

Obituary

Karstein Bye

19th May 1953 – 11th April 2012

Karstein Bye, former chairman of the Nordic Council for Reindeer Husbandry Research (NOR), has died when he was on a family holiday in Cuba April 2012. He was born in Nordland County, at Ørnes near the city of Bodø. From 1980 to the mid 1990s Karstein Bye was occupied with reindeer research and reindeer husbandry administration. And for this engagement we will remember him.

He studied at the University of Tromsø, Department of biology and geology, Section of terrestrial ecology and graduated Cand.real in 1980 with the thesis "Parasites of wild reindeer in Svalbard and Norway". He carried on studies on intestinal nematodes of the reindeer in cooperation with his supervisor Professor Odd Halvorsen. Karstein's practical power was revealed both in handling reindeer during research, in planning and carrying out research, and in building a weighing-machine for living reindeer. Karstein Bye's research was a branch of the reindeer brain worm project started at the University of Tromsø already in 1974. At the University/Tromsø Museum, Karstein was in 1986 issue editor of the Museum's popular science journal *Ottar* with a publication entitled "Parasites of the reindeer" which became the biggest edition of *Ottar* until then.



That same year he became research leader for a new established research department at the Norwegian Reindeer Husbandry Administration at Alta, Finnmark, which replaced the Reindeer Research Centre of Norway at Lødingen. At Alta his organisational skills were challenged, especially when the department got to cope with the Chernobyl catastrophe (April 1986). The research department got started several projects to curtail the radioactive damage on reindeer husbandry. During NOR's 3rd Nordic work shop at Rovaniemi, Finland, October 1986, with main theme Chernobyl, Karstein Bye was an eager participant.

His formal participation in NOR started in 1987 as a research delegate. He has also for a shorter period been NOR's (general) secretary, and in the period 1994 to 1996 he was elected chairman of NOR. This was a hectic time of the organisation when its office was moved from the city of Harstad to Tromsø, and a new secretary was installed. When taking part at the leadership of NOR, he presided working with the Project catalogue for Nordic reindeer research projects, issued in December 1992. The catalogue also assessed research needs of the future and gave priority to research efforts. He was also editor (together with Swedish Bengt Ekendahl) for the reindeer husbandry textbook "Flora of reindeer pastures", published 1997 in four Nordic languages.

We will remember Karstein being the very farsighted and organised man he was and who knew the importance of research in reindeer husbandry. In the Nordic cooperation, he defended with great conviction NOR's position as an organisation for the advantage of reindeer husbandry. It was also his interest for research that brought him from the reindeer Administration to the University College in Finnmark. He moved later to the position of research director for Nordland Research Institute, Bodø. His last position was in the Executive Committee for Northern Norway. Karstein Bye was in all his behaviour an engaged person, and it is very sad that his life ended premature.

Mauri Nieminen

Öje Danell

Inge Even Danielsen

NOR's working committee (AU)

Rolf Egil Haugerud

Former secretary of NOR

