

## From the institute's Photo Library

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Along the beaches of the fjord Van Keulenfjorden, Spitsbergen, lie mounds of white whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*) bones, remains of whale hunting in earlier times. Russian whalers in Svalbard began harvesting white whales for their blubber and skin in the 18th century. Norway and other nations joined in during the latter half of the 19th century, when the larger whales they had been targeting became scarce. Between 1871 and 1940, Norwegian whalers brought in about 9000 white whales. Hunting continued into the 1960s, by which time the white whale population was severely depleted. Since the species has come under legal protection, white whales—also known as belugas—seem to be making a comeback. Pods comprising a few individuals to a few hundred whales are regularly seen around the archipelago. Larger pods are spotted from time to time. This photograph was taken by Mikael Westh Hammer at Kvitfiskpynten (“white whale point”) in 2000.



The Norwegian Polar Institute's Photo Library preserves some 90 000 polar-related images captured during the last 135 years, including glass plates and slides, stereo images, print photographs and modern digital photographs. Images documenting Norwegian activities in the Arctic and Antarctic comprise the bulk of the collection. Scanning the older images and registering newer digital ones is an ongoing endeavour. To date, digital versions of 32 000 pictures are available in a searchable online database at <http://sivert.npolar.no/fotoweb/>. Search words associated with the online images are mostly in the Norwegian language; please send an e-mail to [bildearkiv@npolar.no](mailto:bildearkiv@npolar.no) for assistance in searching the database.