


Of Bogs & Books

Engaging Conversations since 1994

Spring 2021

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VOLO BOG
STATE NATURAL

- **Second Saturday of each month, 10:00 – 11:30 am**
- **Zooming our Book Discussions for adults and teens**
- **Potential in-person gatherings if/when state guidelines allow**
- **To register, request the zoom link by emailing us at dnr.volobog@illinois.gov and tell us your name.**
- **Coffee & Snacks at your place :D :D :D**
- **Books range from classic to contemporary**
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- **Sponsored by IDNR & the Friends of Volo Bog at Volo Bog SNA**
- **Please register at 815-344-1294 or dnr.volobog@illinois.gov**

Spring Selections

March 13 – Owls of the Eastern Ice: A Quest to Find and Save the World's Largest Owl

by Jonathan C. Slaughter

"I saw my first Blakiston's fish owl in the Russian province of Primorye, a coastal talon of land hooking south into the belly of Northeast Asia . . . No scientist had seen a Blakiston's fish owl so far south in a hundred years . . ."

"When he was just a fledgling birdwatcher, Jonathan C. Slaughter had a chance encounter with one of the most mysterious birds on Earth. Bigger than any owl he knew, it looked like a small bear with decorative feathers. He snapped a quick photo and shared it with experts. Soon he was on a five-year journey, searching for this enormous, enigmatic creature in the lush, remote forests of eastern Russia. That first sighting set his calling as a scientist.

"Despite a wingspan of six feet and a height of over two feet, the Blakiston's fish owl is highly elusive. They are easiest to find in winter, when their tracks mark the snowy banks of the rivers where they feed. They are also endangered. And so, as Slaughter and his devoted team set out to locate the owls, they aim to craft a conservation plan that helps ensure the species' survival. This quest sends them on all-night monitoring missions in freezing tents, mad dashes across thawing rivers, and free-climbs up rotting trees to check nests for precious eggs. They use cutting-edge tracking technology and improvise ingenious traps. And all along, they must keep watch against a run-in with a bear or an Amur tiger. At the heart of Slaughter's story are the fish owls themselves: cunning hunters, devoted parents, singers of eerie duets, and survivors in a harsh and shrinking habitat.

"Through this rare glimpse into the everyday life of a field scientist and conservationist, *Owls of the Eastern Ice* testifies to the determination and creativity essential to scientific advancement and serves as a powerful reminder of the beauty, strength, and vulnerability of the natural world." - Excerpted from an Amazon Review

April 10 — From My Jamaican Gully to the World: The Environmental Journey of Audrey Peterman

by Audrey & Frank Peterman

"The pages of Audrey Peterman's book come alive with the joys of a child growing up in a natural and unspoiled environment. Her beautiful literary imagery takes the reader on a journey of discovery, from exploring the nature of her beloved gully to discovering the wonders of the wider world. Audrey has worked tirelessly to educate others on the value of preserving the environment. I urge you to take this journey with her, as her powerful message stirs us to action to save our World for generations to come."

- A review by Beverly Marchesani on Amazon

May 8— Becoming Wild: How Animal Cultures Raise Families, Create Beauty, and Achieve Peace

by Carl Safina

Some believe that culture is strictly a human phenomenon. But this book reveals cultures of other-than-human beings in some of Earth's remaining wild places. It shows how if you're a sperm whale, a scarlet macaw, or a chimpanzee, you too come to understand yourself as an individual within a particular community that does things in specific ways, that has traditions. Alongside genes, culture is a second form of inheritance, passed through generations as pools of learned knowledge. As situations change, social learning—culture—allows behaviors to adjust much faster than genes can adapt.

Becoming Wild brings readers into intimate proximity with various nonhuman individuals in their free-living communities. It presents a revelatory account of how animals function beyond our usual view. Safina shows that for non-humans and humans alike, culture comprises the answers to the question, "How do we live here?" It unites individuals within a group identity. But cultural groups often seek to avoid, or even be hostile toward, other factions. By showing that this is true across species, Safina illuminates why human cultural tensions remain maddeningly intractable despite the arbitrariness of many of our differences. *Becoming Wild* takes readers behind the curtain of life on Earth, to witness from a new vantage point the most world-saving of perceptions: