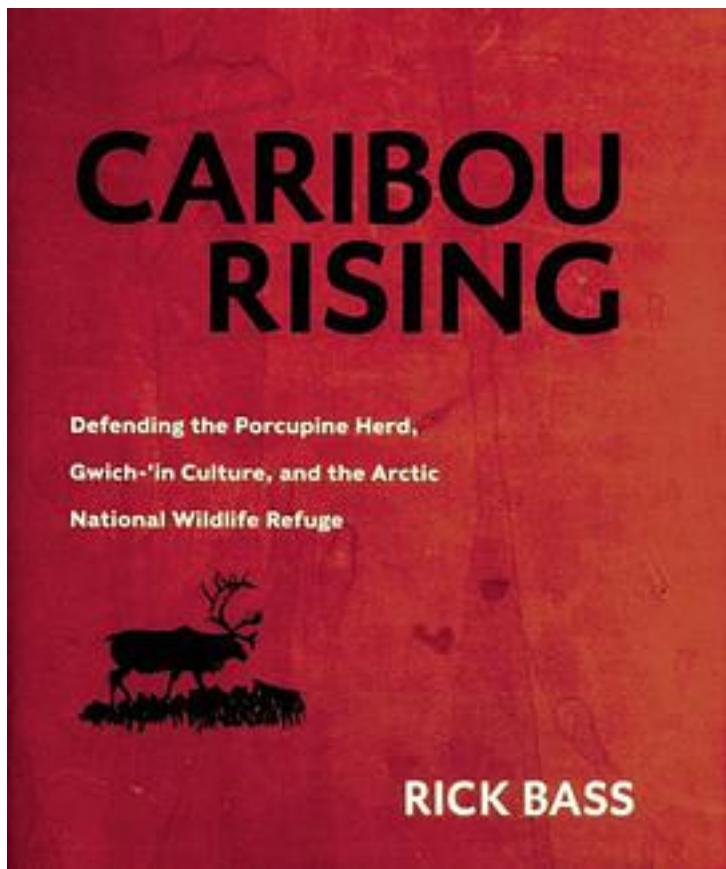


# Caribou Rising



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著者:Bass, Rick

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The eloquent voice of Rick Bass has been raised often in celebration and defense of America's surviving wilderness and the big wild animals that live there, in acclaimed books such as *Wild to the Heart*, *The Ninemile Wolves*, and *The Lost Grizzlies*. Now, in *Caribou Rising*, he journeys from his beloved Yaak Valley in Montana to Alaska, to witness firsthand one of the sole remaining landscapes on Earth where the wild is

entirely untrammeled-America's Serengeti, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It is a place where great caribou herds gather, calve, and migrate as they did in the Pleistocene, and where the ancient bond between animals and human hunters still informs daily life. Bass's avid desire to meet this landscape and its native people, the Gwich- in, had several sources. A hunter himself since his Mississippi childhood, he now pursues game with a primal passion coupled with an environmentalist's conscience, providing nearly all the meat his family consumes. He hoped to kill one caribou and bring home its meat. But the deeper intent of that act was to enter, even briefly, the experience of the Gwich- in, who have been following, relying on, and praying to the caribou for 10,000 years, in a relationship parallel to that of the Plains tribes and the buffalo. The more urgent impulse for his journey was that the Refuge, along with the caribou and the Gwich- in, faces ruin if the oil industry and its minions in government get their way. Rather than fight for it in the abstract, Bass wanted to find out for himself-and share with readers-what we really stand to lose if the Arctic Refuge is opened to drilling. Bass's Arctic sojourn brings surprises and unexpected rewards. The caribou's late arrival gives him some downtime in remote Arctic Village, the Gwich- in's home at the base of the Brooks Range. Waiting to travel upriver, Bass walks the land, talks to villagers about their lives, and interviews their leaders. Through him we meet Sarah James, a matriarch wise in the ways of Beltway politics; Trimble Gilbert, an Episcopal priest who kills a caribou for a village-wide barbecue while Bass is in town; and the mysterious Jimi, designated the village's chief hunter. Bass ponders the profound differences between this culture and ours: "the gunmetal hardness of their lives," their casual acceptance of physical risk, and their visceral knowledge that none can exist outside the community. And he reflects on the timeless dance of human, caribou, and land in this place. While a great many Americans are concerned about assaults on the Arctic National wildlife Refuge, not all are aware that a culture is at risk along with the 129,000 caribou of the Porcupine herd-so, as Bass observes, "the caribou. . . will either save the the Gwich- in one last time, or not." Those who read his extraordinary testament to the place, its animals, and its people will understand the interconnectedness of the three and will have all the more reason to make a stand with conviction. "It is here that we are being challenged," Bass writes, "with the responsibility of imagination and of discipline, attributes we as a country once had in spades. . . . It is not the caribou, nor the Gwich- in, who are being given one more chance. It is we who are being given one more chance." Illustrations: 2 b/w illustrations

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