

Alexander William Francis (Frank) Banfield - Pioneer Award

Frank Banfield, while working for the Canadian (Dominion) Wildlife Service in late 1940-early 1950's, conducted some of the first population surveys of Barren Ground Caribou in the North West Territories. Banfield developed landmark aerial survey techniques for populations of large mammals dispersed over vast landscapes. Born in 1918, he spent 7 years as a child with his missionary parents in Lagos, Africa. After completing high school in Toronto, he undertook his BA and MA at the University of Toronto. He was hired as Chief Mammalogist with the Dominion Wildlife Service in 1947 and went on to complete a PhD at the University of Michigan working on Barren Ground Caribou from 1949-1951. He continued writing about caribou through the 1950's in published literature as well as Wildlife Management Bulletins put out by the Dominion Wildlife Service. In 1957 Frank became the Chief Zoologist with the National Museum of Canada and in 1963 the National Director of the National Museum of Natural Sciences. During his tenure he wrote "A revision of the caribou and reindeer genus Rangifer" where he considered many of the then subspecies were in fact *Rangifer tarandus* caribou. This continues to be debated by scientists to the present day. Banfield left the Museum in 1969 to join Brock University as Professor of Biological Sciences and later as Director of the Institute of Urban and Environmental Studies. In 1973 he formed Rangifer Associates Environmental Consultants working on the impacts of gas and oil development on caribou in the Mackenzie Valley. Banfield was recognized for his career achievements as a Fellow of both the Arctic Institute of North America and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He published over 80 works including *The Mammals of Canada*, considered the only publication that deals extensively with all of the mammals of Canada. Frank Banfield passed away in 1996.