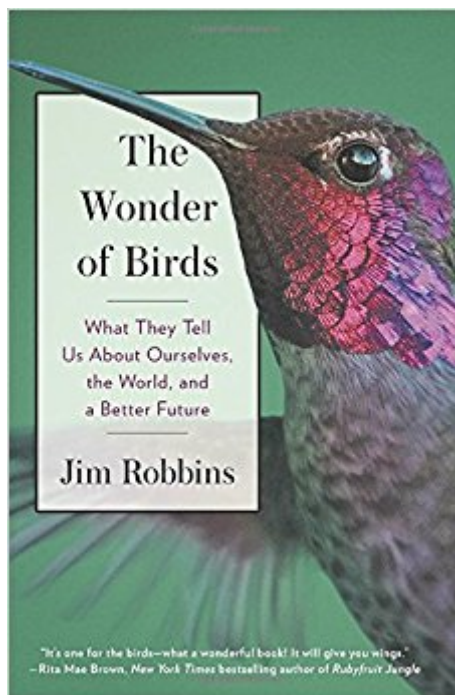




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The Wonder Of Birds: What They Tell Us About Ourselves, The World, And A Better Future



Synopsis

A fascinating investigation into the miraculous world of birds and the powerful ways they enrich our lives and sustain the planet. Our relationship to birds is different from our relationship to any other wild creatures. They are found virtually everywhere and we love to watch them, listen to them, keep them as pets, wear their feathers, even converse with them. Birds, Jim Robbins posits, are our most vital connection to nature. They compel us to look to the skies, both literally and metaphorically; draw us out into nature to seek their beauty; and let us experience vicariously what it is like to be weightless. Birds have helped us in so many of our human endeavors: learning to fly, providing clothing and food, and helping us better understand the human brain and body. And they even have much to teach us about being human in the natural world. This book illuminates qualities unique to birds that demonstrate just how invaluable they are to humankind—both ecologically and spiritually. The wings of turkey buzzards influenced the Wright brothers' flight design; the chickadee's song is considered by scientists to be the most sophisticated language in the animal world and a "window into the evolution of our own language and our society"; and the quietly powerful presence of eagles in the disadvantaged neighborhood of Anacostia, in Washington, D.C., proved to be an effective method for rehabilitating the troubled young people placed in charge of their care. Exploring both cutting-edge scientific research and our oldest cultural beliefs, Robbins moves these astonishing creatures from the background of our lives to the foreground, from the quotidian to the miraculous, showing us that we must fight to save imperiled bird populations and the places they live, for the sake of both the planet and humankind. Praise for *The Wonder of Birds* "A must-read, conveying much necessary information in easily accessible form and awakening one's consciousness to what might otherwise be taken for granted . . . The Wonder of Birds reads like the story of a kid let loose in a candy store and given free rein to sample. That is one of its strengths: the convert's view gives wide appeal to those who might never have known birds well." —Bernd Heinrich, *The Wall Street Journal* "Engaging, thoughtful . . . worthy of a place alongside David Attenborough's documentary *The Life of Birds* or Graeme Gibson's *The Bedside Book of Birds* . . . This offering will appeal to naturalists, anthropologists, linguists, and even philosophers as well as to lay readers." —*Library Journal* "In this deeply felt and well-supported argument for avians' value to humankind, science writer Robbins hits the full trifecta for engrossing and satisfying nature writing." —*Publishers Weekly* (starred review) "Using enchanting stories and rich historical references, Jim Robbins explores the role of birds on the

evolution of human self-awareness. **“It’s one for the birds”** •Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. **“It’s what a wonderful book! It will give you wings.”** •Rita Mae Brown, New York Times bestselling author of Rubyfruit Jungle **“The Wonder of Birds provides a great and well-timed gift: a portrait of the quiet miracles around us on each day of our ordinary lives.”** •Michael Punke, #1 New York Times bestselling author of The Revenant **“Jim Robbins writes masterfully, with lucid prose and deep insight into the human psyche and natural world.”** •Peter Stark, author of Astoria

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Customer Reviews

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personal involvement with and a soul-stirring wonder about his subject, a fondness for the sometimes-obsessed researchers who dive deeply into specifics of anatomy and behavior, and a smooth and engaging writing style through which he conveys a huge amount of factual information while keeping his narrative flowing. . . . The world is fantastically rich and alive with meaning, Robbins reminds readers, offering correctives to our inability to sense it as well as pointers on where to look.

—Publishers Weekly (starred review)

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“Jim Robbins writes masterfully, with lucid prose and deep insight into the human psyche and natural world. In *The Wonder of Birds* he illuminates the realm of this extraordinary creature that is both a miracle of physiology and a poetic manifestation of our own transcendence.”

—Peter Stark, author of *Astoria*

“A peregrine falcon and a loggerhead shrike, my flying friends, came into the garden the day *The Wonder of Birds* arrived. I’m surprised they didn’t fly away with it—this exciting book of nature.”

—Diana Beresford-Kroeger, author of *The Global Forest*

“Jim Robbins’s insight has brought even more perspective into a world I have been discovering most of my life and career with birds.”

—Steve Malowski, aviculturist, Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden

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Book full of teachable anecdotes. How much richer we are for knowing birds. non-encyclopedic we learn by example about a universe of birds. Gained a lot by reading it. Highly recommended.

Not your typical 'bird book' - it examines many different topics about many different kinds of birds. I learned a lot, and really enjoyed reading this. I can't wait to pass it on to another bird and nature lover.

Got a good review in WSJ. I couldn't get into it. Author Jim Robbins is passionate. Didn't grab me I guess. Lots of great info on birds which is sweet.

Considering that birding is not the authors' primary field, he has done a remarkable amount of research and written an extremely comprehensive and well organized book on the subject. In particular, the chapter on murmurations stimulated my interest enough to research the matter further. Very informative and entertaining.

The reviews sold me on the book and then it was a hit with the "sight-impaired" group I read for. The research, the writing, the stories -- all add up to a powerful and delightful book.

Absolutely a beautiful book!

Gave it to a birder friend for a birthday present and she loved it.

Revealing, well researched. A pleasure to read. How the bird world has assisted mankind since the beginning.

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