

R. M. Anderson (the "Dr.")

Rudolph Martin Anderson was born in 1876, and received a Ph.D. from the [University of Iowa](#) in 1906. His dissertation was entitled, *The birds of Iowa*. As a mammologist and zoologist first with the American Museum of Natural History, and later with the National Museum of Canada, Anderson spent seven winters and ten summers north of the Arctic Circle.

During his first northern expedition, the Stefansson-Anderson Arctic Expedition of 1908-12, Anderson travelled through Arctic Alaska and the northern Yukon and explored the area around Amundsen Gulf, the Coppermine River, and Coronation Gulf. Throughout his first four years in the north he collected bird and mammal specimens, made an extensive series of photographs, and collected information on an incredible variety of topics: from native customs to wildlife population trends. In their journals, the other scientists and men of the Southern Party routinely refer to Anderson as "the Dr.". At the end of the fieldwork, Anderson was appointed as editor of the scientific volumes of the expedition.

Anderson became a naturalized British citizen in 1913. That same year he accepted an appointment as a zoologist with the Geological Survey of Canada. In 1916 Anderson was in Ottawa as part of a government advisory board that drafted the Migratory Birds Convention Act between Great Britain and the United States. As Chief of the Biology Division of the National Museum of Canada (1920-1946), Anderson travelled to many parts of Canada, collecting mammal specimens and information that formed a valuable foundation for the eventual writing and publication of the *Catalogue of Recent Canadian Mammals*. Anderson's work throughout his career advanced the National Museum from having a rudimentary and incomplete mammal specimen collection to one that documented and had representatives of virtually all mammals found on Canadian lands or its waters.

Anderson's knowledge of Arctic animals played an important role in the early action by the Canadian government in drafting the Northwest Game Act to help in the conservation of northern wildlife particularly caribou and muskox. Anderson's book *Methods of Collecting and Preserving of Vertebrate Animals*, first published in 1932, has been reprinted many times and is still in print. He was also associate editor of the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* (1918-55). Three subspecies of mammals bear his name.

Anderson has been described as the Canadian father of mammalogy. He provided some of first scientific observations of Arctic animals and their populations. He also produced a remarkable collection of reference specimens particularly mammals for the National Museum of Canada. His publication of the *Catalogue of Recent Canadian Mammals* (1946) was the first attempt to accurately document the mammals of Canada. During his career Anderson published 134 papers or larger publications. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Rudolph Martin Anderson passed away in 1961.