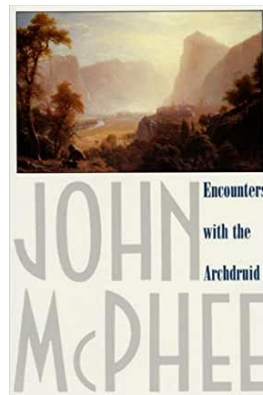
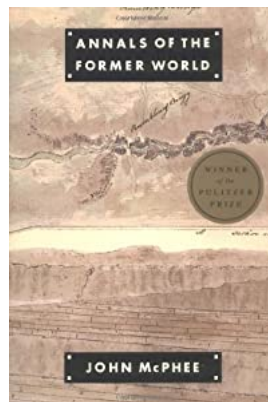
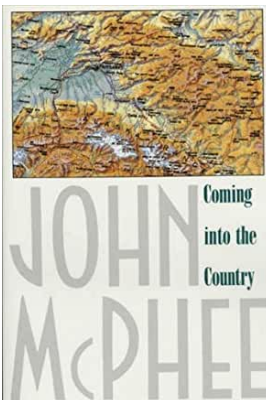




## Nature and Science Books

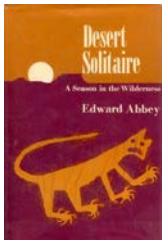
Three categories: Classics, Near Classics, and Novels (a few classics, most just thumping good reads). These should hold you through the next coronavirus pandemic.

Many of these are available at or through Oblong Books and Music. *It is functioning during the pandemic for online ordering and free shipping (oblongbooks.com).* Shop local!

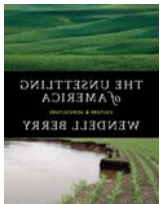


John McPhee is the best nonfiction writer of this and probably any era. Much of his oeuvre takes on the outdoors and—sign of his continued relevance—stays in print. He eloquently hikes, fishes, canoes, hitches rides aboard ships, a coal train, and a geologist's pickup truck.

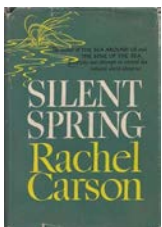
For an introduction, try a collection of his shorter pieces, such as *Table of Contents* or *Giving Good Weight*. His great book about Alaska is *Coming into the Country*. For a spellbinding book-length discussion of environmentalism versus economic development in the person of David Brower, a pivotal head of the Sierra Club and founder of Friends of the Earth, and a series of three worthy foes, read *Encounters with the Archdruid*. For 660 breathtaking pages about rocks—well, geology and the folding of time in North America's surface layers—get *Annals of the Former World*, a Pulitzer-Prize winner. Initially presented in five long *The New Yorker* pieces and then books: *Basin and Range*, *In Suspect Terrain*, *Rising from the Plains*, *Assembling California*, and *Crossing the Craton*.



Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire* (1968)

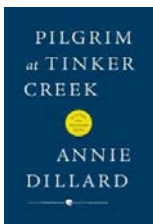


Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America* (1977)

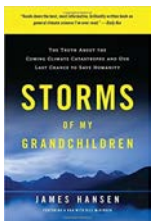


Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (1962)

It started everything. Amazing we put up with pollution so long, and with such consequences. It almost literally had to run us over with a DDT tanker.

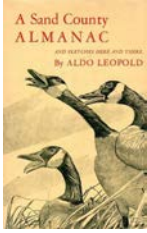


Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974)



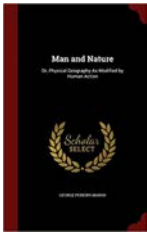
James Hansen, *Storms of My Grandchildren* (2009)

That *rara avis* an activist scientist, Hansen was the earliest and most persistent voice declaiming the reality of global warming. He first warned Congress in 1988. When on this book tour, he came to Cary one Friday evening. His great enemy is "business as usual." The boys in Dallas and Houston have spent zillions trying to silence him and make him look bad. He's still out there, publishing original science and raising the alarm.



Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* (1949)

Probably the world's first exploration of ecology—at least since antiquity. This unassuming collection of essays about the natural world of Sauk County, Wisconsin introduced the notion of "land ethic" and is an uncontested gem.



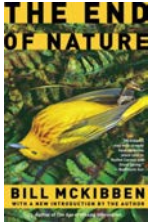
George Perkins Marsh, *Man and Nature: Or, Physical Geography As Modified by Human Action* (1864)



PHOTO BY GEORGE SCHALLER

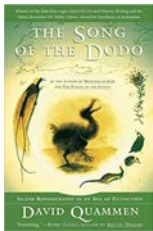
Peter Matthiessen, *The Snow Leopard* (1978)

The account of the author's 1973 quest in the Himalayas for a sighting of this famously elusive creature and his own spiritual growth through the study of Zen Buddhism. Only one photo of the smoke-colored cat had ever been taken before their journey:: in 1970 by zoologist George Schaller, Matthiessen's companion throughout the Tibetan Plateau (above).

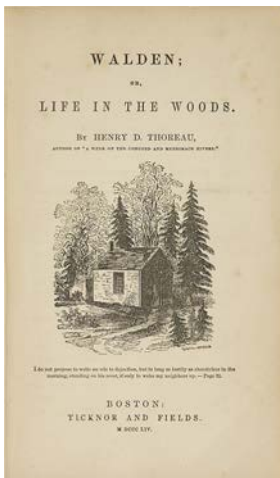


Bill McKibben, *The End of Nature* (1989)

Our most eloquent voice on the urgent subject of global climate harm, McKibben has written a dozen books, most recently and imperatively, *Falter*. This is his first.

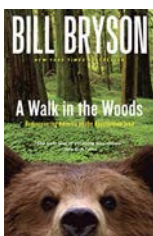


David Quammen, *Song of the Dodo* (1997)

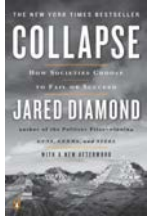


Henry David Thoreau, *Walden: or, Life in the Woods* (1854). This is the title page of the first edition, with a drawing by his sister. (Thank you, Wikipedia)

## MINOR CLASSICS



Bill Bryson, *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* (2006)



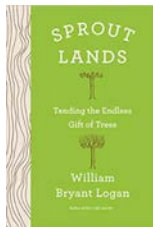
Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (2005)

David George Haskell, *The Forest Unseen* (2012)



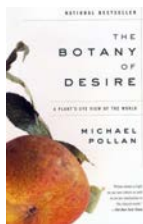
Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything* (2014)

Elizabeth Kolbert, *Sixth Extinction* (2014)



William Bryant Logan, *Sprout Lands: Tending the Endless Gift of Trees* (2019)

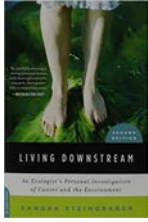
Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, *Merchants of Doubt* (2010)  
How a handful of scientists, bought and paid for by death-dealing industries, obscured the facts, embedded counter narratives, and successfully institutionalized doubt when the scientific consensus was as close to certain as science gets.



Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire* (2001)

Anne Raver, *Deep in the Green* (1995)

Nathaniel Rich, *Losing Earth: A Recent History* (2019)



Sandra Steingraber, *Living Downstream* (2010)

David Foster-Wells, *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming* (2019)

This book grew out of a particularly dark—darkly realistic—cover story in *New York Magazine* about the fate of biosphere. For all that, it's hopeful. We know the problem, we have the solutions. The unknowns: The human head and heart.

E.O. Wilson, *The Diversity of Life* (1992)

Andrea Wulff, *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World* (2015)

## NOVELS

Any novelist worth her or his salt will give the reader a deeper understanding of nature and humanity's place in the world. Here are a few mostly recent ones for which that was an abiding purpose.

Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*

Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*

J.G. Ballard, *The Drought*

T.C. Boyle, *A Friend of the Earth*

Liu Cixin, *The Three-Body Problem*

Richard Flanagan, *Death of a River Guide*

Barbara Kingsolver, *Flight Behavior*

Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories*

Peter Matthiessen, *Far Tortuga*

Ian McEwan, *Solar*

Thomas McGuane, *92 in the Shade*

Toni Morrison, *Tar Baby*

Chigozie Obioma, *The Fishermen*

Ann Pancake, *Strange as This Weather Has Been*

Richard Powers, *The Overstory*

Annie Proulx, *Barkskin*

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*

Paul Theroux, *The Mosquito Coast*

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Petals of Blood*