



The Curse of the Labrador Duck: My Obsessive Quest to the Edge of Extinction

Glen Chilton

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In an obsessive 82,000-mile quest for dead birds, how much trouble can one scientist get into?

Finally, the world's leading authority on the extinct Labrador Duck, Dr. Glen Chilton, shares the story of his frenzied obsession to reveal the histories behind the mysterious bird -- a saga wherein he sets out to examine the remains of every Labrador Duck, conduct genetic analysis on every Labrador Duck egg, and visit every site where the duck was shot...with many a (mis)adventure along the way.

More elusive than the Passenger Pigeon, the Dodo, or the Great Auk and breeding in places so obscure that no certain records exist of its nests, the Labrador Duck succumbed to extinction almost before anyone realized it was in decline. When Chilton began his travels, there were thought to be approximately fifty stuffed specimens, scattered among the museums of Europe and North America. However, as his search progressed, it became clear that some specimens had been lost to war and theft, while others lay hidden in far-flung collections, overseen by secretive curators. After traveling the equivalent of 3.3 times around the world with a series of oddball companions, Chilton finally began to close in on every known specimen...but not before he risked heavy-metal poisoning in Russia, swam naked in a glacier-fed stream, corresponded with a millionaire murderer, and narrowly avoided arrest in New York City.

A magnificent blend of travel writing, science, detective work, and mishap, *The Curse of the Labrador Duck* is the zany adventure of one biologist's obsessive quest to uncover the mysteries of one of the world's most enigmatic birds.

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