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<http://www.nsf.gov/od/opp/arctic/start.htm>

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In Memoriam: Malcolm Alexander Ramsay

Malcolm Ramsay, a professor of biology at the University of Saskatchewan and the world's leading expert on polar bears, was killed in a helicopter accident on 21 May 2000. Malcolm and Stuart Innes, of the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, were returning from tagging polar bears on Lowther Island, approximately 100 km southwest of Resolute, Nunavut, when their Bell 206L helicopter crashed. Innes was also killed. The pilot survived the crash and is expected to recover. The cause of the crash is under investigation.

From 1997–99, Malcolm made important contributions to the OAI Science Steering Committee. His death is a great loss to many who had the pleasure of working with him, and to the arctic scientific community as a whole.

Malcolm received his B.Sc. in 1977 and M.Sc. in 1980, both from Simon Fraser University. In 1986 he earned a Ph.D. from the University of Alberta and won a Postdoctoral Visiting Fellowship in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Winnipeg. His research interests were in vertebrate physiological and behavioral ecology, primarily in the Arctic. Although he was best known for his research on nutrition and reproduction in polar bears, his interests were broad. He published papers on diverse topics, including aspects of pharmacology and toxicology, the material properties of narwhal tusk, and the evolution of viviparity in amniotes. He had recently begun to investigate the biology of two large cold water fish—Greenland sharks and Bluntnose sixgill sharks. Malcolm was increasingly concerned about the effects of environmental change on organisms, particularly in the North, and the reductions in support for ecological research in Canada. He was an eloquent spokesman for these issues, and his research received wide coverage in the popular press.

Contributions in memory of Malcolm can be sent to the Malcolm Ramsay Memorial Fund, Department of Biology, 112 Science Place, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK S7N 5E2 Canada.

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