

heights distance about the tree leaving the impression that soot is falling. Examination of the material under a microscope quickly reveals the spores and/or mycelium of these fungi.

Author's Note: The author is indebted to Thaddée Renault of Forestry Canada Maritimes Region Forest/Tree Pest Extension Service for the provision of the following references.

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THE MOUNT STEWART WHALE STORY

by Bruce Pigot

The beluga whale is typically an inshore species often ascending the larger rivers and estuaries. It ranges in length from nine to eighteen feet. When it reaches its fourth year it turns milk white.

Newsy Notes by Blythe Hurst, August 23, 1941 documented the occurrence of two belugas on Prince Edward Island. The first was taken at Vernon River on May 26, 1938. It was twelve feet long and had an extreme girth of eighty-four inches. The other was taken at Mount Stewart on August 6, 1941, measured sixteen feet long and weighed about a ton. On inquiry, I can find no recent record of a live beluga in P.E.I. waters. The St. Lawrence population seen here is isolated from the other seven populations in Canada. At present its numbers may be in the low hundreds. This, along with reduction and alteration of habitat, population disturbance, and possible affects of environmental contamination or competition with other species, bestowes upon it the distinction of being an endangered race.

It has been protected under the beluga protection regulations of the Fisheries Act since March, 1979. This act outlaws all forms of hunting, killing, chasing, or willful disturbance of these whales.

During the time the Mount Stewart beluga was shot, World War II was raging in the world. Conditions in Bristol, England are pertinent to the story. Winston Churchill visited there April 5, 1941. He gives an eye witness account of a situation that was common to both sides of the conflict. "There had been a heavy air raid on the city the previous night. The air raid services were feverously at work, and people were still being dug out of the ruins." Such conditions sparked headlines which prompted a move on P.E.I. to raise funds for the bombed victims.

Mount Stewart has never lacked hunters. An eyewitness account (Guardian, August 8, 1941) states "spying a large white object in the river between the highway and railway bridges, they hurriedly got shotguns and rifles, and succeeded in killing a beluga whale. The whale was retrieved from the bottom by spearing its tail with an eel spear, then its tail was tied to a rope secured to a punt, and the punt was then rowed to shore. A small tractor proved unequal to the task of towing it ashore, a large truck succeeded, then

