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Book Review

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Antarctic lakes

J. Laybourn-Parry & J. Wadham
Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014
ISBN-13: 978-0199670505 (paperback), 215 pp. £34.99

The book *Antarctic Lakes* is written by two prominent British Antarctic scientists with a long record of scholarly activity focused on cold regions limnology. Thus it is no surprise that the authors have put together a through review of the state of the art in this field. One of the authors, Laybourn-Parry was an editor of a recent book on lakes and rivers (Vincent & Laybourn-Parry 2008). The new book, *Antarctic Lakes*, is entirely focused on the southern hemisphere lakes and not a collection of authored chapters, but a text book of sorts. There have been other books written about lakes in specific areas of the Antarctic (e.g. the Dry Valleys and the Schirmacher Oasis), but this is the first to take look at research on the full continent including other coastal regions like Bunger Hills, Amery Oasis, Vestfold Hills, Syowa Oasis, Terra Nova Bay and Larseman Hills. However, the authors do not limit themselves to lakes in dry areas on the edge of the continent, but also include research on subglacial lakes, and cryolakes (lakes on the surface of glaciers). Subglacial lakes is a relatively new and important area of research considering how wide-spread they are, and I believe this is the first time they have been covered in detail in a textbook.

Antarctic Lakes is written in an accessible way, with an intended audience starting at the undergraduate level. The book starts with an introductory chapter, which discusses the physical, chemical and biological nature of Antarctic lakes, in addition to climate and history of the lake regions. The first chapter has some useful text boxes describing in more detail topics like stable isotopes and radiocarbon dating. One wonders why these boxes were limited to the first chapter only. This is my harshest criticism of this book.

Subsequent chapters cover lake types, specifically fresh water lakes, saline lakes, epishelf lakes, supraglacial lakes and subglacial lakes. The book does a good job of stitching together the various topics. In particular, tables comparing basic physiography and biogeochemistry of all published lakes is very useful. The book is thorough, and up-to-date in its coverage of the literature, and has a very helpful glossary at the end. *Antarctic Lakes* is a welcome addition to the literature on polar limnology.

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References

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