

Smart Stuff

with Twig Walkingstick



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION
OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

For the week of
Jan. 13, 2008

Q. Dear Twig: What about other Arctic animals? If the ice cap melts, what will it mean to them?

A.: Certain **seals** — ringed, ribbon and bearded seals — need **sea ice**.

They give birth to and nurse their pups on it. They rest on it. They hunt near and under it. "Adapting to life on land," says a report called the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, "seems highly unlikely for these species."

Millions of **birds** — ducks, geese, others — fly north to nest on the **tundra** (frozen Arctic ground) in summer. The tundra, however, might shrink or thaw or even sprout trees due to melting. "Important breeding and nesting areas," the same report says, "are projected to decrease sharply."

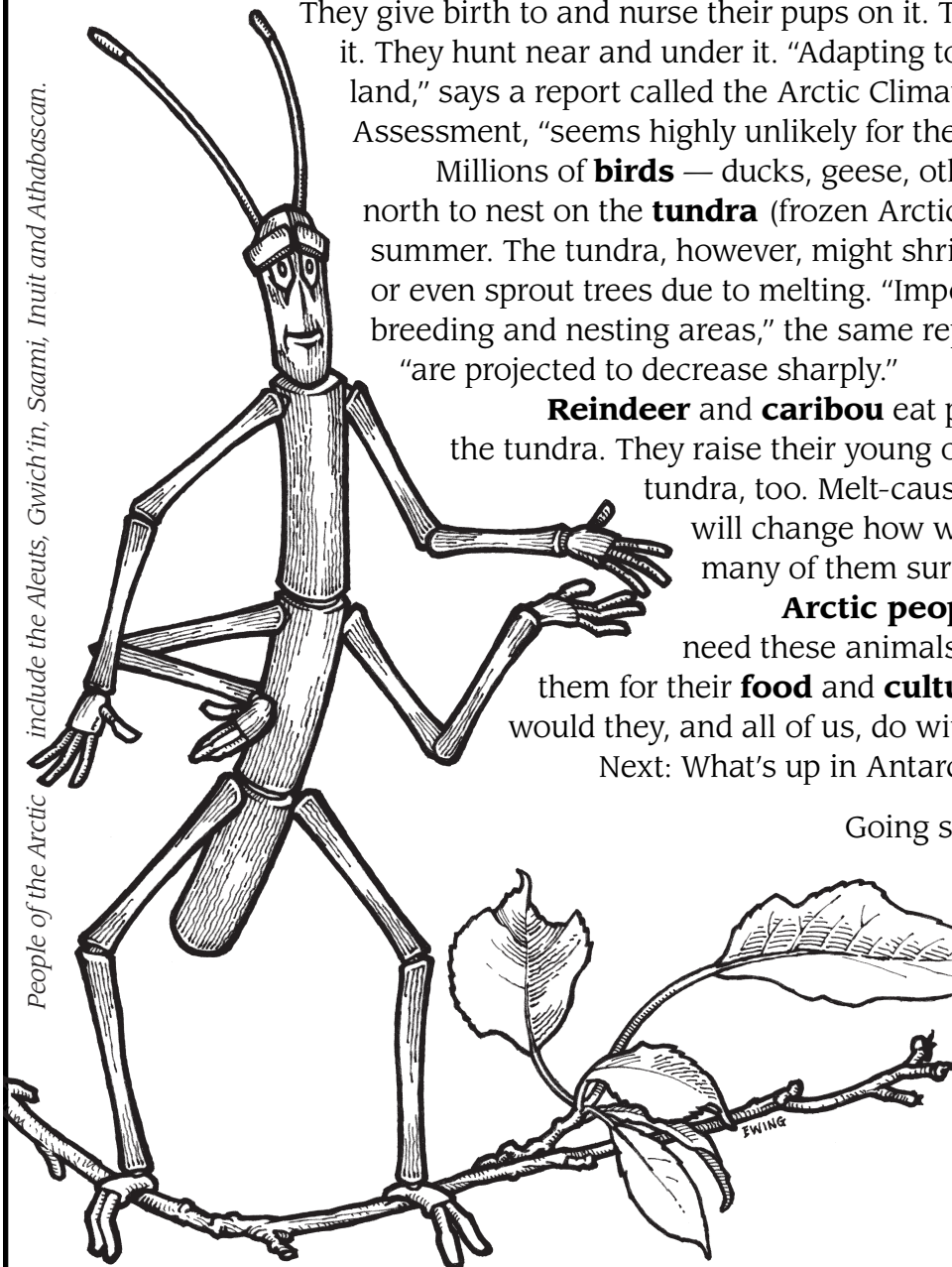
Reindeer and **caribou** eat plants on the tundra. They raise their young on the tundra, too. Melt-caused changes will change how well and how many of them survive.

Arctic people in turn need these animals. They need them for their **food** and **culture**. What would they, and all of us, do without them?

Next: What's up in Antarctica?

Going south,

Twig



People of the Arctic include the Aleuts, Gwich'in, Saami, Inuit and Athabaskan.

From your scientific friends at The Ohio State University — specifically, the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (www.oardc.ohio-state.edu) and OSU Extension (extension.osu.edu).

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Notes: Different spellings exist for many of the names of Arctic people. For example, Sami instead of Saami, Athapascan instead of Athabaskan, Kutchin or Gwitchin for Gwich'in. Learn more at Web sites such as Arctic Peoples, <http://www.arcticpeoples.org/>, and All Things Arctic, <http://www.allthingsarctic.com/people/index.aspx>; in the book *Journey Into the Arctic* (2003) by Bryan and Cherry Alexander; and in the film "Great North" (2001). About the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment: Get the full scientific report, a shorter synthesis report, an even-shorter highlights brochure and more at <http://www.acia.uaf.edu/>.

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