

# On The Natural History Of Destruction

On The Natural History Of Destruction

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### CONCLUSION

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#### A Natural History of Time *University of Chicago Press*

The quest to pinpoint the age of the Earth is nearly as old as humanity itself. For most of history, people trusted mythology or religion to provide the answer, even though nature abounds with clues to the past of the Earth and the stars. In *A Natural History of Time*, geophysicist Pascal Richet tells the fascinating story of how scientists and philosophers examined those clues and from them built a chronological scale that has made it possible to reconstruct the history of nature itself. Richet begins his story with mythological traditions, which were heavily influenced by the seasons and almost uniformly viewed time cyclically. The linear history promulgated by Judaism, with its story of creation, was an exception, and it was that tradition that drove early Christian attempts to date the Earth. For instance, in 169 CE, the bishop of Antioch, for instance declared that the world had been in existence for “5,698 years and the odd months and days.” Until the mid-eighteenth century, such natural timescales derived from biblical chronologies prevailed, but, Richet demonstrates, with the Scientific Revolution geological and astronomical evidence for much longer timescales began to accumulate. Fossils and the developing science of geology provided compelling evidence for periods of millions and millions of years—a scale that even scientists had difficulty grasping. By the end of the twentieth century, new tools such as radiometric dating had demonstrated that the solar system is four and a half billion years old, and the universe itself about twice that, though controversial questions remain. The quest for time is a story of ingenuity and determination, and like a geologist, Pascal Richet carefully peels back the strata of that history, giving us a chance to marvel at each layer and truly appreciate how far our knowledge—and our planet—have come.

#### On the Natural History of Destruction *Vintage Canada*

W. G. Sebald completed this extraordinary, important and controversial book before his untimely death in December 2001. It is a harrowing study of the devastation of German cities by Allied bombardment in World War II, and an examination of the silence in German literature and culture about this unprecedented trauma. On the Natural History of Destruction is an essential and deeply relevant study of war and society, suffering and amnesia. Like Sebald’s novels, it is studded with meticulous observation, moments of black humour, and throughout, the author’s unmatched intelligence and humanity.

#### A Natural History of the Future

#### What the Laws of Biology Tell Us About the Destiny of the Human Species *Hachette UK*

Over the past century, our species has made unprecedented technological innovations with which we have sought to control nature. From river levees to enormous one-crop fields, we continue to try to reshape nature for our purposes - so much so it seems we may be in danger of destroying it. In *A Natural History of the Future*, biologist Rob Dunn argues that nothing could be further from the truth: rather than asking whether nature will survive us, better to ask whether we will survive nature. Despite our best - or worst - efforts to control the biological world, life has its own rules, and no amount of human tampering can rewrite them. Elucidating several fundamental laws of ecology, evolution, and biogeography, Dunn shows why life cannot be stopped. We sequester our crops on monocultured fields, only to find new life emerging to attack them. We dump toxic waste only to find microbes to colonize it. And even in the London Tube, we have seen a new species of mosquito emerge to take advantage of an apparently inhospitable habitat. Life will not be repressed by our best-laid plans. Instead, Dunn shows us a vision of the biological future and the challenges the next generations could face. *A Natural History of the Future* sets a new standard for understanding the diversity of life and our future as a species.

#### A Natural History of the Chicago Region *University of Chicago Press*

Interweaving historical anecdotes and modern-day scientific data, a definitive study of the natural history of Chicago describes the various forces that shaped the region's environment, from Ice Age glaciation to the human settlement of the Midwest, and discusses the various habitats of the region, environmental destruction, conservation efforts, and more. Original.

#### A Natural History of Transition

Fiction. Short Stories. LGBTQIA Studies. A NATURAL HISTORY OF TRANSITION is a collection of short stories that disrupts the notion that trans people can only have one transformation. Like the landscape studied over eons, change does not have an expiration date for these trans characters, who grow as tall as buildings, turn into mountains, unravel hometown mysteries, and give birth to cocoons. Portland-based author Callum Angus infuses

his work with a mix of alternative history, horror, and a reality heavily dosed with magic. Callum Angus is one of the younger writers I'm most excited by, with a mind full of marvels and an ear to match. Every story surprises; every sentence strives gorgeously toward music. This is writing as transition, as entrancement, as transcendence.--Garth Greenwell

**New Observations on the Natural History of Bees**

**A Natural History of Vision** *MIT Press*

This illustrated survey covers what Nicholas Wade calls the "observational era of vision," beginning with the Greek philosophers and ending with Wheatstone's description of the stereoscope in the late 1830s.

**A Natural History of the Senses** *Vintage*

Diane Ackerman's lusciously written grand tour of the realm of the senses includes conversations with an iceberg in Antarctica and a professional nose in New York, along with dissertations on kisses and tattoos, sadistic cuisine and the music played by the planet Earth. "Delightful . . . gives the reader the richest possible feeling of the worlds the senses take in." —The New York Times

**The Natural History Book**

**A Natural History of Belize**

**Inside the Maya Forest** *University of Texas Press*

Belize's Chiquibul Forest is one of the largest remaining expanses of tropical moist forest in Central America. It forms part of what is popularly known as the Maya Forest. Battered by hurricanes over millions of years, occupied by the Maya for thousands of years, and logged for hundreds of years, this ecosystem has demonstrated its remarkable ecological resilience through its continued existence into the twenty-first century. Despite its history of disturbance, or maybe in part because of it, the Maya Forest is ranked as an important regional biodiversity hot spot and provides some of the last regional habitats for endangered species such as the jaguar, the scarlet macaw, Baird's tapir, and Morelet's crocodile. A Natural History of Belize presents for the first time a detailed portrait of the habitats, biodiversity, and ecology of the Maya Forest, and Belize more broadly, in a format accessible to a popular audience. It is based in part on the research findings of scientists studying at Las Cuevas Research Station in the Chiquibul Forest. The book is unique in demystifying many of the big scientific debates related to rainforests. These include "Why are tropical forests so diverse?"; "How do flora and fauna evolve?"; and "How do species interact?" By focusing on the ecotourism paradise of Belize, this book illustrates how science has solved some of the riddles that once perplexed the likes of Charles Darwin, and also shows how it can assist us in managing our planet and forest resources wisely in the future.

**Natural History of the Waterfowl** *Rockhopper Pub*

**The Nature of Natural History** *Princeton University Press*

This classic work is an exploration of what natural history is, and a sustained effort to see how it relates to other areas of biology. Marston Bates did not attempt to overwhelm his audience with facts or overinterpret those he did use, and, perhaps for this reason, The Nature of Natural History is a timeless work. The author's genuine interest in the tropics has a very current feeling, and the first ten or fifteen chapters of the work have a style that is parallel to that of David Attenborough's verbal presentations of nature. From the book: "I have already made several remarks about the connection between parasitism and degeneracy. I suspect this is a matter of point of view. We are predatory animals ourselves, and consequently admire the characteristics of predationagility, speed, cunning, self-reliance. We feel a certain kinship with the lion, and regard the liver fluke with horror. If a sheep were given the choice, though, it might prefer to be debilitated by liver flukes rather than killed by a lion." Originally published in 1990. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

**A Natural History of California** *Univ of California Press*

Includes introductory chapters on basic ecology and geology to familiarize the reader with the climate, rocks, soil, plants, and animals in each distinctive region of California and shows how the state's natural history is uniquely interwoven with its human history.

**The Natural History of Man: Africa**

**An Essay Toward a Natural History of the Earth and Terrestrial Bodies, Especially Minerals, as Also of the Sea, Rivers, and Springs : with an Account of the Universal Deluge, and of the Effects that it Had Upon the Earth**

**A Natural History of Wine** *Yale University Press*

"Wine is art. Wine is ritual. Wine is culture. Wine is romance. But in the hands of Tattersall and DeSalle . . . we learn that wine is also science."—Neil

deGrasse Tyson A Wall Street Journal Best Book for Wine Lovers An excellent bottle of wine can be the spark that inspires a brainstorming session. Such was the case for Ian Tattersall and Rob DeSalle, scientists who frequently collaborate on book and museum exhibition projects. When the conversation turned to wine one evening, it almost inevitably led the two—one a palaeoanthropologist, the other a molecular biologist—to begin exploring the many intersections between science and wine. This book presents their fascinating, freewheeling answers to the question “What can science tell us about wine?” And vice versa. Conversational and accessible to everyone, this colorfully illustrated book embraces almost every imaginable area of the sciences, from microbiology and ecology (for an understanding of what creates this complex beverage) to physiology and neurobiology (for insight into the effects of wine on the mind and body). The authors draw on physics, chemistry, biochemistry, evolution, and climatology, and they expand the discussion to include insights from anthropology, primatology, entomology, Neolithic archaeology, and even classical history. The resulting volume is indispensable for anyone who wishes to appreciate wine to its fullest. “Chemistry. Evolutionary biology. Genetics. This book is an excellent layman’s refresher on these diverse topics, and many more, and how they fit into the grand scheme of wine . . . A fact-packed and accessible read that goes a long way toward explaining why and how wine became such an important component in our enjoyment of the natural world.”—Wine Spectator

**Natural History**

**The Ultimate Visual Guide to Everything on Earth** *Dk Pub*

With oversight from the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, this detailed visual guide examines thousands of species and specimens of animals, plants and minerals that make Earth unique.

**Natural Histories**

**Extraordinary Rare Book Selections from the American Museum of Natural History Library** *Sterling Signature*

Providing readers with a rare glimpse into one of the largest natural-science libraries in the Western Hemisphere, this fascinating collection of 40 essays from the American Museum of Natural History's top experts discuss the library's seldom-seen, fully illustrated scientific works.

**The Natural History of Sexuality in Early America** *Johns Hopkins University Press*

Ultimately, The Natural History of Sexuality in Early America not only rewrites all dominant scholarly narratives of eighteenth-century sexual behavior but poses a major intervention into queer theoretical understandings of the relationship between sex and the subject.

**The Natural History of Pliny**

**A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert**

**Revised and Updated Edition** *Univ of California Press*

"A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert provides the most complete collection of Sonoran Desert natural history information ever compiled and is a perfect introduction to this biologically rich desert of North America."--BOOK JACKET.

**Worlds of Natural History** *Cambridge University Press*

Explores the development of natural history since the Renaissance and contextualizes current discussions of biodiversity.

**University of Iowa Studies in Natural History**

**A Natural History of Australia** *UNSW Press*

Written for the general reader and lavishly illustrated this book attempts complete coverage of Australia's diverse natural history.

**The Natural History of the Rich: A Field Guide** *W. W. Norton & Company*

A tantalizing, droll study of the idiosyncratic existence of the very rich, through the unexpected lens of the naturalist. Journalist Richard Conniff probes the age-old question "Are the rich different from you and me?" and finds that they are indeed a completely different animal. He observes with great humor and finesse this socially unique species, revealing their strategies for ensuring dominance and submission, their flourishes of display behavior, the intricate dynamics of their pecking order, as well as their unorthodox mating practices. Through comparisons to other equally exotic animals, Conniff uncovers surprising commonalities. • How did Bill Gates achieve his single greatest act of social dominance by being nice? • How does the flattery of the rich resemble the grooming behavior of baboons? • What made the British aristocracy the single most successful animal dominance hierarchy in the history of the planet? • How does Old Money's disdain for the nouveaux riches resemble the pig-grunting of mountain gorillas? This marvelously entertaining field guide captures in vivid detail the behaviors and habitats of the world's most captivating yet elusive animal.

**Words from the Land**

**Encounters with Natural History Writing** *Gibbs Smith*

Gathers essays by Annie Dillard, John McPhee, Edward Hoagland, Peter Matthiessen, and Barry Lopez

A Natural History of Love

**Author of the National Bestseller A Natural History of the Senses** *Vintage*

The bestselling author of A Natural History of the Senses now explores the allure of adultery, the appeal of aphrodisiacs, and the cult of the kiss. Enchantingly written and stunningly informed, this "audaciously brilliant romp through the world of romantic love" (Washington Post Book World) is the next best thing to love itself.

Natural History

**Heritage, Place and Politics** *Routledge*

The concept of 'natural heritage' has become increasingly significant with the threat of dwindling resources, environmental degradation and climatic change. As humanity's impact on the condition of life on earth has become more prominent, a discernible shift in the relationship between western society and the environment has taken place. This is reflective of wider historical processes which reveal a constantly changing association between humanity's definition and perception of what 'nature' constitutes or what can be defined as 'natural'. From the ornate collections of specimens which formed the basis of a distinct concept of 'nature' emerging during the Enlightenment, this definition and the wider relationship between humanity and natural history have reflected issues of identity, place and politics in the modern era. This book examines this process and focuses on the ideas, values and agendas that have defined the representation and reception of the history of the natural world, including geology and palaeontology, within contemporary society, addressing how the heritage of natural history, whether through museums, parks, tourist sites or popular culture is used to shape social, political, cultural and moral identities. It will be of interest to scholars and practitioners within heritage studies, public history, ecology, environmental studies and geography.

**The Natural History of Puget Sound Country** *University of Washington Press*

Winner of the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Award Bounded on the east by the crest of the Cascade Range and on the west by the lofty east flank of the Olympic Mountains, Puget Sound terrain includes every imaginable topograhic variety. This thoughtful and eloquent natural history of the Puget Sound region begins with a discussion of how the ice ages and vulcanism shaped the land and then examines the natural attributes of the region--flora and fauna, climate, special habitats, life histories of key organisms--as they pertain to the functioning ecosystem. Mankind's effects upon the natural environment are a pervasive theme of the book. Kruckeberg looks at both positive and negative aspects of human interaction with nature in the Puget basin. By probing the interconnectedness of all natural aspects of one region, Kruckeberg illustrates ecological principles at work and gives us a basis for wise decision-making. The Natural History of Puget Sound Country is a comprehensive reference, invaluable for all citizens of the Northwest, as well as for conservationists, biologists, foresters, fisheries and wildlife personnel, urban planners, and environmental consultants everywhere. Lavishly illustrated with over three hundred photographs and drawings, it is much more than a beautiful book. It is a guide to our future.

Natural History of Birds

A Guide to Ornithology

A Natural History of the New World

**The Ecology and Evolution of Plants in the Americas** *University of Chicago Press*

A Natural History of the New World traces the evolution of plant ecosystems, beginning in the Late Cretaceous period and ending in the present, charting their responses to changes in geology and climate.

**Natural History** *Penguin*

A monumental and beautiful guide to Earth's wildlife and natural history--its rocks, minerals, animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms--this landmark of reference publishing has been extended and updated. In the 11 years since this book was released, thousands of new species have been identified, and new revelations have redrawn the tree of life. Already featuring galleries of more than 5,000 species, The Natural History Book now includes discoveries such as the olinguito (the "kitty bear" of the Andean cloud forest) and the painted mannakin of Peru. It takes advantage of the first living observations of the giant squid and the deep-sea anglerfish. And it has reorganized the groups of living things to reflect the latest scientific understanding. All this ensures that this, the only ebook to offer a complete visual survey of all kingdoms of life, remains the benchmark of illustrated natural history references. Written by a worldwide team of natural history experts, The Natural History Book is the perfect addition to every family bookshelf, as well as an ideal gift for any nature lover. From granites to grapevines, from microbes to mammals, The Natural History Book is the ultimate celebration of the diversity of the natural world.

**The Natural History of Deer** *Cornell University Press*

Discusses the diversity--in habitat, diet, social organization, and behavior--of the world's forty species of deer summarizes all that is known about their biology and natural history

A Natural History of Rape

**Biological Bases of Sexual Coercion** *MIT Press*

A biologist and an anthropologist use evolutionary biology to explain the causes and inform the prevention of rape. In this controversial book, Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer use evolutionary biology to explain the causes of rape and to recommend new approaches to its prevention. According to Thornhill and Palmer, evolved adaptation of some sort gives rise to rape; the main evolutionary question is whether rape is an adaptation itself or a by-product of other adaptations. Regardless of the answer, Thornhill and Palmer note, rape circumvents a central feature of women's reproductive strategy: mate choice. This is a primary reason why rape is devastating to its victims, especially young women. Thornhill and Palmer address, and claim to demolish scientifically, many myths about rape bred by social science theory over the past twenty-five years. The popular contention that rapists are not motivated by sexual desire is, they argue, scientifically inaccurate. Although they argue that rape is biological, Thornhill and Palmer do not view it as inevitable. Their recommendations for rape prevention include teaching young males not to rape, punishing rape more severely, and studying the effectiveness of "chemical castration." They also recommend that young women consider the biological causes of rape when making decisions about dress, appearance, and social activities. Rape could cease to exist, they argue, only in a society knowledgeable about its evolutionary causes. The book includes a useful summary of evolutionary theory and a comparison of evolutionary biology's and social science's explanations of human behavior. The authors argue for the greater explanatory power and practical usefulness of evolutionary biology. The book is sure to stir up discussion both on the specific topic of rape and on the larger issues of how we understand and influence human behavior.

**A Natural History of Shells** *Princeton University Press*

From "one of the master naturalists of our time" (American Scientist), a fascinating exploration of what seashells reveal about biology, evolution, and the history of life Geerat Vermeij wrote this "celebration of shells" to share his enthusiasm for these supremely elegant creations and what they can teach us about nature. Most popular books on shells emphasize the identification of species, but Vermeij uses shells as a way to explore major ideas in biology. How are shells built? How do they work? And how did they evolve? With lucidity and charm, the MacArthur-winning evolutionary biologist reveals how shells give us insights into the lives of animals today and in the distant geological past.

The Natural History of Chocolate

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**The Natural History Museum Book of Dinosaurs** *Andre Deutsch Limited*

Unlike an encyclopedia, a data book or even a learned exposition, this book is designed to be read from start to finish as the developing story of a remarkable group of animals. It is an ideal introduction to dinosaurs for the older child or adult.

From Natural History to the History of Nature

**Readings from Buffon and His Critics** *University of Notre Dame Press*

This scholarly and conscientious book makes an important . . . contribution to the study and interpretation of Buffon, and so, too, to the Enlightenment generally. What Lyon and Sloan have done is present English texts under four headings, so that we have successively: a selection from Buffon's writings prior to the first (1749) volumes of his Histoire naturelle; pieces from these first volumes of 1749; immediate responses by the earliest critics, writing about the 1749 texts, and finally Hérault de Séchelles' essay on Buffon, Voyage à MontbardK/i>. Much of the material is in translations made by Lyon and Sloan themselves, and in many cases the texts are ones not previously translated into English. Moreover, at every turn Lyon and Sloan have provided highly informative notes and commentary. In a substantial and original introduction, they have discussed the nature of Buffon's natural history especially from an epistemological point of view." --Medical History

**After Nature** *Modern Library*

After Nature, W. G. Sebald's first literary work, now translated into English by Michael Hamburger, explores the lives of three men connected by their restless questioning of humankind's place in the natural world. From the efforts of each, "an order arises, in places beautiful and comforting, though more cruel, too, than the previous state of ignorance." The first figure is the great German Re-naissance painter Matthias Grünewald. The second is the Enlightenment botanist-explorer Georg Steller, who accompanied Bering to the Arctic. The third is the author himself, who describes his wanderings among landscapes scarred by the wrecked certainties of previous ages. After Nature introduces many of the themes that W. G. Sebald explored in his subsequent books. A haunting vision of the waxing and waning tides of birth and devastation that lie behind and before us, it confirms the author's position as one of the most profound and original writers of our time.

Heaven's Breath

**A Natural History of the Wind** *New York Review of Books*

Wind is everywhere and nowhere. Wind is the circulatory system of the earth, and its nervous system, too. Energy and information flow through it. It brings warmth and water, enriches and strips away the soil, aerates the globe. Wind shapes the lives of animals, humans among them. Trade follows

the path of the wind, as empire also does. Wind made the difference in wars between the Greeks and Persians, the Mongols and the Japanese. Wind helped to destroy the Spanish Armada. And wind is no less determining of our inner lives: the föhn, mistral, sirocco, Santa Ana, and other “ill winds” of the world are correlated with disease, suicide, and even murder. Heaven’s Breath is an encyclopedic and enchanting book that opens dazzling new perspectives on history, nature, and humanity.