

The complex history and extensive faunistic legacy of Lake Superior Islands

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Despite their status as the most remote, least developed of Great Lakes Islands, numerous species have been introduced to the 1800+ islands of Lake Superior. From the earliest to most recent, white-bellied nuthatches and the 1850s introduced western meadowlark and muskrat to the north. Through various and less documented and less intentional activities of the 19th-century fur trade and the 20th-century fur and fishery industries, numerous species were introduced to the islands. From 1850, dozens of non-indigenous species in the Great Lakes have been transported throughout the region, and many have established on the islands. We discuss the species, the routes, and why, generally, intentionally and unintentionally, the 180+ islands of Lake Superior are a unique and important natural laboratory for understanding the history of the Great Lakes and other neighboring regions.

Introduction

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