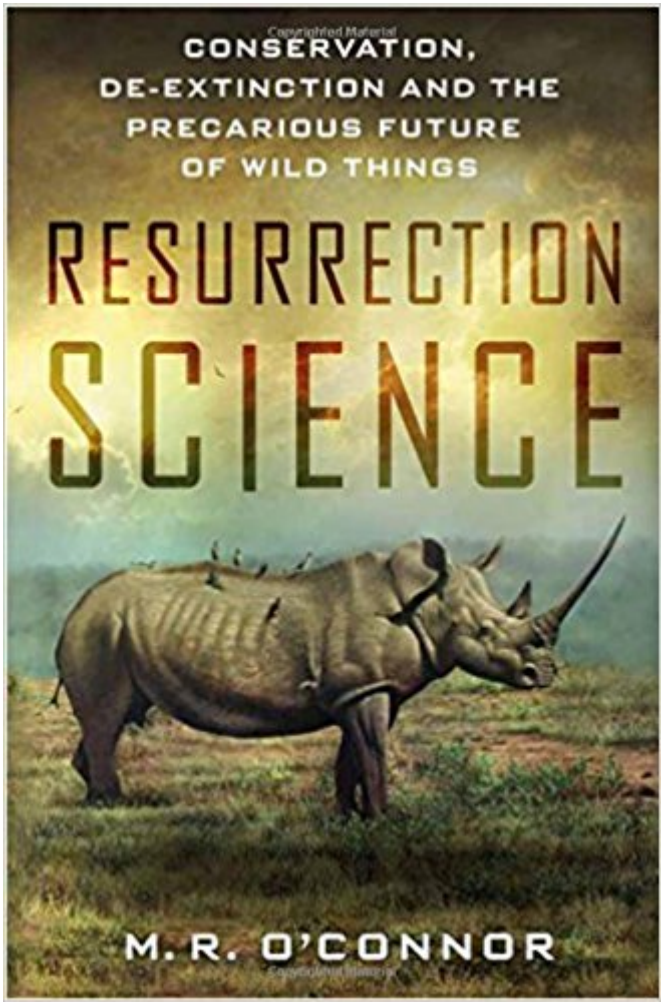
Resurrection Science: Conservation, De-Extinction And The Precarious Future Of Wild Things



Synopsis

A Library Journal Best Book of 2015 ****A Christian Science Monitor Top Ten Book of SeptemberIn a world dominated by people and rapid climate change, species large and small are increasingly vulnerable to extinction. In Resurrection Science, journalist M. R. O'Connor explores the extreme measures scientists are taking to try and save them, from captive breeding and genetic management to de-extinction. Paradoxically, the more we intervene to save species, the less wild they often become. In stories of sixteenth-century galleon excavations, panther-tracking in Florida swamps, ancient African rainforests, Neanderthal tool-making, and cryogenic DNA banks, O'Connor investigates the philosophical questions of an age in which we "play god" with earth's biodiversity. Each chapter in this beautifully written book focuses on a unique species--from the charismatic northern white rhinoceros to the infamous passenger pigeon--and the people entwined in the animals' fates. Incorporating natural history and evolutionary biology with conversations with eminent ethicists, O'Connor's narrative goes to the heart of the human enterprise: What should we preserve of wilderness as we hurtle toward a future in which technology is present in nearly every aspect of our lives? How can we co-exist with species when our existence and their survival appear to be pitted against one another?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Honorable Mention for Sigurd F. Olson Nature Writing Awards 2016**A Library Journal Best Book of 2015****A Christian Science Monitor Top 10 Book of September 2015**"Entertaining...Resurrection Science demonstrates unequivocally that the Anthropocene has

already dawned, and that we are ill-equipped to deal with its consequences." Ã¢â ¬â ¢The New York Review of Books"Deep and inquiring...O'Connor sets out to tell the story of the...species that face or have gone through extinction." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Pacific Standard"An extraordinary smorgasbord of cutting-edge science and thinking...[O'Connor] made me stop and think, again and again." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Ashley Hay, The Australian "This is a very important contribution to conservation, but even more importantly connects conservation and the current extinction crisis to deeper and broader themes concerning the human experience and the natural world." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Dr. George Amato, Director of the Sackler Institute for Comparitive Genomics, American Museum of Natural History"Will it one day be possible to bring a woolly mammoth or a Neanderthal back to life? If so, should we? How is climate change affecting the evolution and extinction of species?... Traveling the world from Kenya (in search of the white rhino) to a lab in California (where a geneticist is trying to resurrect the extinct passenger pigeon), OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Connor reports on the people and places on the front lines of what has become known as resurrection science." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Simon Worrall, National GeographicÃ¢â ¬Å“What is a species worth, especially when its natural environment no longer exists? This question becomes the driving force behind journalist M.R. OÃ¢â ¬â„¢ConnorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s new book, Resurrection ScienceÃ¢â ¬Â¦ OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Connor offers a critical toolkit to help readers understand the challenges of wildlife preservation.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Christian Science MonitorÃ¢â ¬Å“A book as thought-provoking as it is fascinating.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢BooklistÃ¢â ¬Å“OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Connor skillfully negotiates her way through the thorny ethical issues involved in reinventing nature from DNA banks and frozen tissue samplesÃ¢â ¬Â¦[has] a reporting-from-the-front-lines feel.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Library JournalÃ¢â ¬Å“At the intersection of conservation, technology and hope lie some of the most fascinating -- and often unsettling -- stories of the fight to preserve the world's natural heritage. In RESURRECTION SCIENCE, M.R. O'Connor plumbs the ways synthetic biology might recreate an extinct pigeon, a Hail-Mary gamble in Africa to save a vanishing toad with the world's biggest sprinkler system, and the bioethics of bringing living Neanderthals back to the 21st century. Rhinos, whales, panthers and a sacred crow inhabit this world of tantalizing and sometimes frightening prospects, which O'Connor navigates with journalistic skill and graceful prose.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢Scott Weidensaul, author of The Ghost with Trembling Wings and other books"In a provocative and thoughtful new book, journalist M.R. OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Connor scrutinizes the earnest efforts of the conservation movement. She asks the hard questions. For what are we saving endangered species? For their own sake? To keep in a zoo? So our children can see one or two? But is a tiger in a zoo, with little room to roam and no prey to catch, really a tiger? Should we be

retrieving the DNA of the extinct passenger pigeon or the charismatic woolly mammoth to try to rebreed them, in a bold attempt at rewilding, if we cannot also protect or recreate the habitat and resources on which they once lived ? OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Connor explores the ethics, benefits, and consequences of one of the most important biological movements today. This book should be required reading for anyone interesting in conservation." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Pat Shipman, author of How Humans and Their Dogs Drove Neanderthals to ExtinctionÃ¢â ¬Å“In this gripping overviewÃ¢â ¬Â¦ the author examines the complex, high-tech, usually expensive, and often controversial efforts to save species in peril and even long-gone.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â œKirkus Reviews (Starred Review)Ã¢â ¬Å“Few topics in conservation are as dizzyingly futuristic as that of bringing extinct species back to life. M.R. OÃ¢â ¬â„¢ConnorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Resurrection Science steadily unwraps the technical wizardry of saving vanishing wildlife and then plumbs the strangest discipline of all: Promethean projects to raise passenger pigeons and perhaps even Neanderthals from the dead. A masterful explicator, OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Connor never loses sight of the moral weight and complexity of these aims, and this remarkable, important book makes gripping reading for anyone who cares about the endÃ¢â ¬â ¢or perhaps the beginningÃ¢â ¬â ¢of the world.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â ¢Caroline Fraser, author of Rewilding the World: Dispatches from the Conservation Revolution

M.R. O’CONNORÃ¢â ¬â„¢s reporting has appeared in Foreign Policy, Slate, The Atlantic, Nautilus and The New Yorker. Her work has received support from the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, The Nation Institute’s Investigative Fund, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. In 2016 she was a Knight Science Journalism Fellow at MIT. A graduate of ColumbiaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Graduate School of Journalism, she lives in Flatbush, Brooklyn.

I went into M.R. O’Connor’s book thinking I knew where I stood on most conservation issues, but within the first few pages this book challenged me on many issues where I thought I’d long made up my mind. O’Connor does an excellent job of laying out meticulous arguments that will make you see conservation issues in a whole new light. She is a masterful story teller, weaving together tales of animals and humans that make this book a quick read. You’ll have fun reading it and it’s sure to challenge you to see the world in a new light. Definitely a must read!

In 30 years as a wildlife biologist, I have had a many experiences that have made me stop, think or re-think about something I thought I knew, and then alter my beliefs. Reading this book was one of those experiences. Ms. O’Conner did a terrific job of writing, as journalist. She presents the facts,

along the opinions of others, then challenges the reader to form an opinion, or re-examine the one they already had. By tackling the science as well as the ethics of these cases, we are forced to address "why?" questions. Resurrection Science should be required reading for all biologists working with endangered species and any student majoring in conservation biology.

Finished Resurrection Science last night. I was impressed with how O'Connor conveyed the very complex ethical issues behind conserving, modifying and de-extincting species ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ arguments and concerns which I was not previously familiar. In the last few chapters she devotes a good number of pages to deeply ontological views of how nature, the environment and all living things exist outside of human cognition and should thereby be regarded (and preserved) outside of human interests, but I would think most everyone ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ even ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“layÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• conservationists ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ would find that perspective baffling and not one which would rally people to save the whales and such. In practical terms, you and I would prefer to rid the oceans of whalers (mostly done, thanks to the advent of fossil fuels), Africa of elephant poachers and Florida of more suburban sprawl. But how is that done, exactly? A game of musical conservation chairs, that the development song ends and all remaining wild places have to be conserved? The US ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ already wealthy by world and historical standards - could survive that, but what about Africa? HowÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s that conversation go? Hey Africa, we know you are massively poor, and that developed nations have exploited all wealth, caused hundreds of species to become extinct so that our poorest are better off than 99% of your human inhabitants, but you should halt all development because you were late to the industrialization table? We can just turn your continent into one big zoo! Anyway, thought-provoking book.

I learned so much from this author & it has changed the way I view the world, my own personal choices, & what I do or don't do, keeping in mind how fragile our little earth & its creatures are. All of them. Change your life. Read this book.

This is a fascinating book. The author raises legitimate questions about the rationale behind conservations and the 'saving' of endangered species while at the same time being fully sympathetic with the emotion behind the drive. Highly recommended

When I graduated with a masters in environmental studies from Yale in '89, the way in which we

conceived of conservation was different than we do today. It took being completely engaged by this thoughtfully written book to really understand this. It probes deeper ideas about how we think about other species. It does this while touring how genomics is shaping the conservation of individual species, from the florida panther to the neanderthal (that's part of the resurrection part).What surprised me the most was how the author led me on the unexpected journey to discover that how human culture values other species is shifting. And she does this by telling the stories of individual species: white rhinos, African toads, small desert fish, Atlantic right whales and even those we eliminated, like the passenger pigeon, whose flocks once blocked out the sun.This is a book of fascinating side canyons. Maura very accessibly distills different disciplines (from different schools of philosophy to, yes, even quantum theory), offering different ways for us to think about our big 21st Century, very real choice...how biodiverse the Earth remains after the Anthropocene.

Fantastic book! M.R. O'Connor does a wonderful job guiding the reader through the possibilities and pitfalls of modern technology and the ethics of species conservation. This book made me reconsider a number of my long-held beliefs about humankind's role in conservation.

Awesome. I'm just on the 3rd chapter and I cant stop recommending this book! What a great read!

Food, Money, and the Future of Life on Earth The Mystery of the Shemitah: The 3,000-Year-Old Mystery That Holds the Secret of America's Future, the World's Future, and Your Future! Hound of the Sea: Wild Man. Wild Waves. Wild Wisdom. Edible Wild Plants: Wild Foods From Dirt To Plate (The Wild Food Adventure Series, Book 1) Canine Olfaction Science and Law: Advances in Forensic Science, Medicine, Conservation, and Environmental Remediation