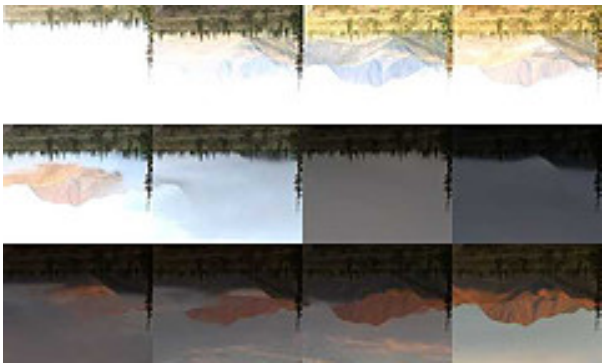


Ivvavik is in of one of the most biodiverse regions of the Western Arctic and its Inuvialuktun name *Ivvavik* means nursery or place of giving birth. It is a portion of the calving grounds and migration route of the Porcupine Caribou herd which migrate from Ivvavik into into an area of the Arctic National Wildlife that is threatened with oil extraction.



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Diary 2 (Beringia, journey across time)

Alice Angus



Beringia

In the summer of 2003 I spent several weeks in the Northern Yukon, began a collaboration with Joyce Majiski (artist and guide) and participated in a residency in Ivvavik National Park in the northwestern Arctic. This eBook is one of a series from the sketchbooks of that journey.

Time

Bordered on the north by the Beaufort Sea and Alaska on the west, Ivvavik National Park sits at the north western tip of Canada's mainland. It is part of the Beringia Refugium, an area untouched by the last glaciation. With little snowfall and water locked in the ice caps, sea levels dropped and a ice free land bridge formed between present day Alaska and eastern Siberia that migrating humans and animals from Asia into North America about 24,000 years ago.

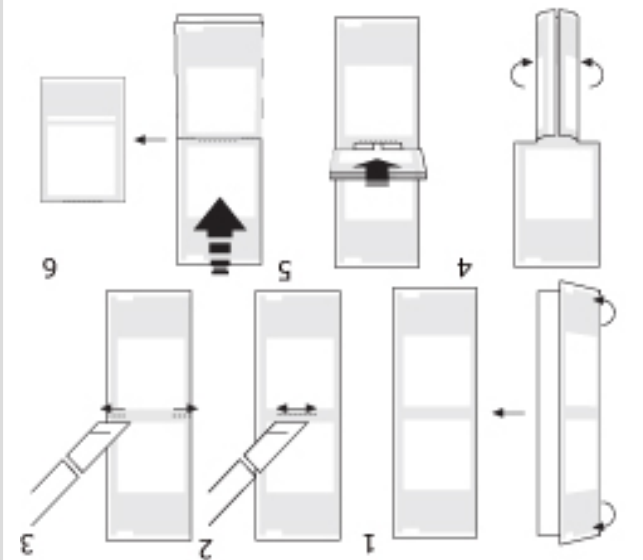


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Alice Angus

created on: Fri Oct 19 08:08:26 2007

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1. Arctic Haze further information
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arctic_haze
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/MediaAlerts/2006/2006051022278.html>
2. Porcupine Caribou Herd
Porcupine Caribou Management Board
<http://www.taiga.net/pcmb/>
- Being Caribou
<http://www.beingcaribou.com/>
3. Sheila Watt-Cloutier
Quoted on;
<http://www.vitalgraphics.net/arctic.cfm?pageID=1>
Further information: Inuit Circumpolar Council
(Canada) <http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/index.php?ID=34&Lang=En>

To many people the Arctic is invisible beneath an aura of romanticism portrayed, as it has been, through the history of polar exploration, in paintings, literature and latterly photographs, as a landscape of sublime desolation. To some I expect, it's not a place but an imaginary landscape far away from their everyday lives. But to the people who live, and have lived there for thousands of years, it is surely *home, homeland, backyard*, a place alive with the struggles of everyday life as it is faced with the harsh reality of climate change and pollution.

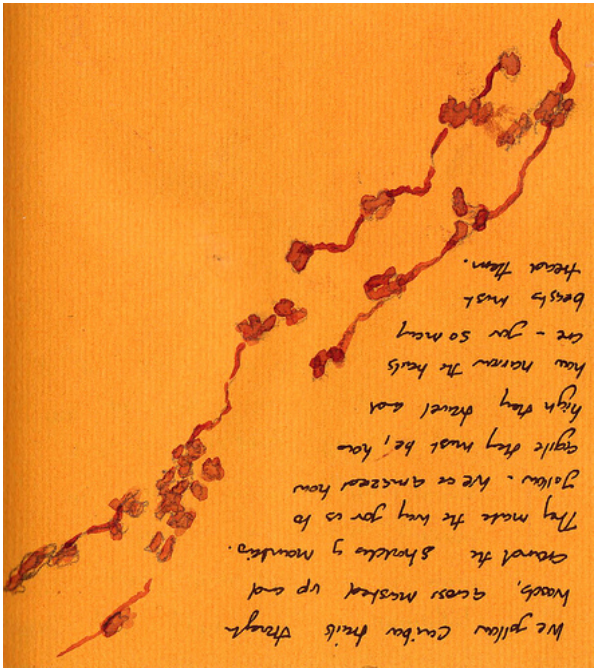
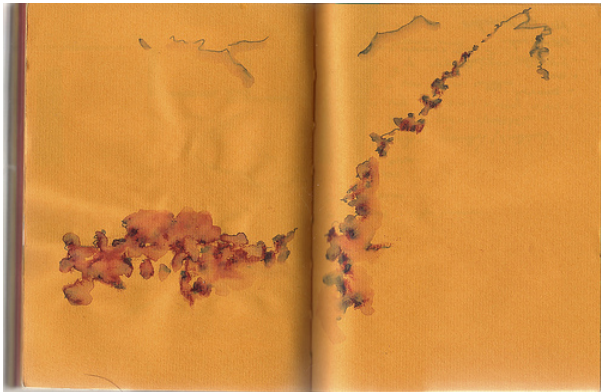
To many environmental organizations the Arctic is wilderness to be preserved. To industry it is a frontier and a source of energy and minerals to be exploited. But to the 155,000 Inuit living in Canada, Alaska, Greenland and Chukotka in Russia the Arctic is home with all that this implies. Shiela Watt-Cloutier. (3)



Time's geological pace is etched across its purple and ochre mountains, geological events, erosion and climate changes have transformed this

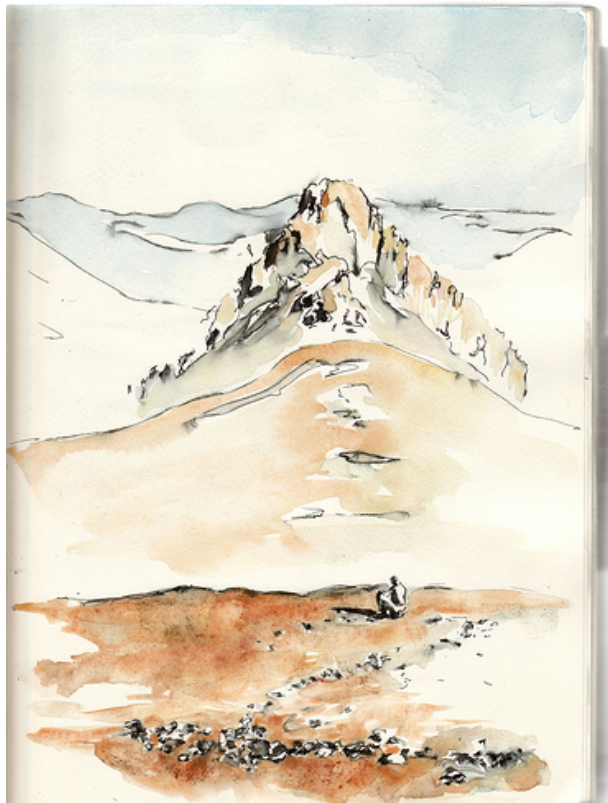


Caving there is a defining characteristic of the herd. So important are the calving grounds the Gwich'in people refer to them as the "sacred place where life begins". The herd is central to the lives and culture of the many First Nations people who live in its range. If the area is opened for drilling many people believe it will result in untold damage to the herd and the people whose lives and traditions depend on it. But with some people reliant on the caribou and others on an economy derived from oil the issue is complex. (2)



quarter of a million move through Yukon NWT and Alaska. Pregnant cows lead the herd out of Ivvavik and into the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge - in particular onto the 1002 lands - an area rich in oil reserves.

landscape many times but at first sight the land seems to sleep.



increase their ability to retain heat.(1) The seasons and weather are unpredictable and the land feels unfamiliar. Traditional techniques are no longer reliable. Such is the speed of change that as phenomena and species are lost and new ones arrive, in some cases there are no indigenous names to describe them.



One day we see five caribou. Hoping they herald the arrival of thousands we wait for the rumbling of hooves to flow over the valley. The Porcupine Caribou are the largest migrating herd, nearly

Unglaciated, the land forms are rounded and heaped in massive ripples like flesh sagging over the gargantuan back bones of hibernating monsters, piled up in humps like the shoulders of dinosaurs or moulded as if by a monumental hand. Sometimes the land falls away to reveal rocky tors and ochre tinged ridges, the sharp spines of iron clad dragons. Or it rolls into purple and grey venerable pachyderms, the ancients of days, great elephant's backs or a rhinos skin mapped with the passing of time. Here and there are single pointed peaks, perfect cones of loose pebbles rising precariously, steep sided isolated hills appearing as soft as the sand in an hourglass, as if some gods pondered there a while at the beginning of all things and let ochre earth run through their great fingers, doodling with the stuff that made the world. Yet beneath this illusion of timeless certainty is a shifting landscape where every story is complex and multilayered. In the worlds wildernesses like Ivvavik it is easy for a visitor to be lost in such a reverie of wonder that they miss the traces of the lives and culture that are part of them.

Across the Arctic global warming and pollution alter the landscape; permafrost melts and the tree line advances more than it has done in living memory. The Arctic Haze of pollution visible since the industrial revolution, combines with clouds to

