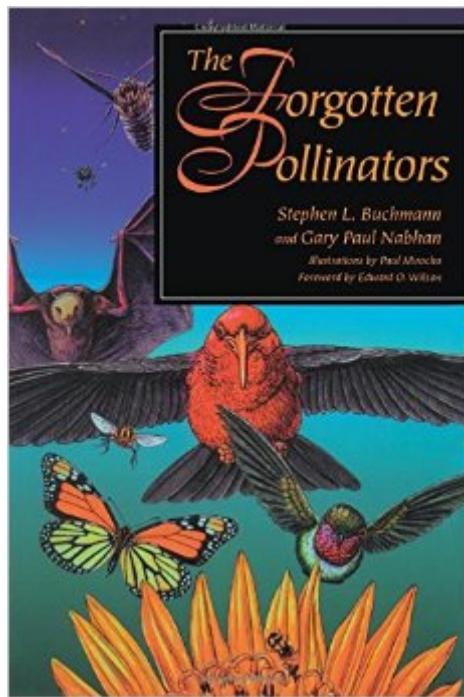


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The Forgotten Pollinators



Synopsis

This work looks at the human impact on plants and the animals they depend upon for reproduction. As an increasing number of species are erased by pesticides or habitat disruption, 80 per cent of the human diet is threatened.

Book Information

Paperback: 312 pages

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Customer Reviews

Ever wonder where most plants come from? They come from seeds. Ever wonder where seeds come from? They come from sex. Ever wonder what plant sex is about (or why this is an issue)? It comes from beetles, bees, butterflies, moths, birds, bats and winged pseudogenitalia in general, whether great or small. Pollination is the key to life on the terrestrial earth. Pollination of plants is also the key to life in much of the aquatic part of our planet, which is about the only omission for which the authors might be faulted. It is a mind-expanding exercise, to be sure, to ask ourselves what would happen if pollinator "X" suddenly disappeared from the scene. Buchmann and Nabhan have taken great care both to inform us that all would not be lost, because pollinator "Y" or "Z" is frequently waiting in the wings. But in many, many cases, pollinator "X" has never been studied and cannot even be named, let alone conserved

Like Silent Spring, this book surprises and alarms. It is well written, rarely bogging down, and opens new ways of understanding with almost every chapter - the perils of patchwork preservation, the honeybee as an invading exotic, the concept of nectar corridors for long distance pollinators. Well

done indeed.

Reading this book I felt as though my basic education was flawed by my not having been taught the supreme importance of the insect world to all life on earth. Each page presented fascinating, sometimes alarming information, about our natural world that I had never seen, though it is always right in front of me. The most enlightening book I have read in years!

Honey bees are less easily forgotten in 2008 than they were in 1997, when this book was published. Any crisis is good press, and several threats to honey bees - sudden hive collapse, viral and other infestations, etc - have put the hives on the front pages lately. A serious decline in the population of commercial pollinators does threaten America's agricultural productivity, especially of orchard crops. Doing something about it will require serious science and public support for serious science, so perhaps all of us ought to learn something about the buds and the bees. The first chapter of *The Forgotten Pollinators* is titled "Silent Springs and Fruitless Falls: the Impending Pollinator Crisis". Clearly the authors are alarmed about public ignorance or indifference to the role of pollinators in the ecology of Earth today. However, the bulk of their book is not alarmist but informational. They describe in lively detail the physical mechanisms of pollination, the symbiotic interdependencies of diverse plants and their specific pollinators, and a bit of the history of human-related changes in populations of pollinators and thus of plant communities. As the book jacket declares, "plant-pollinator relationships offer vivid examples of the connections between endangered species and threatened habitats." Plant-pollinator relationships also offer remarkable proofs of Darwinian evolutionary theories, as flowers and beaks have co-evolved for adaptive mutual reproductive advantage. *The Forgotten Pollinators* is solid science but it's also a chatty book, full of personal anecdotes and asides, written in easy-going non-technical prose. It's a book you might read in your study, in a lawn chair on your patio after planting your dahlia tubers, or even at the beach, as I did.

A great book, fun to read. It's a real eye opener - with messages we all need to take with us. We're so dependent on the pollinators yet their work is so transparent to us. This book lays it all out. It's quite timeless in both the message and the great info on different types of insects and animals. You can learn a lot in this book on a lot of different levels

I do not have a plant or animal biology background, nevertheless this book held my interest and I feel that I have learned a great deal. I see the world with greater clarity. I highly recommend this

book.

This book really captures the beauty of the Southwest amongst other places where pollinators play a crucial role. Buchmann and Nabhan tell a tale that is both dazzling and at the time disturbing: the lost of pollinators and how they impact our lives in so many ways. The book brings about how humankind takes for granted the timeless work these creatures do. Unfortunately, the writing style of the book tends to be repetitive and thoughts fragmented like some of the stories were torn right out of a journal (which they probably were). However, overall a book that will add greater insight and depth to any human concerned about the environment.

This is a great read for more than one reason. It's introduced by none other than E.O. Wilson! Not only is it informative, but both authors lend their characteristic insight to each chapter. Their style is approachable and hopeful, even as they discuss the dire situations facing some pollinators and ecosystems worldwide. I wish I had discovered this gem sooner!

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