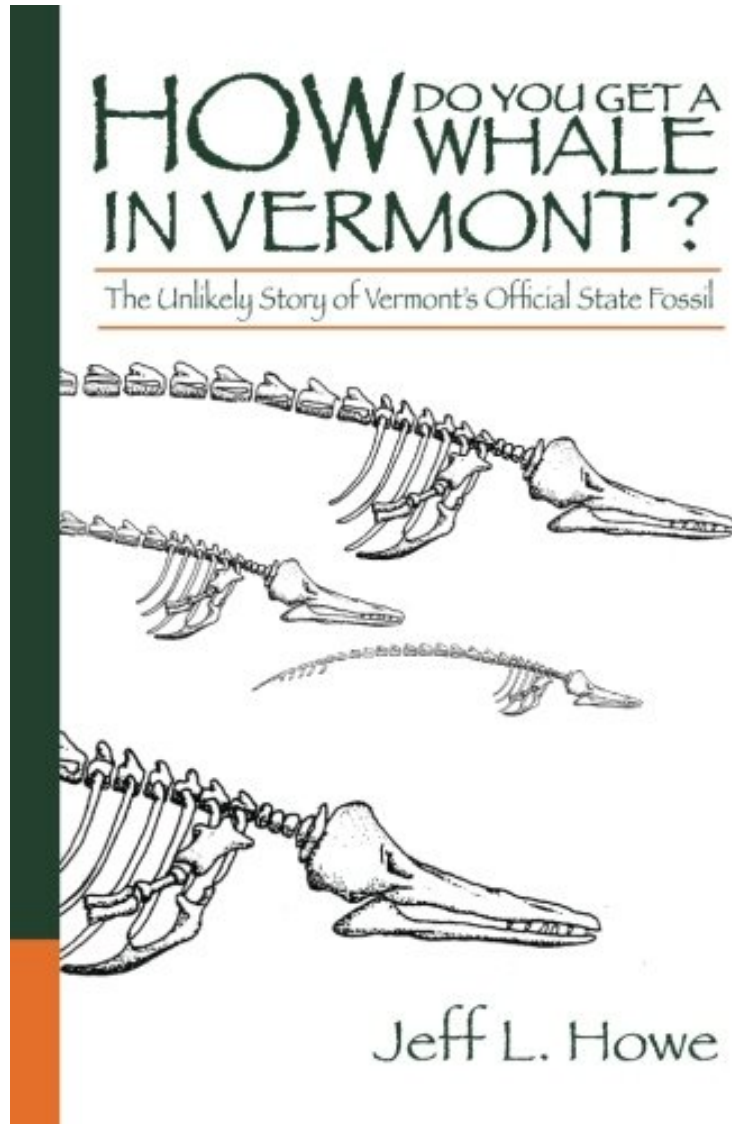


How Do You Get a Whale in Vermont? The Unlikely Story of Vermont's State Fossil

Jeff Howe

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Jeff Howe : How Do You Get a Whale in Vermont? The Unlikely Story of Vermont's State Fossil before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How Do You Get a Whale in Vermont? The Unlikely Story of Vermont's State Fossil:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Story Telling Goes Beyond State BoundariesBy Roger W.

Wright! I've always been fascinated with things that seem out of place. The sailboat on the car trailer being pulled down the highway. The guy on the airplane wing in the rain on an old Twilight Zone episode. So this book had me at the title. And I frankly couldn't put it down. I enjoyed every word. The comparison to John McPhee is apt. Like McPhee, this author has a way of telling a story that lets you in on the story and makes you glad you came. This is a unique and wonderful book. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Whale of a Tale By Jane Morris "How do you get a Whale in Vermont?" is a lively combination of historical narrative and scientific exploration. "I don't think Vermonters can find a better story that tells more about their state than this one!" says author Jeff Howe, and I couldn't agree more! Since starting in 1993, Howe has taken his time to write this movie-worthy story in a style that recalls the creative nonfiction of John McPhee. It's not just about a whale, but a story about the 19th-century scientist Zadock Thompson, who bucked religious dogma to identify a whale skeleton in land-locked Vermont; of science in the mid-19th century (think pre-Darwin); of the ice ages; and of the first railroad coming across Vermont. There are several great reads that I would recommend to those interested in the history and environment of Vermont. This is definitely one of them, as is Vermont Nature Guide and Vermont Curiosities: Quirky Characters, Roadside Oddities Other Offbeat Stuff.

In 1849, a gang of railroad workers racing to build the first railroad across Vermont stumbled upon the fossil bones of a mysterious animal buried deep in sticky, blue clay. A local natural historian was consulted who quickly and correctly declared the bones to be those of a beluga whale. But with one question answered, a dozen more sprang up. How did the bones of a small, white whale end up buried ten feet beneath a rural Vermont farm field, two mountain ranges and over 200 miles from the nearest ocean? Why did two of the most significant fossil discoveries in 19th century New England occur in Vermont on consecutive summers? And how would these discoveries fit into the rapidly evolving scientific debate over glacial ice ages, evolution and the history of the Earth? *How Do You Get a Whale in Vermont?* is the story of an ancient whale that captured the imagination of an entire State and went on to become Vermont's official State Fossil.

About the Author Jeff L. Howe is a public geologist, historian and story teller. In 1993, he was curator of the Perkins Museum of Geology at the University of Vermont when a bill designating the Charlotte whale as Vermont's Official State Fossil was signed into law. He has continued to research the whale and has carefully considered its place in the cultural and geologic history of the Green Mountain State. Howe has an undergraduate degree in zoology from Michigan State University and a masters degree in geology from the University of Vermont. He currently lives in Strasburg, Pennsylvania where he writes stories, and teaches science to college art students.