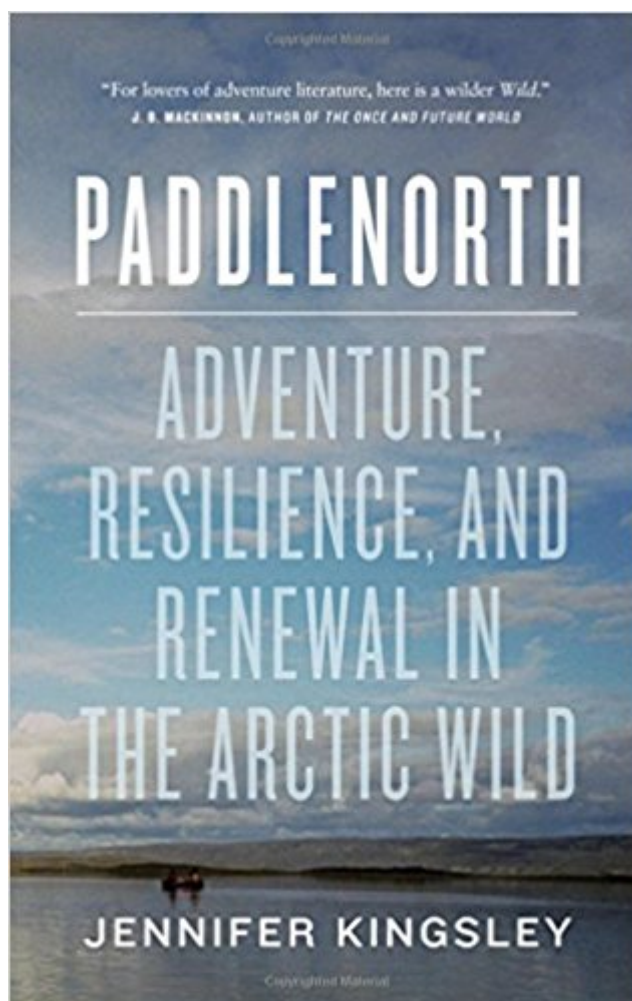


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# Paddlenorth: Adventure, Resilience, And Renewal In The Arctic Wild



## Synopsis

Paddlenorth tells the riveting story of Jennifer Kingsley's 54-day paddling adventure on the Back River in the northern wilderness of the Arctic as she and her five companions battle raging winds, impenetrable sea ice, treacherous rapids, and agonizing sores and blisters while contending with rising tensions among the group. But they also experience the lasting joy of grizzly sightings, icy swims, and the caribou's summer migration. Woven through this spellbinding narrative are often-harrowing accounts of the journeys of earlier explorers, some of whom never made it back home. Paddlenorth paints an indelible portrait of the spectacular Arctic landscape, rendered with a naturalist's eye and an artist's sensibility, and offers an eloquent exploration of how wilderness changes us.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Kingsley beautifully describes the gorgeous, deadly tundra ...The physical and emotional rawness of the trip is keenly felt in Kingsley's prose, leaving the reader to ponder the incredible toll such a journey would take."#151;Shelf Awareness"Words often fail when it comes to describing the grandeur of the Canadian Arctic, but Ottawa-based writer Kingsley succeeds beautifully in her ruminative memoir about a 54-day rowing trip through Nunavut that featured caribou, grizzlies, and treacherous rapids."#151;Backpacker"A page-turner of an adventure in the Far North, at turns bone-chilling, mind-blowing, and exultant. I like sitting in my easy chair reading about Jennifer Kingsley's explorations in the wilds left in the world. This is travel-writing at its best.â • - Janisse Ray, author of Ecology of a Cracker Childhood"Kingsley goes in search of a place where she feels 'both

small and strong,' and comes back with a fast-paced story of risk, reward and raw emotion. For fans of adventure literature, here is a wilder Wild."- J.B. Mackinnon, author of *The Once and Future World and Plenty*"A perilous journey through an unforgiving landscape. A wild adventure that sweeps you up in its wake. Jennifer Kingsley is a wicked paddler and a beautiful writer.â •  
•#150;Andrew Westoll, author of *The Chimps of Fauna Sanctuary*"In the tradition of great exploration literature, Jennifer Kingsley examines both the wilderness she paddles through and the wilderness within. An engrossing story that illuminates the north and the nature of friendship.â •#151;Don Gillmor, author of *Mount Pleasant*"A very personal tour of the beauty as well as the physical, emotional, social and spiritual challenges of arctic "tripping." There's a lot to like in this book--and a lot to be learned. If you're dreaming of mounting your own arctic river expedition, you'll be taking notes."•#151;Jo Deurbrouck, author of *Anything Worth Doing: A True Story of Adventure, Friendship and Tragedy on the Last of the West's Great Rivers*•#147;The book is an emotional read, a sense of longing or yearning running throughout. Kingsley is a fine and vulnerable writerâ •#151;Literary Review of Canada --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Jennifer Kingsley holds a degree in biology and a Master of Fine Arts in Writing and has worked as a guide and naturalist for more than a decade. Her writing and radio stories have been featured nationally and internationally.

BOOK REVIEWTitle: *Paddlenorth*Subtitle: *Adventure, Resilience, and Renewal in the Arctic Wild*Author: Jennifer KingsleyPublished: 2014Publisher: Greystone BooksWebsite: [...]Contents: 231pp; one map, a few b&w pics; bibliographyCover: Hardback, dustjacketSize: 222 x 148 mmPrice: US\$ 26.95ISBN: 978-1-77164-035-0 (also an epub)Availability: .comReview: Paul CaffynThis is the story of a 2005 Canadian canoe trip down the Baillie and Back rivers from Moraine Lake in northern Canada to the Arctic Ocean. After six months of planning and preparation the six paddlers flew from Yellowknife with their canoes in a Twin Otter floatplane, aiming to finish at Gjoa Haven where they could fly home.Jennifer Kingsley has written a corker book, an excellent blend of narrative, snippets of historical river exploration, descriptions of the tundra and its wildlife, the bonds between the paddlers, and her philosophy on wanting to paddle in the high Arctic.It starts with the fly in, then an introduction to the other five paddlers, some planning and then onto the water. Jennifer writes:The tundra, ÃçÂ Â is unlike anywhere else, and that is a wonder in itself, but in the three years since my last visit, I had forgotten about the tundraÃçÂ Â™s oppressive moods. The landscape is so open ÃçÂ Â yet when the wind rises, the temperature drops, and the sky fills with

clouds, the atmosphere becomes heavy, and you feel trapped by all that freedom. Jennifer's first introduction to canoeing was being taken by her father paddling in his cedar-canvas canoe, but she found, "Canoeing was for adults. Supremely slow and quiet, a perfect place for that most hated adult activity " conversation. At the age of eight, she was allowed her first solo paddle and realized that a canoe could help reveal the world's secrets and it could unlock the land. Her first long canoe trip at the age of 22 was in the lakes of northern Ontario, the second a 50 day paddle on the Hood River at the age of 25. In 2005, at the age of 28 she was ready for the Back River. On the 5th day, Jennifer describes a capsizing in rapid, two of them in the freezing cold river water, unable to swim to shore, however quick thinking by the other two canoes led to a quick rescue and recovery of the capsized canoe, with the loss on just one paddle. A pretty savage wakeup call of how things could turn to custard so quickly in such a remote area. The rescue was reviewed and the group's emergency communications were triple checked. The narrative is not diary style, but it flows nicely along with a blend of detailed descriptions of life ashore and afloat, encounters with the outriders of the big Porcupine caribou herd, wolves and a grizzly bear. I could sympathize with Jennifer's feelings when strong daytime winds led to a schedule of paddling at night. She noted, "I had always been terrible as sleeping in. Alie was the most prodigious sleeper of all of us, and the later we paddled, the more I resented her for it. On the rare occasion I did get some extra rest, I woke drenched in sweat under the midmorning sun. The heat forced me out, only to be attacked by mosquitoes, which had finally hatched en masse. I slapped them out of my ears until the bug jacket was on and then scowled at the silent tents. A very clear vignette! The historical snippets link in nicely with the narrative. On shore of Garry Lake, the team walked to an abandoned cabin which was bare, except for a biography of George Back written by Peter Steele. Titled The Man who Mapped the Arctic the book describes George's 1833 expedition down the river now named after him to the sea. The front cover of the book was inscribed by seven girls of a YMCA group paddling a few days ahead of Jennifer's team, and noted to leave another book if this one was taken. Alie's copy of War and Peace was left as a substitute. A short epilogue updates the lives of the historical figures described in the text and also that of the team members to 2014. The bibliography is very comprehensive. Any gripes? The cover is just so bland. The frontispiece two page tight shot of two canoes would have lifted the visual appeal of this book no end. With Jennifer taking 40 rolls of print and slide film on the paddle, it is disappointing that more photos were not included in the text, and that no colour plates were included. But those are minor grizzles. If you are keen to up the ante with your descriptive trip report writing, this book is an

absolute treasure. A book that kept me page turning to the end-notes.

A wonderful narrative of adventure and human relations. Jennifer did a superb job of sharing the experience of this journey without making it a tedious regurgitation of a daily log. The reader is transported to the arctic wilderness and can almost share in the extreme conditions that her group of explorers shared. The attention to group dynamics as well as the individual relationships made the entire ordeal very real and captivated the attention of the reader. I particularly liked the way she so smoothly wove in the historical background, which made the significance of this trek all the more alluring. I read this one on a trip from the Arctic back to the States and it made the time go by quickly. A great read for anyone!

I am an outdoor girl, and have really enjoyed reading this, so much that I had a hard time putting it down. Great read!

An excellent account of a long canoe trip in the remote tundra. It's a nice look at the challenges, opportunities, joys and frustrations of a small group of young adults in their 20s as they face or avoid inter-personal issues on the trip or within themselves. This book is more than a trip report, which makes it a far better read than some similar books.

I have a shy pleasure of rebelling with Jen shipboard. She is an excellent writer and speaker. I wish her luck with her newest endeavor about people of the northern regions. This book is an amazingly honest writing of the author's adventure in the Arctic. She has more guts than I do!!

She has a great ability to get people to talk with her about true inner feelings.

Paddlenorth is a great read - I didn't put it down through my whole bus trip between Montreal and Toronto. It's a straight-up, 'real person' adventure story, thought provoking but not overly sentimental, that captures the remarkable journey and intriguing social/individual dynamics of this kind of long, isolated, outdoor travel, without turning heroic or sensational. I'm grateful for having been transported to these places and allowed to witness these personal/natural processes.

This is an excellent book. It delves into the adventures of long-distance, multi-day paddling, the meaning of friendship, overcoming grief, dealing with self and learning about life and human

interactions. The describe settings are beautifully represented...the human interaction stories make you feel like an intimate friend of people you don't really know. Jenny can write...is a good story teller and proudly wears her foibles and insecurities...her ability to reasonably deal with her own weaknesses and strengths is the power and attraction of the book.

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