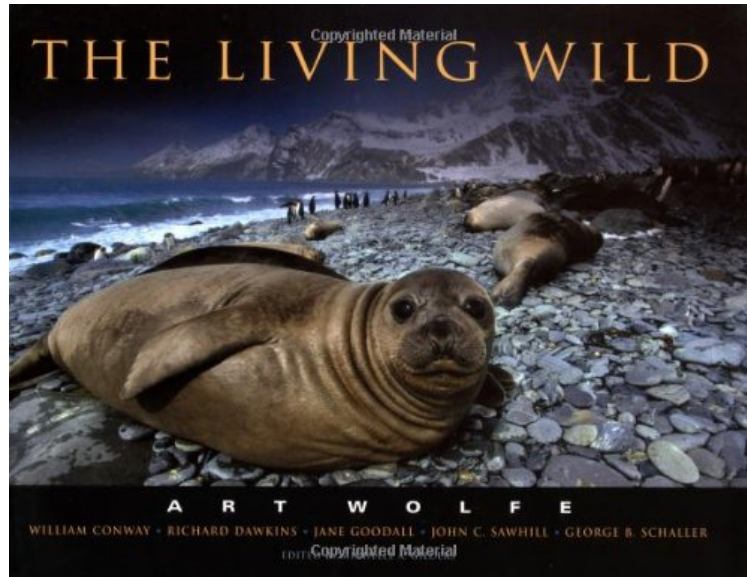


The Living Wild

Art Wolfe

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Art Wolfe : The Living Wild before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Living Wild:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. beautifulBy Alejandrobeautiful but not the best art wolfe book. All the other books i own from him are way better .2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful photos and great information for photographersBy Poison WoodOthers have commented rightly that the photographs in this book are fantastic. The book is hardcover and large format and takes hours to go through.However, this book is particularly good for amateur photographers. The book is split into several sections, based on ecosystem - island ocean, moutain, subtropical, etc. At the end of each section, Wolfe has a couple paragraphs about the animals in every single photograph. In addition, for every single photograph, he includes a paragraph about how it was taken and why it was taken that way. He also includes camera, lens and film used, and aperture and shutter speed. I find looking at a beautiful photograph and then learning about how it was created a great way to learn. I have encountered few nature photography books with this kind of information.The photographs alone make this book worth the money. However, the details about how the photographs were taken make it a book that anyone who enjoys taken photographs will especially enjoy.39 of 39 people found the following review helpful. An exquisite call to arms...By J. D. BakerOnce in a great while, an author produces a book that has the potential to change the way people view the environment and their role in preserving it. From an idea initially born while photographing a single endangered Florida panther, Art Wolfe has produced such a book."The Living Wild" is a call to arms that highlights the need for immediate habitat preservation to combat the decline of biodiversity in the world. Happily, it accomplishes this goal while remaining a uniquely accessible work, with a visual splendor that will allow people far-removed from the core environmental debate to appreciate, relate to, and, with any hope, be inspired by its central message.It is obvious on every page that Wolfe was meticulous in his editing choices during the book's production. Each image is composed carefully, and no photograph in the book appears even slightly out of focus. There is no implication that any photograph made the final

cut because it was "good enough." Wolfe stayed in the field until he got it right. Such tenacity was particularly important on this project because the visual style Wolfe chose led to a significantly lower number of "keeper" images than would normally be expected from a seasoned pro running so much film through his camera. By employing slower films, longer exposures, and wider-angle lenses than those typically used for wildlife photography, each of which naturally magnifies the possibility of subject movement or camera shake, Wolfe has created a collection of images that will stand out in a crowd. After three years of seemingly perpetual motion on the world's many continents, and with hundreds of thousands of travel miles behind him, Wolfe may have met his greatest challenge of the project on the light table when he arrived back home in Seattle. Although there are a large number of pictures in the book, that number represents an incredibly small percentage of the total number of exposures Wolfe made during his three years in the field. Upon a second reading of the book, I found myself extrapolating from the photographs Wolfe ultimately chose to include, wondering what images had found their way to the cutting room floor (metaphorically) during the production process in order to make room for the survivors. Wolfe's goal in producing this book was to highlight the state of wildlife in the world at the turning of the Millennium, and to that end, the photographs in "The Living Wild" place an unusual amount of emphasis on the animals' context in their environment. This is not a book of portraits; nearly all of the photographs depict the animals in their native habitats. This style will not please every viewer, of course. For those who prefer tightly-framed animal portraits, or animal photographs exhibiting a high degree of anthropomorphism, Wolfe's emphasis on environmental context may detract from the viewing experience. Such readers might be better served with a review of Frans Lanting's excellent "Eye to Eye." In addition to Wolfe's photographs, "The Living Wild" also features a series of essays written by environmental luminaries, including Jane Goodall, Richard Dawkins, William Conway, John C. Sawhill, and George B. Schaller. The essays tie Wolfe's images together well, and those readers who are drawn to "The Living Wild" for its message of habitat preservation will find that the text of the essays effectively outlines the problems human encroachment on the environment is producing, and calls for immediate corrective efforts before the remedies escape us. On the other hand, those readers who purchase the book solely for its visual qualities will find that the text is easily skimmed, and will not impede the book's value as a fixture on the coffee table. "The Living Wild" concludes with a section of thumbnail-sized images of each of the photographs in the book. Each of the pictures is accompanied by a small map indicating the habitat range for the particular animal depicted in the corresponding photograph. There is also a narrative passage offering Wolfe's comments about the making and meaning of the image, which those in the nature photography community seeking to emulate Wolfe's work will find helpful. The fact that such information was presented on additional pages in the book, rather than edited tightly and crammed into captions on the same page as the primary image, underscored for me the commitment Wolfe and his production team had to releasing a top-quality work. Such additional pages invariably add to production costs, and "The Living Wild" is already a thick book, with large pages printed on excellent quality paper. Wolfe spent a great deal of his own money on the project, which was obviously a labor of love, and at the price for which it is selling I'm not sure the project can even recoup its costs. No book, of course, is perfect, and "The Living Wild" is not an exception. Some readers may be looking for a collection of pretty pictures, and no more, and may accordingly find the message of habitat preservation Wolfe presents unduly "preachy," although as mentioned above I think the textual portions of the book are easily circumnavigated. Those on the opposite end of the political spectrum may wish that the essays took an even harsher tone in condemning human expansion on the planet. And the emphasis on broad-based accessibility does not allow for a high-minded, scholarly dissertation. At any rate, that is not Wolfe's style. I would also note that the photographs Wolfe has selected for the book often differ greatly from one another stylistically. While this visual diversity helps showcase the breadth of Wolfe's talents, and probably means that the book will have a "Wow!" shot for every reader, it also increases the likelihood that no reader will feel a connection to all of the photographs. Finally, although it is a very accessible and persuasive work, it is unlikely to have the same far-reaching energizing effects on society as some earlier works, such as Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring." That it may be mentioned in the same company as such a book, however, is already a testament to the power "The Living Wild" does have. "The Living Wild" is a beautiful and important book. It will improve any shelf or coffee table upon which it sits, and will hopefully have a similar effect on the minds of those that read it. I whole-heartedly recommend it.

Art Wolfe has been photographing nature and wildlife to wide acclaim for 25 years, but his most recent book takes a new approach. Recognizing the crucial interdependence between animal life and the environment, Wolfe focuses on this relationship. As he says, "An animal . . . within its habitat is a vibrant representation of natural selection." The Living Wild offers breathtaking evidence of this. Wolfe traveled three years to capture these rare, soaring images, from Mongolia to Australia to Iceland and beyond. The result is a rich pictorial tour of a magnificent array of animals, from "charismatic" beasts like the giant panda and the lowland gorilla, to a stunning display of birds, to such unsung contributors to the ecology as insects. Complementing the images are essays by renowned conservationists, such as Jane Goodall, who document the increasingly tenuous state of earth's biodiversity and suggest ways to strengthen it.

From Booklist This is a stunning work. Wolfe, one of the world's preeminent wildlife photographers, has chosen a new

approach in his forty-second book. Recognizing that we cannot save animals without saving the places they live, Wolfe has illustrated this concept by using wideangle lenses for the majority of the images to portray animals in their habitats. The pictures then become both portraits and landscapes in the same instance, drawing the viewer in with the immediacy of an individual creature and the grandeur of its habitat. This approach is best illustrated by the image on the book's cover, where an elephant seal gazes directly into one's eyes, surrounded by the rocky emptiness of South Georgia Island in the Antarctic. Complementing Wolfe's photographs are essays by William Conway, Richard Dawkins, Jane Goodall, John Sawhill, and George Schaller. This is a beautiful production, essays and photographs perfect counterparts, and highly recommended for all libraries with good collections in photography and natural history. Nancy BentCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved