



The Kayaker's Companion

Annotated Bibliography

Glacier
Bay

DAVID BAHR

The essential Glacier Bay reference.

Annotated Bibliography for Glacier Bay

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve generates astounding heaps of scholarship and literature covering everything from stuffy academic books about the park's history, culture, and science to vaguely useful travel-ogues, mind-numbing administrative paperwork, and money-grubbing schemes. Focusing on references most relevant to the three-volume *Kayaker's Companion to Glacier Bay, Second Edition*, this bibliography compiles and comments on the best, most interesting, most fun, and /or most incriminating resources. All the park's major and minor wordsmiths and memoirists are here, from John Muir, Eliza Scidmore, and Harry Reid to modern ethnologists, beat reporters, and park staff.

DAVID BAHR is a glaciologist and photographic artist.
He was the 2013 Artist-in-Residence at Glacier Bay.

- ★ **THE ANNOTATIONS** summarize key points for each reference
- ★ Assigns easy to see colors indicating a citation's relevance
- ★ Notes bloopers and errors
- ★ Praises the worthy but politely eviscerates the odious
- ★ Discusses the repetitive 18th century travelogue surplus
- ★ Warns of eyewitness unreliability and the resulting contradictions
- ★ Has 1,287 references.

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The Kayaker's Companion to Glacier Bay

Annotated Bibliography

David Bahr

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Contents

Introduction	1
A (Aaerud to Associated)	7
B (Badè to Byersdorfer)	15
C (Cade to Cushing)	36
D (Dahle to Dyurgerov)	50
E (Eckert to Ewart)	59
F (Fahs to Furuya)	63
G (Gabriele to Gustavus)	70
H (Hall to Hyde)	92
I (Iliescu to IPCC)	104
J (Jackson to Jurasz)	107
K (Kamb to Kvitek)	110
L (Lafferty to Lutz)	117
M (MacAyeal to Munroe)	128
N (Nadeau to Nye)	155
O (Oberg to Owens)	162
P (Pacific to Price)	164
R (Rakestraw to Ruth)	174
S (Sanford to Syvitski)	187
T (Taberlet to Twitchell)	203
U (United to US)	208
V (Vallejo to Voelckers)	217
W (Wachtel to Wychen)	220
Y (Yde to Yukon)	232
Z (Zamboni to Zion)	235
Appendix A: Personal Communications	237
Appendix B: Torture by Alphabet Soup	239
Appendix C: What Should I Read First?	241
Reference Index	242

Introduction

THE FOLLOWING BOOKS, ARTICLES, reports, compendiums, blurbs, and occasional bloviated blatherings explore Glacier Bay's natural resources, history, science, governance, Tlingit culture, toponymy, etc. Some references are not specific to Glacier Bay but explore relevant wilderness themes, people, or scientific analyses applicable to the wider region and discussed in *The Kayaker's Companion to Glacier Bay, Second Edition*. Except as noted, quotes scattered throughout that book correlate with the obvious authors and books below, but see the accompanying *Chapter Notes* for specific references to each bibliographic entry.

A WARNING

The details of 150-year-old narratives and of John Muir's historic visits to Glacier Bay get a bit jumbled in their original sources, differing from author to author. For most this will matter little, but the discrepancies speak to John Muir, Samuel Hall Young, Eliza Scidmore, Charles Hallock, and other primary sources as slightly unreliable and sometimes biased narrators, at least later in their lives when they edited reminiscences from distant 40-year-old memories and diaries. In some cases, widely quoted and broadly accepted sequences of events could be flat-out inaccurate. In a few cases, people lied or plagiarized (e.g., Richard "Dick" Willoughby, Miner Bruce, Charles Hallock), falling victim to exaggerated visions of Alaskan grandiosity and general fanfaronade. In the late 1800's, fame and fortune could be won with embroidered tales about that great final frontier of Alaska. Read and digest with care.

As an example of a notable discrepancy: by Muir's own account in *Travels in Alaska* (1915), he first visited the Muir Glacier on his *second* visit to

Glacier Bay with the Tlingit guide Tyeen in 1880. He only eyed the glacier from a distance in 1879, an account repeated in his 1891 and 1893 dispatches; see *Letters from Alaska* (1993). But Samuel Hall Young claims in *Alaska Days with John Muir* (also published in 1915) that they landed together at Muir Point in the fall of 1879 with their much-loved guide Toyatte on their *first* visit to Glacier Bay (see Young, 1915, Ch. 4). As separately recorded by all of Young (1927, pg. 224), Captain Beardslee (1882, pg. 53), and Muir (1915, Ch. 13), the highly respected Toyatte died in an internecine Tlingit raid in January of 1880 and could not have accompanied them on Muir's second visit, so either Young's story is incorrect on multiple counts (misremembering who was there and when and where), and/or Muir completely forgot his first visit to the glacier (highly unlikely). To his credit and no doubt after reading Muir's book, Young walks this back in his much later autobiography, saying that due to the onset of winter they could not visit the Muir Glacier in 1879 (Young, 2027, pg. 204).

Other discrepancies abound. For example, Eliza Scidmore—a highly respected journalist writing her observations close to the time of the events—claims in her 1893 book that Captain Carroll “took the mail steamer *Idaho* up the bay in July, 1883, found the glacier John Muir had described, and named both inlet and ice-stream for him.” She makes the claim again in an 1896 *National Geographic Magazine* article (Scidmore, 1896b, pg. 143). But Samuel Young insists, “On our way back [in 1880] from this mass of icy glaciers, far up the bay, we passed the greatest of all the glaciers, to which, at my suggestion, Captain Beardslee of the gunboat ‘Jamestown,’ gave Muir’s name” (Young, 1927, pg. 204). Beardslee, never shy to take credit, makes no mention of this in his 1882

Archive (npshistory.com) which preserves many park documents in an excellent repository created by former Park Service historian Harry Butowsky.

CITATION STRUCTURE

To make it easier to scan for a reference, the authors' names are in bold. To avoid clutter when searching for a reference, I separated the citation's name(s), date, and title from other citation details like the journal name, volume number, etc. I do not abbreviate journal titles because it's annoying to decipher "*J. Ind. Eng. Chem.*" While not a standard structure, this format is much easier to read, according to both me and my dog. If your dog disagrees, that's OK.

CITATION COLORS

Some references in this bibliography are peripheral to the bay's story. Edward Abbey's book *Desert Solitaire* is an example. Nevertheless, each citation is relevant to a quote, number, description, history, concept, philosophy, or other detail within the *Kayaker's Companion to Glacier Bay, Volumes 1, 2, and 3*. If my books quote Edward Abbey, he deserves his due.

To quickly distinguish citations that are highly relevant to Glacier Bay from those that are barely germane, many references are highlighted with colors that emphasize my subjective assessments of the material.

Citations directly relevant to Glacier Bay

Essential works

Highly recommended works

Field guides and other field resources

★ Citations highlighted in **yellow** are essential references for any serious student of Glacier Bay. They might not be the most exciting materials

(e.g., the administrative history of the park), but they are indispensable to some important aspect of the park's history, science, or culture.

★ Citations highlighted in **blue** discuss Glacier Bay specifically and/or at length. Along with the "essential" references, these are the most directly related to the park.

★ Citations highlighted in **violet** are personal recommendations that I deem subjectively awesome and worth putting in your personal library (though virtually every reference has something valuable to offer). These are typically books, and most are closely related to primary themes in Glacier Bay's history, science, or culture (otherwise, I'd be including many other favorites, including Abbey, Leopold, Milne, etc.).

★ Citations highlighted in **green** are field resources that might find a place in a kayak or on a hike inside the park.

★ References **without a highlighted color** are indirectly related to the bay. They do not discuss the park specifically (or not in any detail), but they apply more broadly to a discussion within or about the *Kayaker's Companion to Glacier Bay, Volumes 1, 2, and 3* and their accompanying *Chapter Notes*. For example, many brown bear references use data collected elsewhere, but the conclusions nevertheless apply to bears in the park. Similarly, A. A. Milne might be surprised to find *The House at Pooh Corner* in a Glacier Bay bibliography, but the game "Pooh sticks" makes a nice visual for discussing beach drift in *Vol. 2, Ch. 31*.

ORDER OF REFERENCES

Despite what we learned in kindergarten, alphabetizing is never simple. The arcane details are known only to those foolish enough to write a bibliography



Rear Admiral Lester A. Beardslee, aka Captain Beardslee while in Alaska. (From Hamersly, 1902 pg. 131.)

US Government Printing Office didn't send out copies until 1883, the official publication date).

Beardslee, L. A. [as Piseco]. 1880b. *Alaskan Ichthyology*.

★ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 15, No. 6, pp. 107–108.

★ Writing under the pseudonym Piseco, Captain Beardslee continues his semi-friendly feud with Henry Elliot (see Beardslee, 1880a), and gives a fastidiously detailed climate report in which he claims it is wonderfully sunny and not at all rainy in Alaska. On the latter, he seems unable to make up his mind; see Beardslee (1880a).

Beardslee, L. A. [as Piseco]. 1880c. *Chilcat and Chilcoot*.

★ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 15, No. 17, pg. 325.

★ Writing under the pseudonym Piseco, Captain Beardslee describes his negotiations with Kloh Kutz. This is a far more interesting read than his stiff and official 1882 government report describing the same scenes (Beardslee, 1882). Describing his first encounter with Kloh Kutz,

...behind him five Indians, the foremost of whom I at once recognized by descriptions I had had as Klotz-Klotz, the chief of the Chilcats, a tall, well-built, dignified old fellow, from whose good looks, however, a wad of cotton, stuffed into a hole in his left cheek, somewhat detracted, From this hole, caused by a gunshot wound, one of his soubriquets, "Hole-in-the-Cheek," has been derived.

Beardslee also takes a dig at Henry Elliot, one of his apparent passions (see Beardslee 1880a, 1880b).

Beardslee, L. A. [as Piseco]. 1881a. *Log of the Favorite*.

★ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 15, No. 23, pp. 444–445.

★ Finally set free from Sitka, Beardslee does a little exploring on his way to negotiate with Kloh Kutz. Awestruck by icebergs and scenery, he commends all who are weary of their more easily reached summer destinations to visit Alaska. He discusses the potential sea otter war between the Huna and Tsimshian, and he mentions the history of hooch production among the Xutsnoowú. Chronologically, this narrative comes before Beardslee (1880c) but was published afterwards.

Beardslee, L. A. [as Piseco]. 1881b. *Log of the Favorite*—(No. 2).

★ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 15, No. 25, pp. 484–485.

★ Beardslee visits Hoonah. He talks of half-mile square icebergs in Cross Sound and

mentions his hydrographer/surveyor Master Lieutenant Gustavus Hanus. He describes the Huna as being among the “most powerful and warlike” of the Tlingit of the Alexander Archipelago but also says that the danger to visitors is overstated. In Hoonah he finds “about twenty-five large houses” and suggests a population of 500 to 800 people, but believes the larger number to be closer to the truth. Beardslee has a halibut fishing competition with Dick Willoughby.

Beardslee, L. A. [as Piseco]. 1881c. *Log of the Favorite, No. 3.*

★ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 15, No. 26, pp. 504–505.

★ Beardslee famously explored Glacier Bay with “local pilots” Dick Willoughby and some Huna at the helm. He believed that Excursion Inlet connected with Glacier Bay and incorrectly identified (the still unnamed) Gustavus forelands as being the largest of the bay’s islands. He was excited by the exploration but entirely underwhelmed. “Upon one thing we are all agreed, and that is that compared with that of the rest of Southeast Alaska the scenery of Glacier Bay is a failure.” But he visited while a major fog bank lay over the waters and traveled no further than Berg Bay. He didn’t even see a glacier, only the low, flat terrain near the entrance.

At first, Beardslee thought he was the bay’s first non-native explorer but quickly learned from his Huna pilots that Muir and Young had beat him to the punch. (And he didn’t know it, but so had C. E. S. Wood, the USRC *Wayanda*, and others. See *Vol. 2*, Ch. 18.) After realizing that this was the magnificent bay described by Muir in his many newspaper articles, Beardslee was dismayed that he hadn’t push further to see the grand wonders. You can practically hear Beardslee berating and kicking himself.

Beardslee indicates that Willoughby had previously visited some island’s near the bay’s

entrance (probably earlier that summer). This seems to contradict Beardslee’s idea of being the first group of “white men” to visit Glacier Bay. It’s a minor inconsistency, and a year later, he gives Willoughby more credit (Beardslee, 1882, pg. 94).

The day before their underwhelming visit, Beardslee met with representatives of the Huna on Lemesurier Island and discussed the Tsimshian (native Canadian) hunters making semi-secret incursions into Huna (and US) territory to hunt sea otters. The Tsimshian threatened to bring 60 canoes and 600 men to wage war against the Huna, but Beardslee promised to protect them.

★ Beardslee wrote under the pseudonym Piseco, but in case anyone had forgotten, the editor revealed his true identity on pg. 503. It was an open secret (see the annotations for Beardslee, 1880a).

Beardslee, L. A. [as Piseco]. 1881d. *Log of the Favorite, No. 4.*

★ *Forest and Stream*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 5–6.

★ Writing under the pseudonym Piseco, this is a partial account of Beardslee’s trip up Lynn Canal after leaving Glacier Bay.

Beardslee, L. A. 1882. *Reports of Captain L. A. Beardslee, U.S. Navy, Relative to Affairs in Alaska and the Operations of the USS Jamestown.*

★ US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 198 pp.

★ This won’t be an easy read for everyone. The poor relations between the Tlingit, settlers, and the US Navy are on full display, frequently tinged with prejudice and racism. Writes Beardslee, “It is very poor policy to quarrel with or tantalize Indians. They should either be whipped, or treated with perfect friendship, according to circumstances.” Still, Beardslee’s official reports contain very reliable and superb tidbits of history, including his 1880 negotiations with Kloh Kutz, his interactions

with Dick Willoughby while exploring Glacier Bay, his protections of the Huna Tlingit from raiding parties, references to substantial time spent in the company of John Muir, and copies of an 1880 letter describing Samuel Hall Young's efforts to quell a conflict that killed Toyatte (Muir and Young's friend and guide to Glacier Bay in 1879). You cannot read these prosaic accounts without reevaluating the incompatibly romantic descriptions of Alaska by Muir, Scidmore, Hallock, and other travelogue and guidebook writers of the era.

Behnke, C., T. Lewis, and K. Mocnik. 2013. *Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve 2013 Bear Program Report*.

- ★ NPS, DOI, 18 pp.
- ★ A summary of the year's bear incidents, including an amusing anecdote about a black bear in a lodge room.

Behnke, C., T. Lewis, and K. Pinjuv. 2011. *Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve 2011 Bear Program Report*.

- ★ NPS, DOI, 9 pp.
- ★ A summary of the year's bear incidents, including a bear who bit a chemistry textbook in the backcountry and scared himself off by accidentally turning on a headlamp. From the authors: "How the bear turned on the headlamp, why these kayakers chose to lug this large book on their wilderness adventure, and what this bear had against chemistry are among the many unsolved mysteries involved in bear-human interactions in Glacier Bay."

Behnke, C., T. Lewis, and K. Pinjuv. 2012. *Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve 2012 Bear Program Report*.

- ★ NPS, DOI, 16 pp.
- ★ A summary of the year's bear incidents, including a very hectic "Circus Day" (as they called it) with a brown bear chasing a moose

and its calf through lodge housing, a black bear charging this same brown bear, and the brown bear subsequently chasing the black bear.

Belarde, L., M. Hotch, and 7 others. 2011(?). *Alaskan Middle School Social Studies Teachers' Resources — The Road to ANCSA, Alaskan Natives Claims Settlement Act, Grade 6*.

- ★ Sealaska Heritage Institute. 533 pp. <https://sealaskaheritage.org/shi-alaskan-teachers-educational-resources/> (accessed Dec. 17, 2025) and at <https://sealaskaheritage.org/shi-educational-documents-library/> (accessed Dec. 17, 2025). Note: the publication date is not given within the document, but other publications indicate 2011 as the likely date.

★ This is an educational resource for sixth-grade students and includes an age-appropriate synopsis of the Kaasteen story (Glacier Bay story). The appendix includes a verbatim copy of the Amy Marvin and Susie James oral histories about Kaasteen (copied from Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, 1987). While designed for young middle school students, the Sealaska Heritage Institute is an authoritative source, and this is a helpful resource for anyone who is very new to Tlingit culture, history, and concepts.

Bellemain, E., J. E. Swenson, and P. Taberlert. 2006. *Mating strategies in relation to sexually selected infanticide in a non-social carnivore: the brown bear*.

- ★ *Ethology*, Vol. 112, No. 3, pp. 238–436.
- ★ Brown bear males will kill cubs to increase their chances of siring young with the mother. In many cases, the father of the cubs will not kill their own young, perhaps recognizing the females with whom they previously mated. As a possible counter-strategy for reducing infanticide, female promiscuity masks paternity and can result in mixed paternity litters (14% of the time for litters with one or two cubs and 28% of the time with