ATLAS OF AMAZING MIGRATIONS

Extract



In loving memory of Rob Avery

Thanks

Eternal love and sunshine to Jess, Romy & Mae

To the Sewells, the Roses, the Lees and the O'Sullivan-Averys

To the NHS nurses and Covid key workers.

And to all the spotters and jotters that made Lockdown 0.1 so much fun!

ATLAS OF AMAZING MIGRATIONS

MATT SEWELL

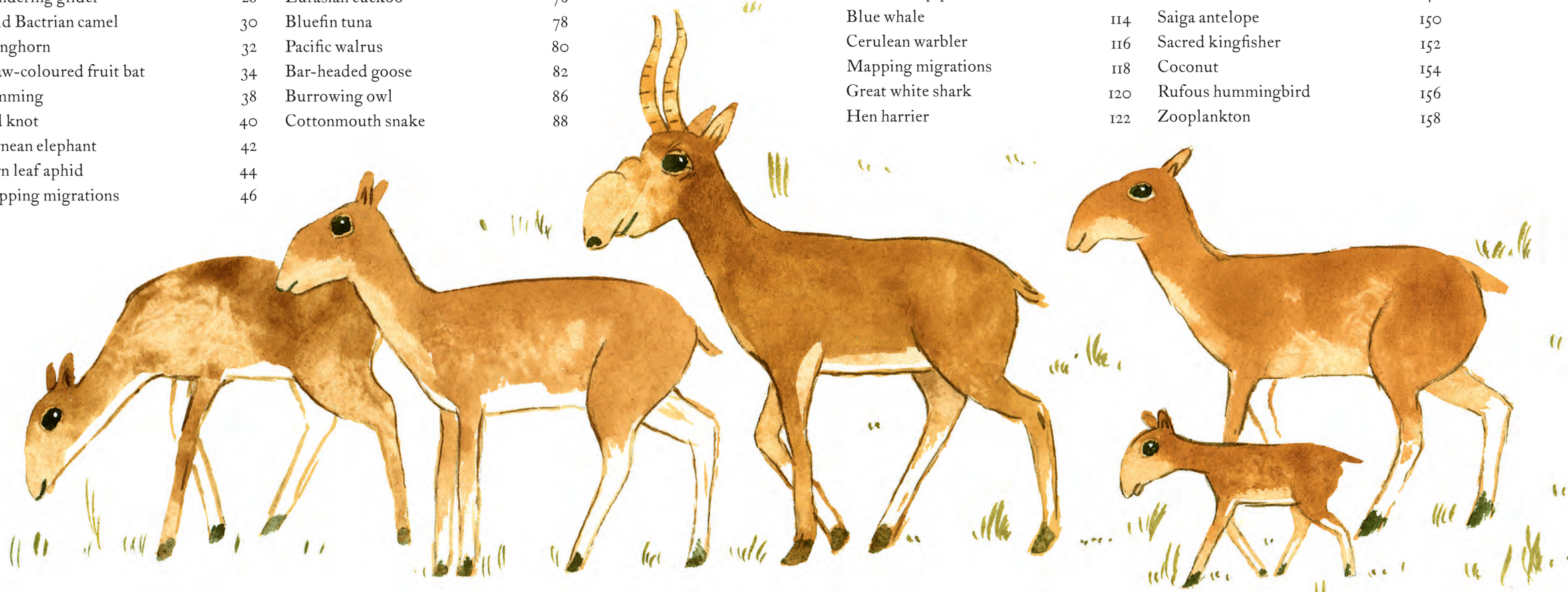
WRITTEN BY MEGAN LEE

PAVILION

Contents

Introduction 6

Cougar 8
Basking shark 10
Wildebeest 12
Zebra 16
Swift parrot 18
Orange-bellied parrot 19
Sockeye salmon 20
Adélie penguin 22
Violet 24
Amur falcon 26
Wandering glider 28
Wild Bactrian camel 30
Pronghorn 32
Straw-coloured fruit bat 34
Lemming 38
Red knot 40
Bornean elephant 42
Corn leaf aphid 44
Mapping migrations 46
Short-eared owl 48
Northern elephant seal 50
Bohemian waxwing 52
Painted lady butterfly 54
Wandering albatross 58
Mule deer 60
Redstart 62
Leatherback sea turtle 64
Green darner dragonfly 66
Mapping migrations 68
Christmas Island red crab 70
Alpine ibex 74
Eurasian cuckoo 76
Bluefin tuna 78
Pacific walrus 80
Bar-headed goose 82
Burrowing owl 86
Cottonmouth snake 88
Osprey 90
Burdock 92
Mapping migrations 94
Humpback whale 96
Arctic tern 98
Golden jellyfish 100
Wild cherry 102
European eel 104
Barn swallow 106
Monarch butterfly 108
Bar-tailed godwit 110
Nathusius' pipistrelle bat 112
Blue whale 114
Cerulean warbler 116
Mapping migrations 118
Great white shark 120
Hen harrier 122
Bornean bearded pig 124
Caribou 126
Grey wolf 130
Canada warbler 132
Dandelion 134
Common toad 136
Saltwater crocodile 138
Sea lamprey 140
Mapping migrations 142
Cownose ray 144
Desert locust 146
Eurasian curlew 148
Saiga antelope 150
Sacred kingfisher 152
Coconut 154
Rufous hummingbird 156
Zooplankton 158



Introduction

This book looks at some of the most amazing, arduous and downright clever migrations of creatures ranging from birds to mammals, insects to fish, and even some plants. Creatures migrate from one part of the planet to another mainly to find food or warmth, or to reproduce, or sometimes for some other mysterious reason we're yet to discover.

Their journeys range from treks of thousands of kilometres across continents and oceans, to crossing the road (which might sound simple to us, but is an ordeal in itself if you're a snake or a toad, and the road is packed with speeding cars (see pages 88 and 136). In the case of the painted lady and monarch butterflies (pages 54 and 108), migration can take up to five generations, as parent gets replaced by child then grandchild and so on, as the journey continues.

Migration seems to be written into the genes of animals, so that they know when to travel and where to. Without the sat navs we lucky humans have, creatures use a variety of methods to navigate their routes, including magnetic fields, temperature and light. One study found that some birds seem to use the stars to navigate, just like sailors of old. In the book, we have also mapped some of the most amazing migrations, showing the approximate routes. Not all of the migrations in this book have been mapped and those that are may sometimes have diversions from the journeys we've shown, but we wanted to give a sense of how stunning many of these migrations really are.

We all know that nature is an amazing thing, but just read some of these stories and you'll be stunned by the stamina, strength and smartness of these creatures and the lengths they go to in their migrations. And once you've seen what these animals and plants go through, I hope you won't start complaining next time your trip to the shops takes longer than usual!

Wildebeest

Connochaetes taurinus

This is the blue wildebeest, although if you'd like you can simply call it the gnu. It's no wonder its name translates to "wild beast". As far as antelope go, this guy looks rather intimidating, with two sharp, curved horns jutting out of its massive head and a dark, shaggy mane running down its hunched back. It grazes constantly on Africa's grassy plains, munching away through the day and night.

Living in such a hot place means the wildebeest relies on rainfall for enough grass to eat, and changes in the weather push it to migrate in a massive, clockwise loop each year. It sets off with hearty numbers of zebra, gazelle and impala, but the wildebeest is undoubtedly the star of this show.

As the wet season ends around May or June, some 1.5 million hungry and thirsty wildebeest put on a mind-blowing performance, chasing the rain north around the Serengeti towards Masai Mara. They form a big clan, as up to 500,000 of their calves are born just months before this event. Unlike human babies that flail around on their backs for months, wildebeest calves can walk within minutes of being born! It's a good job too, as they need to be able to keep up with the herd. The wildebeest charge together in a chaotic, swirling mass of muscle, pelt and pure drive, thundering over the land on a dangerous journey. Although their huge numbers provide them with some safety, this doesn't stop many of them from dying along the way. Each year more than 250,000 gnu are taken out by predators like lions and hyenas, or caught by cattle fences that are popping up more and more across Africa.

Many will also drown or be pulled down into water by lurking crocodiles as they attempt to cross the Mara River. This is one of the most incredible parts of the wildebeest's journey. The herd moves in unison, scoping out and crossing the river all as one. This kind of teamwork is known as "swarm intelligence", and helps them tackle the obstacle more efficiently. Even though thousands of them won't survive these croc-infested waters, the wildebeest cross the Mara anyway. The sight of distant rainstorms promising lots of fresh grass is just too tempting. They will have to do it all again as they follow the rain back towards Tanzania around November. Altogether, their mighty loop covers almost 650km.

