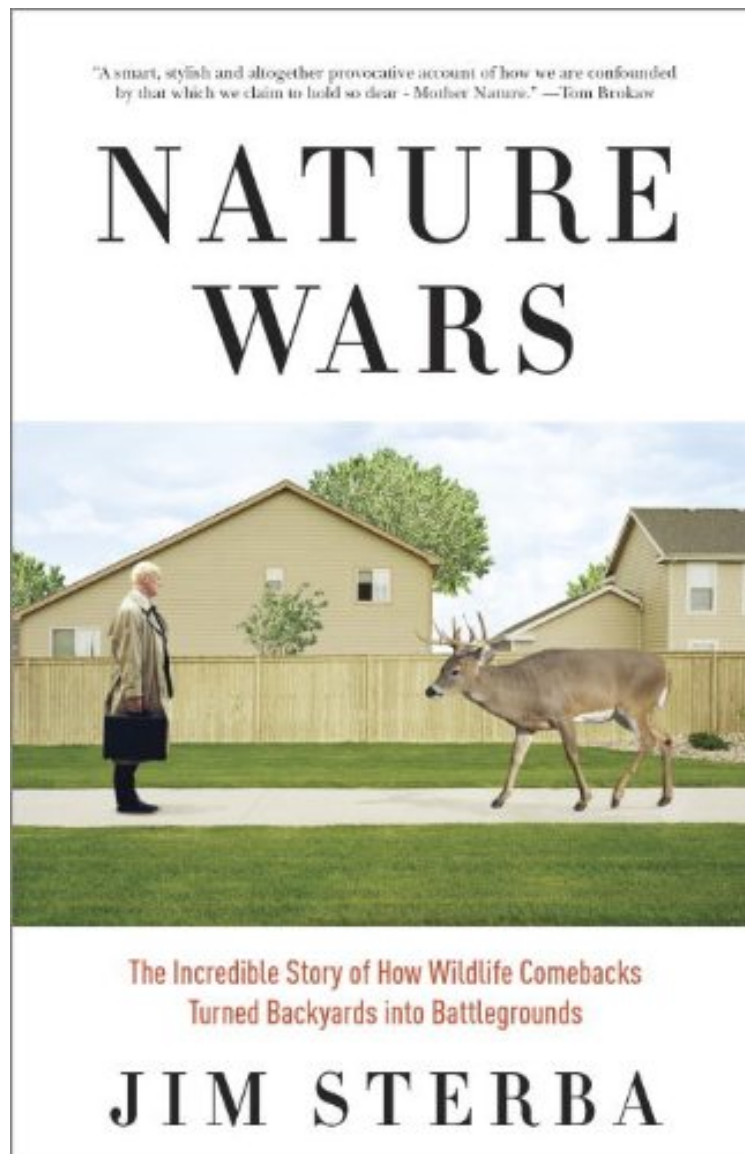


(Ebook pdf) Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds

Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds

Jim Sterba

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Jim Sterba : Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Interesting information, but limited. By Bill CI found the information interesting. He concentrated on trees, deer, turkeys, Canada geese, and the like, all in the eastern United States. It would have been nice to see more species discussed (perhaps in not as much detail), like squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, o'possums, and others. Also, only a limited discussion of the mid-West, plains, or Rockies, and essentially nothing about the Pacific coast or Alaska and Hawaii. I am sure that the author annoyed both the animal rights groups and the animal control groups, with perhaps more annoyance to the former. It would be interesting to read a brief rebuttal from each group to see where they think he misrepresented. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Solid Discussion of an Emerging Social Issue By Janie I hesitate calling a book "important," especially one that probably will never be a major seller. This one, though fires an early salvo in a battle that promises to continue for years to come. The immediate and limited purpose of this volume is to address the issue of emerging and ongoing conflicts between wild animals (both natural and feral) and humans in a contact of expanding woodlands and sprawling suburbia. As Sterba points out, these conflicts have expanded dramatically in the recent past and promise to continue in the foreseeable future as issues such as destruction of suburban landscapes and property damage resulting from road kill bring out legions of interested parties with both harmonious and conflicting proposed solutions. Sterba does a good job of discussing the pros and cons of some of these proposals, although the limited scope of this work precludes an encyclopedic treatment. In a broader context, the author pushes his reader into a mindset that extends beyond the single-issue political solutions proposed by partisans in this issue into a new paradigm of management of such issues with an eye to husbanding society's limited resources. Sterba dismisses the proposals of feral cat fanciers, who favor spay/neuter-and-return policies, as being impractical in the context of the vast number of such animals. He also points out the destructive effects of such animals on wild bird populations, who possess their own political advocates. This discussion brings up the increasingly germane issue of how best to use governmental resources in an era of increasingly tight public budgets. Sterba's book provides an easily accessible and largely objective discussion of this divisive issue, and I highly recommend it to anyone with an interest in any of its ramifications. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. makes you think- what is natural ? Everyone who loves "nature" should read this book. By David G Other reviewers focused on how nature is taking back what we wrenched from the ground, rebuilding the primeval forest that stood across America's east coast. I read instead of man's twisting the environment into an artificial mockery of nature, picking winners and losers. When man interferes he upsets a balance and tilts it one way or another. What we are doing is better than strip mining and wholesale slaughter of entire species; but it is not a return to an unreal make believe ideal forest created by skewed nature films either. Morally he raises a dilemma. Unless you are a vegetarian is there anything ethically better about raising animals in captivity (farm) and then killing them dead in the prime of life versus letting them live free according to their nature and harvesting them (hunting). I do not hunt; but I have never had a moral outrage with people who do. Man has removed the checks and balances that kept some species under control. Removing the predators, or introducing an invasive species can result in unforeseen consequences. Coyotes and deer now thrive in the environment we created. But society would never allow reintroducing the controls of mountain lions and wolves back in to diminish their over breeding and destruction. Saving wild horses ignores that they do not naturally belong on this continent. Feeding deer so you can hunt them probably makes more sense than feeding them so they can over breed and die. But feeding wild life upsets the balance and they cease to be truly wild. Zoos have their place; but they are not natural. He doesn't say it but extrapolating from this book raises some additional questions. How far do we go to protect nature from itself? If a species is so limited in versatility that it can not survive the stress of change should we really be stopping change? Do we bring back the dinosaurs? Or perhaps further back to single cell organisms only? Some who worship nature, do not truly understand what a harsh mistress she is, as we have become separated from reality. Only recently have people begun to accept forest fires as a required natural part of a forest. But even now we will not accept fires near human habitation. When we try to "help" nature we often just pick winners and losers, not back to a fairy tale pristine nature that never really existed. We need to revisit our own natural roots as predators and recognize that saving every single individual wild creature is unrealistic. Everyone who loves "nature" should read this book, preferably with an open mind..

For four hundred years, explorers, traders, and settlers plundered North American wildlife in an escalating rampage, but in the twentieth century an incredible turnaround took place. Conservationists created wildlife sanctuaries, restored habitats, and imposed regulations on hunters and trappers. Over decades, they nursed many wild populations back to health. Then, after World War II, something happened that conservationists hadn't foreseen: sprawl. People moved into suburbs, and then kept moving outward. All the while, well-meaning efforts to protect animals allowed wild populations to burgeon out of control, causing damage costing billions, degrading ecosystems, and touching off disputes that polarized communities. The result is a mix of people and wildlife that should be an animal-lovers dream, but often turns into a sprawl-dwellers nightmare. Deeply researched, eloquently written, and perceptively humorous, *Nature Wars* expresses the need for organic reconnection with our natural ecosystem by offering a provocative look at how Americans created an inadvertent mess.

From Booklist*Starred * Sterba tells the story of, as he puts it, how we turned a wildlife comeback miracle into a mess. The eastern third of the U.S. hosts the majority of Americans and is also the home of a burgeoning population of animals that have adjusted to life near and among humans. This sharing of the landscape has been fueled by three factors: the vast regrowth of forests as farms were abandoned during the Industrial Revolution, the return of decimated and now protected wildlife to the land, and the exurban sprawl created when people moved out of the cities and deeper into the countryside. Dividing his text into three portions, Sterba examines how the clash between suburbanite and animal came about. The first part covers the history of deforestation, farming, reforestation, and the post-WWII movement into the suburbs. The resurgence of wildlife after near-extirmination during the settling and taming of the East fills the second portion. Perhaps the most thought-provoking section discusses how Americans have become removed from the realities of wild animals and of working the land, equating nature with bird-feeding and food with the supermarket. This is an excellent introduction to a problem that is often one of human perception. --Nancy Bent "Smart and provocative...Nature Wars is a counterintuitive take on a social problem, and the tone is knowing and smart, not sarcastic or snide." Chicago Tribune"[A] sweeping and thoughtful work... there's a lot in Nature Wars for the reasoned and concerned human to learn about the changing natural landscape...[Sterba] paints a vivid and memorable portrait of these new eco systems, where only one, plentiful species is capable of bringing balance and harmony among living things: homo sapiens." LA Times"Fascinating...Sterba portrays the resulting conflicts not only between people and animals but also between hunters and activists, government officials and residents, and any number of other factions." Washington Post"Written with considerable charm and more wit than commonly found in works that deal with ecosystems, [Nature Wars] includes extensive and often entertaining treatments of such common nuisances as beavers, Canada geese, and feral cats...For the denatured reader, there is a wealth of useful statistics." New York of Books"While advancing his brief that mankind has to do more to intervene as managers in the natural process, Sterba also ably documents how we influence wildlife without really trying or realizing it." Christian Science Monitor"Jim Sterba's Nature Wars chronicles the dilemmas created by the resurgence of wildlife populations in much of the eastern United States[A] thoughtful text." Seattle Times"[Sterba] makes a provocative, controversial, but quite compelling case that we should not - and cannot - opt out of active management and stewardship of wildlife." Pittsburgh Post-Gazette "In Nature Wars, Sterba, an award-winning journalist, examines how modern society is fighting a new war against the wildlife and nature that surround us...an interesting look at how man's attempt to control nature has created even more problems...Thoroughly researched." Deseret News"In his book Nature Wars, [Sterba] highlights nature's perils... nature has never been as idyllic as we think." Emma Bryce, Discover Magazine"This is an excellent introduction to a problem that is often one of human perception." Booklist, starred review"Jim Sterba employs humor and an eye for the absurd to document the sometimes bizarre conflicts that arise as a consequence of America's transformed relationship with nature... An eye-opening take on how romantic sentimentalism about nature can have destructive consequences." Kirkus, starred review"Sterba provocatively and persuasively argues that just at the moment when humankind has distanced itself irrevocably from nature, its behavior patterns have put people in conflict with a natural world that they don't know how to deal with...A valuable counternarrative to the mainstream view of nature-human interaction." Publisher's WeeklyIn this elegant and compelling tour of America's mutating connections with its land and wildlife, Jim Sterba uses wit and insight to reveal new and unintended consequences of human sprawl and the ways in which they have shaped today's relationships with Nature. John H Adams, Founding Director, Natural Resources Defense CouncilIt's a jungle out there - and we're living in it. Jim Sterba's Nature Wars is a smart, stylish and altogether provocative account of how we are confounded by that which we claim to hold so dear - Mother Nature and all her creatures moving in right next door. Tom BrokawJim Sterba describes a cockeyed country whose denizens spend billions to imitate "nature" in their own small domains, little realizing that their excess creates an environment to which other species are fatefully drawn in increasing, sometimes alarming numbers; that they themselves are the creatures who throw this shared habitat out of whack. An unusual feat of deep and sustained reporting, Nature Wars is full of surprises and marked, from first page to last, by uncommon sense, graceful writing and precious wit. Joseph Lelyveld, author of Great Soul: Mahatma Gandhi and His Struggle with IndiaQuite unintentionally and with little awareness by its inhabitants, over the past century the Eastern United States has become one of the most heavily forested and densely populated regions in world history. Nature Wars explores this marvelous story of environmental recovery and the opportunities and challenges that it brings to its residents and the entire globe in fascinating detail and with great insight by Jim Sterba. This is a great book and a story with lessons for us all. David Foster, Ecologist and Director of the Harvard Forest, Harvard UniversityIf there is one lesson to be learned from Jim Sterba's book, it is: Be careful what you wish for. Having decimated our planet's natural state, we are blithely over-compensating, over-correcting and overturning the balance of nature yet again. Nature, as seen by most of us through a double glazed picture window revealing a manicured lawn, but what's that moose being chased by a coyote being chased by a black bear, doing there? Read Nature Wars and weep. Or at least, stop and think. Morley Safer"Nature Wars, Jim Sterba lays out battle lines that emerged after populations of species that declined to near-extinction by the end of the 19th century came roaring back...This book is sure to initiate discussion about an issue that seems likely to move closer to the forefront in the years ahead." Jerry Harkavy"Nature Wars, Jim Sterba has given us a fascinating,

powerful, and important lesson in why we should be careful when we mess with Mother Nature. Winston Groom, author of *Forrest Gump* At last someone's grappling with the elephant in the room or rather the deer, the coyote, the beaver, the bear, all these damn animals crowding into our living space. Sterba's book may strike some as observational comedy but he's deadly serious. Every word rings true. Nature is vengeful. All I can say is, he better not take a walk in his backyard without a shotgun. John Darnton, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author of *Almost a Family* A wonderful, thought-provoking, important book that will overturn everything you thought you knew about wildlife in America. Jim Sterba confronts the shibboleths that make man-versus-beast conflicts so vexing, divisive, and fascinatingly complex." David Baron, author of *The Beast in the Garden* It's a truly original piece of work, often I would say inspired, told in a pitch-perfect voice, just north of sarcastic and south of appalled. At any event, a terrific read on a subject that is all around us yet largely unobserved. Ward Just, author of *Rodin's Debutante* "Anything Jim Sterba writes is worth reading--and his latest, *Nature Wars*, is terrific. Sterba casts a reporter's sharp eye on a little noticed war unfolding under our noses, in our own backyards. We've messed with nature for way too long, and nature is getting even." Joseph L. Galloway, co-author of *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young* and *We Are Soldiers Still* Jim Sterba has done a brilliant job explain how it happens that drivers more often than ever run into deer, wild turkeys fly into speeding car windshields and gorge on newly-planted seed corn, and why golf courses are filled with people chasing geese down the fairways with 5 irons in hand. This informative and beautifully written book gives us the effect of civilization (often well-meaning) on the natural habitat, both flora and fauna. I loved the book and learned a great deal from it. Peter Duchin, musician and author of *Ghost of Chance* "If you love animals and trees and other wonders of the natural world, this book will astonish you. Sterba's great gifts are reportorial energy, out-of-the-box thinking, and an easy, relaxed prose style that makes *Nature Wars* a pleasure to read, even as its counterintuitive discoveries explode on every page." Daniel Okrent, author of *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* Most Americans now live not in cities but in regrown forests, among at least as many deer as when Columbus landed. Jim Sterba tells us how this came to be and why it isn't all good. In graceful, clear-eyed prose, he explains why we need to relearn how to cut, cull and kill, to restore a more healthy balance to our environment. Paul Steiger, Editor-in-Chief, *ProPublica* "Although few of us realize it, America is at a turning point where we must rethink our most fundamental ideas about nature, animals, and how we live. Fortunately we have a wise and witty guide in Jim Sterba, whose *Nature Wars* is my favorite kind of read -- a book that affectionately recasts much of what we thought we knew about our nation's past and our relationship to the American wild, while at the same time revealing how intimately we ourselves are a part of nature, but in the most surprising and unexpected ways. In Sterba's hands, your everyday notions about the creatures around you -- whether pests, pets, or magnificent beasts -- will turn into entirely new ways of seeing the world." Trevor Corson, author of *The Secret Life of Lobsters* and *The Story of Sushi* About the Author: JIM STERBA has been a foreign correspondent and national affairs reporter for more than four decades for the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*. He is the author of *Frankie's Place: A Love Story*, about summers in Maine with his wife, the author Frances FitzGerald.