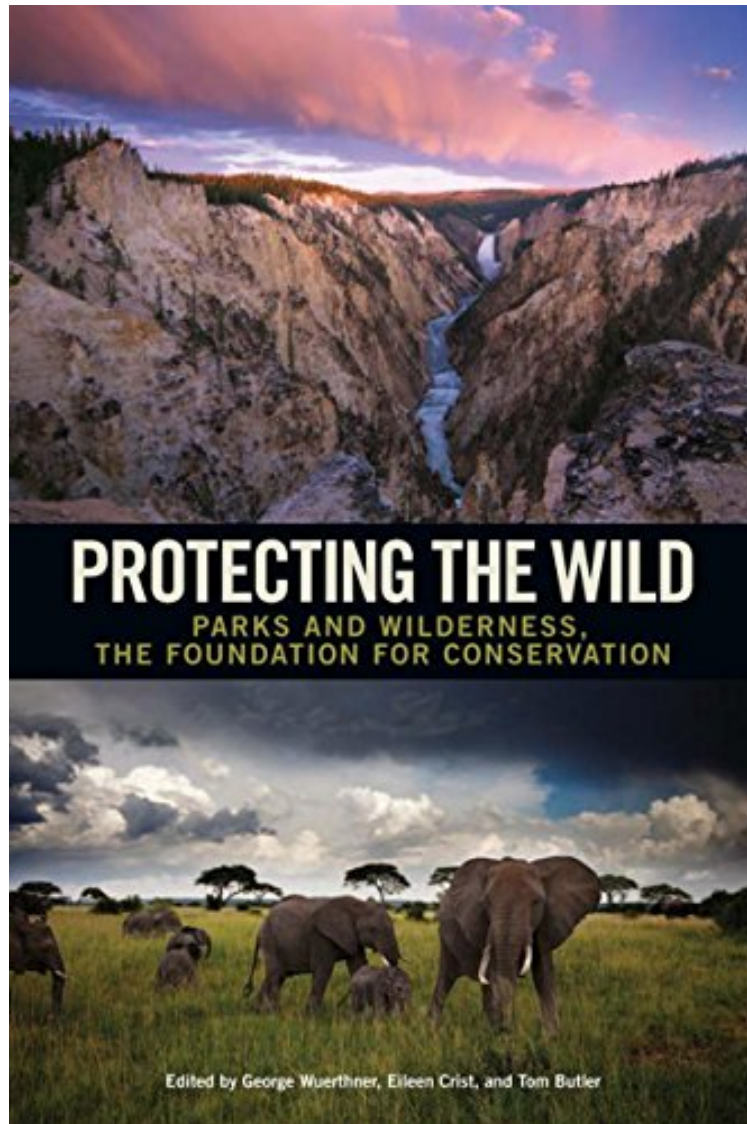


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## Protecting the Wild: Parks and Wilderness, the Foundation for Conservation

*From Foundations for Deep Ecology 3*

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**From Foundations for Deep Ecology 3 : Protecting the Wild: Parks and Wilderness, the Foundation for Conservation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Protecting the Wild: Parks and Wilderness, the Foundation for Conservation:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy chrisMy daughter a wildlife conservationist loved this book.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Review of "Protecting the Wild"By Mark J. PalmerBook Review: "Protecting the Wild"; edited by George Wuerthner, Eileen Crist, and Tom Butler, Island Press,

362p. Review by Mark J. Palmer, Associate Director, International Marine Mammal Project, Earth Island Institute, Berkeley, CA. [www.DolphinProject.org](http://www.DolphinProject.org)

In recent years, a group of "environmental contrarians" have put out essays and books criticizing the environmental movement's traditional advocacy for parks and wilderness. They claim the fight to protect these areas is futile as there is no true wilderness anymore and that the protected species within them are doomed to extinction anyway. They go further to recommend that humans instead manage the global landscape to provide solely for human values, assuming natural cycles should work for our benefit. Island Press's book "Protecting the Wild" is a series of essays aimed at both defending the protection of parks and wilderness and advocating even more protected areas for the sake of preserving biodiversity and the special "services" the environment provides humans, such as watershed protection and sequestration of carbon dioxide. "Protecting the Wild" provides documentation of the value of protected natural areas, contrary to the contrarians. While creating a national park or refuge does not guarantee that all species native to that area will survive, the species diversity is still much greater than surrounding lands used for utilitarian purposes like grazing or logging. And by expanding these natural areas and providing wild corridors or connectivity between them, their value is greatly enhanced for species survival. We need more parks, not fewer.

In one essay, for example, Dr. Jane Goodall notes the success her projects have had in working with local villagers in Africa to protect local forested areas for biodiversity while providing the villagers with additional benefits such as improved medical care, education, and food production. The goal is to give local people a strong stake in protecting these local areas that they share. There is limited discussion in this book of the more traditional arguments for wilderness and parks, which mostly were set up for the enjoyment of the public and for the more spiritual and esthetic values humans have for both wildlands and wildlife. Indeed, in wilderness the human animal was formed. Separating ourselves from that wilderness touchstone is likely to prove disastrous for our species. Several essays further note how illogical the contrarian view is that humans have the knowledge and the ability to manage the Earth at this time. Without nature, we will likely not last very long as a species, no matter how good our management skills sound on paper.

A number of essays cover the importance and future for parks in various areas of the world, such as Latin America, Africa, and Australia. Several essays argue in favor of "re-wilding," such as allowing natural lands to recover from former exploitation, restoring extinct species, and of course establishing new national parks and wilderness areas to maintain what is wild. One of the more exciting, not to say daunting, proposals in the book is that biologists from several perspectives are now saying that in order to preserve the Earth's wild areas and biodiversity roughly half the Earth should be set aside for biodiversity protection. It is a bold suggestion, if not outright crazy, at least when the reader contemplates the effect such efforts will have on human populations and activities. But life in all its forms is only known from the planet Earth. Can we really stand by and watch that destroyed? Species are disappearing at a terrible rate due to habitat loss, pollution and over-hunting. Some of our favorite, most familiar wild animals may well be gone in the next fifty years — elephants, tigers, polar bears, and koalas. That is a high price to pay for more pavement and more logging and more of everything else we consume.

"Protecting the Wild" is a call for new parks and wilderness areas. We can share the Earth with all its inhabitants, and we need to do so now.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding and necessary reading!

By Kyle Gardner: Outstanding and essential reading for understanding the right path forward for conservation. A great collection of essays and top scholars arguing for the goal of preserving wildlife and places because of their intrinsic value, not because they are of "value" to humans. This is a collection that provides a necessary balance against the neo-conservationist utility-maximizers attempting to hijack traditional conservation. (These are the same "thinkers" - corporate hacks - who propose to transfer Western public lands into private ownership.) This volume illustrates progressive thinking which places human needs within some boundaries and moves all of creation to the center of thinking. Well done!

Kyle Gardner, author, Momentary Threshold

Protected natural areas have historically been the primary tool of conservationists to conserve land and wildlife. These parks and reserves are set apart to forever remain in contrast to those places where human activities, technologies, and developments prevail. But even as the biodiversity crisis accelerates, a growing number of voices are suggesting that protected areas are passe. Conservation, they argue, should instead focus on lands managed for human use — working landscapes — and abandon the goal of preventing human-caused extinctions in favor of maintaining ecosystem services to support people. If such arguments take hold, we risk losing support for the unique qualities and values of wild, undeveloped nature.

Protecting the Wild offers a spirited argument for the robust protection of the natural world. In it, experts from five continents reaffirm that parks, wilderness areas, and other reserves are an indispensable — albeit insufficient — means to sustain species, subspecies, key habitats, ecological processes, and evolutionary potential. Using case studies from around the globe, they present evidence that terrestrial and marine protected areas are crucial for biodiversity and human well-being alike, vital to countering anthropogenic extinctions and climate change.

A companion volume to *Keeping the Wild: Against the Domestication of Earth*, *Protecting the Wild* provides a necessary addition to the conversation about the future of conservation in the so-called Anthropocene, one that will be useful for academics, policymakers, and conservation practitioners at all

levels, from local land trusts to international NGOs.