprise us, as rufous hummingbirds do in making a three-thousand-mile flight from Mexico to Alaska each year. In



FIGURE 0.4. Muskoxen are quintessential survivors of the last Ice Age. Photo by Edward Struzik.

2018, an Arctic fox traveled more than two thousand miles from Norway to the Canadian Arctic in three weeks, crossing the frozen ocean and the Greenland Ice Cap along the way. In 2014, a female grizzly named Ethyl stumped everyone involved in tracking her when she set off on a long journey through Montana and Idaho over mountains, along and across many busy highways, through landfills, and people's backyards. Polar bears, we know, stubbornly stick to their territory in twenty areas of the circumpolar world even when receding sea ice makes it difficult for them to put on the energy reserves they need to survive and reproduce. But every once in a while, a polar bear ventures off on a long-distance journey, as one did for 798 days in the spring of 2009, traveling 11,686 kilometers from northern Canada to Arctic Russia and back.

The beginnings and endings of animal dynasties are complex and not well understood as the scant fossil records of the Ice Age demonstrates. What we do know is that if one species is removed, another sometimes takes its

place in larger numbers. We are seeing this happen today when bees, moths, butterflies, and other specialists are dying off, leaving less competent pollinators to take over. When that happens, fewer seeds fall, and fewer seedlings spread. In the end, herbivores decline, and their predators begin dying away soon after. We are seeing this at the top levels of the food chain, also, with killer whales moving into once-unreachable parts of the Arctic, such as those that killed bowhead whales in the Central Arctic in 2020. With sea ice receding, the polar bear may no longer be the only king of this polar world. In southerly locales such as western and southern Hudson Bay, it may disappear.

There's a lesson here for humans. Where animals went, humans followed, as they did during the midst of the Ice Age 45,000 years ago when they began populating Europe. Many of them persevered even as temperatures fell and the ice sheets spread to their maximum coverage between 27,000 and 19,000 years ago. Through many generations, some of them followed the animals that crossed the Bering Land Bridge all the way to the tip of South America. Not all of them persevered. Some cultures collapsed with the mass extinction of so many Ice Age animals. Indigenous people in the Arctic fear that another mass extinction will put an end to their way of life.

Most scientists are justifiably concerned about another mass extinction looming. With temperatures rising by 3.2 degrees Celsius, geographic range losses of more than 50 percent are projected in about 49 percent of insects, 44 percent of plants, and 26 percent of vertebrates. It won't be as catastrophic if we can find a way of controlling greenhouse gas emissions. At 2 degrees Celsius, projected range losses fall to 18 percent of insects, 16 percent of plants, and 8 percent of vertebrates. At 1.5 degrees Celsius, they fall to 6 percent of insects, 8 percent of plants, and 4 percent of vertebrates.¹¹

Migrating animals are the most vulnerable. Among the 577 animal species that migrate north into Canada from the United States and other more southerly wintering grounds, a quarter are considered to be at risk of extinction. Slightly more than 20 percent of the planet's migratory animals face similar extinction threats.

But hidden in the rising mountain of sobering data are animals that continue to surprise us: cougars and grizzly bears are expanding their range, salmon and killer whales are returning to the Arctic, non-migratory Anna's hummingbirds are overwintering in Alaska, and the North American waterfowl population has remained relatively stable over the past half century in spite of climate change, drought, and the systematic degradation of wetlands.

Taking the long view, Grant Zazula believes there is much we can learn from the past. Extinction, he says, is often critical for evolution to be possible. Climate change contributes to evolution in many ways, be it during periods of intense cold or periods of rapid warmth. Chaos can lead to more genetic diversity.

At the risk of giving the movie *Jurassic Park* too much credit, there is one Darwinian line in it that rings true: “If there is one thing the history of evolution has taught us, it’s that life will not be contained. Life breaks free. It expands to new territories, and crashes through barriers, painfully, maybe even dangerously.”

There will always be winners that break free, expanding into new territories, and losers that stay put and allow nature to select them for extinction. Animals that survive do it either through adaptations they acquire genetically from natural selection or through phenotypic plasticity, the ability to change behavior or physiology in response to novel circumstances. It may be the reason why there is an increasing number of migrants that are becoming *synurbic*, choosing to live where we do, or staying put instead of migrating, as the springbok, black wildebeest, kulan, scimitar horned oryx, and birds like the Canada goose are doing. This is not necessarily a good thing. Human activity and urbanization can rapidly alter the ecology and evolution of animals. Since coyotes began settling into the urban environment of the Greater Los Angeles area, for example, gene flow has been reduced, and genetic diversity has been eroded in ways that could undermine their health.¹²

The difference between what is happening now and what happened during and after the last Ice Age is that the world is warming a lot faster. This is coming at a time when, at least from a geological timeline, we should be entering another ice age. Humans are largely responsible for this warming by burning fossil fuels that produce greenhouse gases. Humans are also no longer hunting with spears and bow and arrows. They have guns and snowmobiles, motor-powered boats and fish finders that do away with the need to know where and why fish go to feed. Humans are building roads to mine sites and drilling for oil and gas on land and offshore. They are shipping these resources through narrow strait like the Bering Sea and moving from one place to another in numbers never seen before in human history. They are triggering wildfires that are burning bigger and hotter and lasting much longer.

Realistically, there is no way we are going to be able to stop sea ice from melting, oceans from rising, and permafrost from thawing. At least not in the short term. Wildfires will continue to burn hotter and more often and move

faster, even in wetlands like the Yukon/Kuskokwim Delta and on the tundra of the North Slope of Alaska. Flooding will increase as the jet stream continues to weaken and fail to move rain-soaking low-pressure systems from west to east.

What we can do is learn more about extinctions of the past to make better decisions in the future. We may be able to mitigate the impacts of extinctions or facilitate animal recoveries. We've done this before, just as we did when the peregrine falcon, whooping crane, and plains bison were on the brink of extinction. If we don't, those species that are now on track for extinction will be gone or critically endangered in the coming decades. It will be far worse than what happened when the world warmed so rapidly during the last Ice Age.

In the chapters that follow, we'll begin with an exploration of all we've learned about the migration and movement of animals during the last Ice Age, including how humans have reshaped the world to disrupt animal migration. We'll then carry these lessons forward into the present day to see how animals are altering their migrations on a changing planet. This book is as much about survivors as it about those animals that can no longer be found alive. It's also about solutions, both new and old, that can stave off future losses.

Exploring and learning more about the Ice Age past to better understand the future is in some ways a mystery story, which writer Arthur Conan Doyle once described being as filled with obvious things that nobody by chance ever observes. A new breed of scientist earnest in looking for clues is increasingly relying on the help of the public (citizen science) and the wisdom of Indigenous people to solve this cold case. This is a story of visionaries who have come up with ways to prevent environmental crimes and misdemeanors from happening again. There are many red herrings and skeptical scientists that divert attention away from the main characters trying to piece together the puzzle. New tools such as environmental DNA, stable isotopic fingerprinting, environmental game theory, and statistical methods like phylogenetic regression come into play in good, fascinating, and sometimes misguided ways.

Although we've learned a lot, not all these mysteries have been solved. But we do have clues pointing us in the right direction. Many of our approaches to wildlife were designed decades ago, when the climate was more stable, as it was 27,000 to 19,000 years ago in Beringia. We need to change our strategies as fast as the climate is changing. The end of the last Ice Age is proof of that.

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