

Summer Nature Reading List

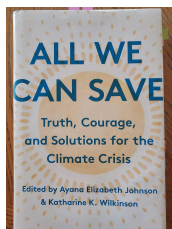
To kick off the summer season, you may encounter various reading lists. These can be fun, easy reads or fun, fantasy fiction; however, this nonfiction list is for those fun, nature learners to add to your summer reading. Maybe you're planning a trip to a national park or a nature preserve. Maybe you want to learn a little more about the lands and waters on which we all depend. Or maybe you cannot afford a trip; either financially or you can't afford the time, and you just want to have a little bit of an escape this season. These books may be right up your alley. [All of the book recommendations below are listed in no particular order and are appropriate for those ages 15+.]

***Where the Deer and the Antelope Play* by Nick Offerman**

[Outdoors, contemplative]



I picked up this nonfiction book by Nick Offerman in anticipation of a fairly long flying day and found it to be the perfect combination of fun and informative. Nick Offerman's latest book is one theme split into three parts; that theme is the remainder of the book's title: ***The Pastoral Observations of One Ignorant American Who Loves to Walk Outside***. In the first part, the author/actor is on a guy's trip with his buddies to Glacier National Park. The second part recounts his learning opportunity from a small farm in England and the third and final part of the book discusses his and his wife, Megan Mullally's trip in an RV across the western U.S. Within all three sections, Nick Offerman threads together the idea of learning about the lands upon which we all depend and how we, as land mammals, can be better informed about what our lands endure and provide. This is one of those books that once you finish, you wake up the next day, and the next and the next, thinking about it. Highly recommend it.



All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis

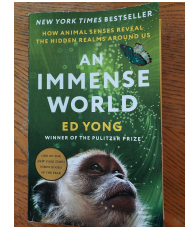
Edited by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson & Katharine K. Wilkinson

[Essays, thought-provoking]

This is a completely different book but still highly recommended. This is actually a collection of essays and poems from women from all walks of the green movement. This is a book you can open up anywhere and find something that resonates. I have SO many Post-it flags stuck all over this book to go back and reference. When you start digging into the climate and biodiversity crises, it can start to feel very overwhelming, and, at times, you may want to scream at all the policy-makers. This is why it is good to have this book on hand. Read it all at once or break it up over several readings and go back to it whenever you feel frustrated - this book will be there to help you find some hope and inspiration for the changes that we so desperately need.

***An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* by Ed Yong**

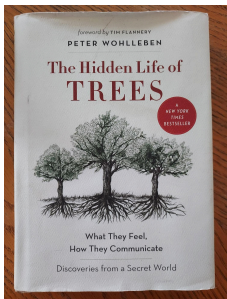
[Biology, revelatory]



This nonfiction book is fascinating. It is all about how we can better understand what other animals sense and how they interact with the same world upon which we all live. But the author does not even remotely suggest that what is presented in this book is the be-all and end-all of animal senses. It freely shows the gaps in the research and provides us a road map for where to learn next. If you've ever had a pet or wondered why cows don't really look at you, or are in any way fascinated about how others interpret the world around us, then this is the Pulitzer Prize-winning book for your summer reading. (I "read" it as an audiobook and then had to buy a copy so I could read it for myself.) Seriously good and you will never look at bees or dogs the same way again.

***The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate* by Peter Wohlleben**

[Trees, informative, quick read]



Where the last book on the list was all about animals, this book is all about trees. And what a book! This little book you can toss easily in a purse or bag and never be bored. It is chocked full of information and yet it is still accessible. The author has managed a forest for over 20 years and he shares with us his wisdom as well as his obvious deep appreciation for

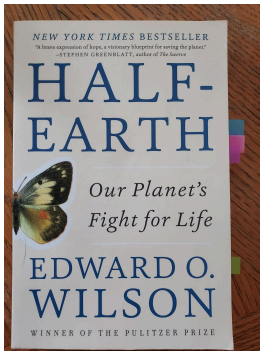
trees. This New York Times Bestseller is worth reading several times and is certainly worth reading at least once.

***Fresh Banana Leaves: Healing Indigenous Landscapes Through Indigenous Science* by Jessican Hernandez, PhD**

[Indigenous knowledge, heartfelt]



I loved this nonfiction book. Not only because it was clearly written with love and comes from deeply personal histories, it is an environmental roadmap written by an Indigenous environmentalist. So many environmental values are dictated and drafted by those of European descent, it is refreshing to learn from one of North American Indigenous descent. But, as the author herself states repeatedly, no group is a monolith and this is only one perspective of being responsible Earth stewards. She certainly makes me want to learn more, which like any good story, whether written or performed, is the mark of a really good piece.



***Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life* by Edward O. Wilson**
[Environmentalism, persuasive, impactful]

You could probably pick up any one of the twenty-plus books by E.O. Wilson and certainly learn something. This is the one that I picked up. I had heard of the global initiative to protect 30% of global lands and waters by 2030, the 30x30 initiative, but to fully understand the reasoning behind that initiative and the push for protecting 50%, is clearly argued in this Pulitzer Prize-winning author's book. This is THE "protect biodiversity" book.

Journaling by You!

In my final summer nature book recommended reading list, I recommend not reading at all. Instead, as you think about, read about, or get out and about, I encourage you to write what you experience. It may not make any sense at all. It may just be a string of words or feelings or musings or drawings. You may show it to someone or no one at all. A journal is just for you so why not use it to help keep track of your journey into and with nature? After all, a summer reading list doesn't have to be all read, all the time. Sometimes it's nice to express what YOU are feeling, instead of reading what someone else wrote.

Whatever your preference, I hope these recommendations help get you started with some nature reading/writing options. Have a great summer exploring nature - in whatever format you choose!

Colleen Rosales, Ph.D. and Nicole Snider, M.S. are volunteers with the Fort Wayne chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby. Participate in a climate conversation today at <https://cclusa.org/take-action>