



The EcoPoetry Anthology

Ann Fisher-wirth (Editor) , Laura-Gray Street (Editor) , Robert Hass (Introduction)

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Definitive and daring, *The Ecopoetry Anthology* is the authoritative collection of contemporary American poetry about nature and the environment--in all its glory and challenge. From praise to lament, the work covers the range of human response to an increasingly complex and often disturbing natural world and inquires of our human place in a vastness beyond the human.

To establish the antecedents of today's writing, *The Ecopoetry Anthology* presents a historical section that includes poetry written from roughly the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Iconic American poets like Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson are followed by more modern poets like Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, Ezra Pound, and even more recent foundational work by poets like Theodore Roethke, Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Hayden, and Muriel Rukeyser. With subtle discernment, the editors portray our country's rich heritage and dramatic range of writing about the natural world around us.

The Ecopoetry Anthology Details

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Author : Ann Fisher-wirth (Editor) , Laura-Gray Street (Editor) , Robert Hass (Introduction)

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Download and Read Free Online The Ecopoetry Anthology Ann Fisher-wirth (Editor) , Laura-Gray Street (Editor) , Robert Hass (Introduction)

From Reader Review The Ecopoetry Anthology for online ebook

Michael says

If there is a single most important topic of discussion in contemporary society, environmental responsibility is most likely at the top of the list. This well-researched collection showcases the fact that this has been an important literary subject for quite some time and the rich history of this narrative should be on the radar of those interested in such things.

Namely--the survival of our ecosystem and the implications found therein.

Storyheart says

An excellent collection of environmentally themed poems; my only complaint is that the self-proclaimed "definitive" collection wasn't international in scope. Surely an anthology about the global environment should include the voices of poets worldwide, not just those of American poets?

Michelle says

I won this on Goodreads and gave it as a gift to my sons teacher. She LOVED IT!!!

Anastasia Dotzauer says

This is a wonderful collection of diverse ecopoems. I particularly appreciate the inclusion of lesser-known poets.

Daniel says

Original review published in Looking For a Good Book. Rating: 3.5 stars

It's National Poetry Month (in the U.S. and Canada), so it seems as good a time as any to review this massive anthology. Actually, I've been reading this book for almost a year, and just finished it recently.

I'm not a huge poetry fan, but I am a fan of ecology and enjoy most things that bring awareness to the beauty of our planet, so when I saw this title, I requested a review copy from the publisher. Again...it's been almost a year since I started this, but look ... it's 672 pages thick, and it's poetry! I could only read this in small chunks, a few days at a time.

As is often the case with any anthology, there were some works that were absolute gems for me, and some works that I couldn't relate to in any way. For the most part, though, I found the bulk of poems to be fair. Oddly enough, the works that I generally didn't care for were those which were the most prose-like ... free-form, run-on sentences creating entire paragraphs. I think I tend to enjoy my poetry simpler and more 'traditional.'

Among the works that capture my interest are:

"Legacy" by Elizabeth Bradfield with the line: "It's the same now as it was with Oedipus, poor stiff, running to escape his fate and running smack dab into it, an awful scene, a nightmare warning we need to keep repeating because, of course, fate never seems immediate."

"The Earth is a Living Thing" by Lucille Clifton

"The Rain in Maine" by Stephen Cushman

"For I will Consider the Overlooked Dragonfly" by Sharon Dolin

Peter Gizzi's "Human Memory is Organic"

From *She Had Some Horses* by Joy Harjo, "V. Explosion" which, with extreme simplicity, spoke volumes. The clear Native American imagery is perfect for an ecopoetry collection.

Some of the work by Robert Hass was beautiful ("Poetry should be able to comprehend the earth...").

Galway Kinnell is the only name I ever mention if someone asks me to name my favorite poet, and his poem here, "The Bear," is remarkable. Again... volumes of imagery in simplicity.

W.S. Merwin's "For a Coming Extinction" speaks directly to the anticipated disappearance of a fellow creature of our planet. I was probably more moved by this brief verse than by any of the others.

I loved this passage from Patricia Smith's "5 P.M., Tuesday, August 23, 2005":

I will require praise,
unbridled winds to define my body,
a crime behind my teeth
because
every woman begins as weather,
sips slow thunder, knows her hips. Every woman harbors a chaos, can
wait for it, straddling a fever.

Pamela Uschuk's poem "Snow Goose Migration at Tule Lake" appears to be about as traditional as one can get without a rhyme scheme, and it was brilliant. I could picture every moment I could almost visualize a Francis Lee Jacques painting illustrating this.

"Bamboo" by Joel Weishaus may be the briefest poem in the collection, but it educated me and it made me chuckle. What more can you ask?

The last of my favorites is Susan Settlemyre Williams' "Johnny Appleseed Contemplates Heaven." The

comparisons and contrasts of heaven and earth, between God and Johnny Appleseed are beautifully managed and speak so well to ecology and the natural world.

If you're a poetry lover, than this needs to be one of the poetry books on your reading shelf. If you're not a poetry fan, like me, you should still find plenty to enjoy. Take it slow. Read only a poem a day. You won't regret it.

I purchased a copy and gave it as a gift this past Christmas.

Looking for a good book? This anthology is full of poems that speak to the earth, nature, and man's place in it. It's worth a read.

Sarah says

Full disclosure: I was required by the husband of the editor of this anthology to read it for one of his Lit classes in college. The course topic was Environmental Literature, so I assumed I knew what I was getting myself into. Poems and stories about the dying of oneself for the sake of a tree and such. I was pleasantly surprised to find that, aside from having to read and analyze Moby Dick, which I would not wish on my worst enemy, a great deal of the subject matter was not the idea that we all need to rush out and by organic fertilizer and become vegetarians, but that we should preserve nature simply because we should want to, because we should love it. Many of the works were by Emily Dickinson and others whose works I appreciated before, but even more so in the scope of the anthology. The poems flow naturally from one topic to another, despite their being arranged by author, and I believe the editor has done a very nice job of choosing works that readers of poetry and first-time readers alike will enjoy. If you're afraid to add this to your to read list simply because you don't want to be pressured into believing that the fate of the world is on your shoulders, don't be.

Mandy Haggith says

This is big, entirely American, but contains a lot of wonderful poetry, by poets both familiar and completely new. I now have a list as long as my arm of poets I would like to explore further, which is all I ask of an anthology.

Rand says

Quite simply excellent.

The editors' preface more fully describes what ecopoetry is than this wikipedia article on the subject. In the general sense, ecopoetry is poetry which "addresses contemporary problems and issues in an ecocentric" way while "respecting the integrity of the other-than-human world". There is, of course, the caveat that prior to the casting of the first cog of industrialization, ALL poetry was ecopoetry. The term was not coined until sometime in the last twenty years, as a way of categorizing a movement in both poetry and environmentalism/eco-activism.

Specifically, ecopoetry includes three subsets (which may overlap within any given ecopoem) : nature poetry, environmental poetry, and ecological poetry. Nature poetry would be that which considers nature as its primary subject and is historically the primary form of poetry. Environmental poetry is much more recent, with roots in the concerns of post-colonialism and activism. And ecological poetry is more recent still, playfully employing the po-mo conception of the fragmented Self to question form, much along the lines of the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets—sometimes "ecological poetry" is referred to simply as "ecopoetry" though the editors argue for a more inclusive idea of the latter.

The introduction by Robert Haas goes into more specific detail, explaining why the book is divided into historical and contemporary sections (and why the latter is larger). His placing Whitman and Eliot as being two opposing reactions to industrialization is illuminating.

To get a general idea of what this book's all about and what a poem looks like which hits all three subsets of ecopoetics, read D. A. Powell's republic.

This book contains 320 poems by 176 poets, some well known and most not. Full list of contributors at publisher's website.

If you like poetry and nature, then you will *love* this book.

Heather Gibbons says

Fantastic anthology. I appreciate in particular the aesthetic range represented. There is a solid diversity of voices included here, though I think a future edition could be more inclusive and could include even more contemporary POC, indigenous and LGBTQ poets. Would be great to have an introductory essay written by a poet of color as well.
