

Book Review

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF MARINE MAMMALS. James F. Gesualdi, Esq. Edited by John R. Twiss, Jr. and Randall R. Reeves, 471 pp. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1999. ISBN 1-56098-778-2.

This coursebook-like compilation features contributions from thirty-one (31) individuals on selected topics in marine mammal conservation and policy. Throughout the book, the various authors stress the difficulties encountered with many marine mammal issues (including ecosystems, habitat degradation, fisheries interactions, endangered species, strandings and die-offs), as well as the need for multi-disciplinary approaches to their resolution. This certainly reinforces the potential appeal and utility of this volume for administrators, curators, educators, researchers, trainers, policy-makers, and yes, even lawyers.

While the entire book warrants the interest of any serious 'student' of contemporary marine mammal issues, several chapters provide essential reading for those in the public display community. These chapters include the following: 'The Evolution of North American Attitudes Toward Marine Mammals', by David M. Lavigne, Victor B. Scheffer, and Stephen R. Kellert; 'The Laws Governing Marine Mammal Conservation in the United States', by Donald C. Baur, Michael J. Bean, and Michael L. Gosliner; and 'Marine Mammals in Captivity', by Randall R. Reeves and James G. Mead.

The chapter on attitudinal changes includes a useful survey of various indicators of societal perspectives. Whether one accepts the posited conclusions, an awareness of the substantive factors is critical to the continued advancement of the public display community.

The legal chapter details both general species conservation oriented protections as well as those

afforded individual marine mammals in various federal legislation including the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Animal Welfare Act. Again, though the reader may take exception to some characterizations, this part of the book includes a very readable summary of recent legal developments relating to the respective roles of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service), Commerce (National Marine Fisheries Service) and Interior (Fish and Wildlife Service). Omitted from the discussion was any meaningful reference to the Marine Mammal Negotiated Rulemaking conducted in 1995-6 as well as the legal issues regarding release to the wild, including the recent administrative law judge decision in the Sugarloaf Dolphin Sanctuary matter.

After providing a most illuminating table on the known record of all species of marine mammals maintained in the care of humans, the chapter on 'captivity' presents a series of the frequently proffered arguments for and against 'captivity' or public display. The arguments advanced for public display include the educational and scientific research benefits of marine mammals in public display as 'ambassadors' for those in the wild; the relative advantages of life in the care of humans; the public display community's support of stranding, rescue and rehabilitation efforts; and populations in the care of humans serving as a hedge against extinction. The arguments against public display include potential impacts of collection on wild populations, survivability and the animal rights perspective.

In short, *Conservation and Management of Marine Mammals* is very readable, often thoughtful, sometimes provocative, and absolutely indispensable for those seeking to take stock of marine mammal issues at the millenium.

