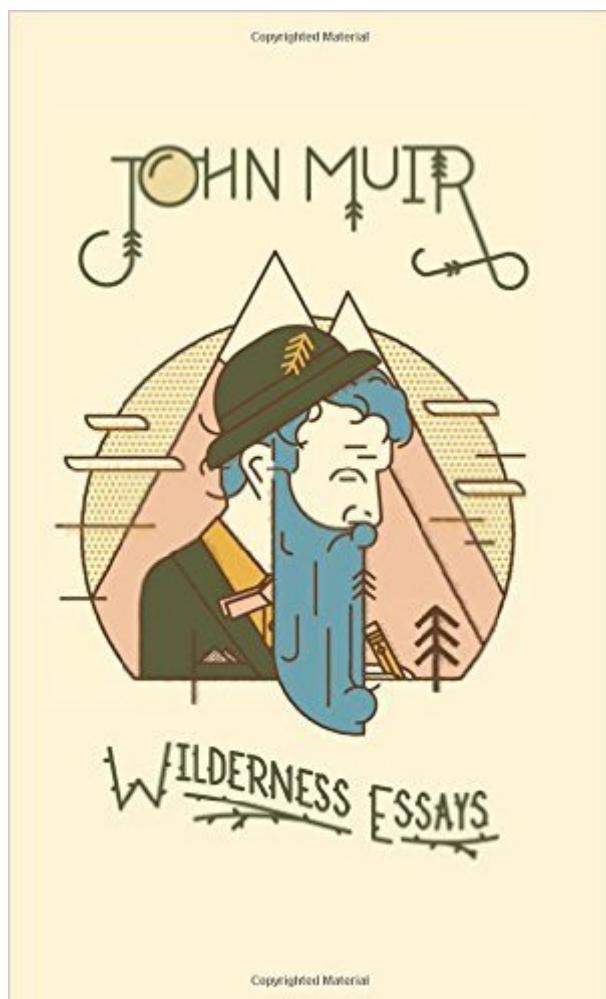


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Wilderness Essays



Synopsis

This series celebrates the tradition of literary naturalists—writers who embrace the natural world as the setting for some of our most euphoric and serious experiences. These books map the intimate connections between the human and the natural world. Literary naturalists transcend political boundaries, social concerns, and historical milieus; they speak for what Henry Beston called the “æother nations” of the planet. Their message acquires more weight and urgency as wild places become increasingly scarce.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My favorite naturalist writer is Loren Eiseley. The Immense Journey: An Imaginative Naturalist Explores the Mysteries of Man and Nature. Somehow, I stumbled on this book by John Muir, maybe because I ran out of Eiseley. I don't remember which Eiseley was my favorite, but he only wrote a few books, so you can easily read them all. John Muir fascinates me, because as he describes Prudhome Bay in Alaska, one can come to understand nature even more so than popularists want you to. According to Muir, the Bay was not even formed in the late 1800's it was being born (the work of icebergs), and over the century it grew into a Bay as we know it today. His description of the work of the icebergs is beautiful, thoughtful and awe inspiring as it helps one to stop and realize that nature has a plan for everything. Icebergs give birth to baby icebergs that replenish the earth with the soil, the limbs of trees and whatever else has been captured by the iceberg as it moves to the sea. It is a marvelous story of the beauty of creation. His description of Alaska, bursting with song,

with fish, fruit, and trees in the summer made me want to go there, it seemed a paradise lost, overlooked because winter coats the beauty for so many months. The writing is gorgeous.

John Muir is simply the best naturalist writer I have ever read. His writing is clear, descriptive and interesting. I typically don't like this type of writing, but his essays make you hear, see, taste and smell the outdoors. I usually like to experience nature directly, but Muir is the next best thing to being there. A collection of his best works is presented here.

I love nature, and only John Muir can take me to mountains, and meadows, touch wild life and its all so real and unpretentious. Reading these essays is a refreshing experience, it's like gazing at a nature scene only better because words can be more detailed. And what makes the essays even better is the abundance of good he did for all humanity by being one of the main instruments to help preserve earth's natural beauty.

What can I say? It's a collection of works from the late, great John Muir. The man is legendary. His writing may come across as a little dry to modern readers, but then most works written in that time period tend to be. It is mainly his observations of the natural world around him. It is very good and for those interested in Muir this is a nice collection of his essays and the book cover is quite lovely in person. My main complaint is that I do wish he wrote more about the details of his day to day life. What he ate, what shelter, if any, he lived in? He doesn't talk much about that kind of stuff. Mainly just describing what he sees, which can get a little boring after a while to be honest.

Muir writes in the language of his time, yet in a way few if any others did. If you enjoy the outdoors, respect nature, love the wild, this man is worth reading for you. Few of us give our lives to what we believe at our core, and Muir did this. His father might be called a religious zealot who, according to Muir, beat him regularly. It seems this relationship drove Muir away and into the solace of nature, where he found himself and his peace. He was a keen nature observer, traveler, and activist who is responsible for starting the Sierra Club and saving Yosemite Valley from development. His writing can seem slow, religious, too detailed at times... and still I see this book as a masterpiece of nature writing for the heart and mind of it. He was one of the first. My first ever piece of writing was about his life, and try as I may, I doubt that my work will ever benefit our planet the way his did.

The wisdom of John Muir is needed more than ever today.

Full of "Muirism", it takes someone who immigrated to this country to show us what we have!

Great book of essays. John Muir is a really underrated writer.

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