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Peer reviewed

Review: Earth Works: Recommended Fiction and Nonfiction about Nature and the Environment for Adults and Young Adults

By Jim Dwyer

Reviewed by [Maria Anna Jankowska](#)
University of Idaho Library, USA

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Dwyer, Jim. *Earth Works: Recommended Fiction and Nonfiction about Nature and the Environment for Adults and Young Adults*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 1996. 507 pp. ISBN 1-55570-194-9 (paperback). US\$49.95

"Individuals can make a difference." This is what Jim Dwyer wrote in the introduction to this book, explaining one of his reasons for writing *Earth Works*. By compiling this annotated bibliography of recommended fiction and nonfiction about nature and the environment for adults and young adults, Jim Dwyer has proven that one person can make a difference.

Jim devoted three years to working on *Earth Works*. It presents 2,601 fiction and nonfiction, new and classic titles on the environment and nature for adults and adolescents. The nonfiction part, which covers 1,600 books, is divided logically into the seven following chapters: General Works, Natural History, Specific Environments, Activities and Issues, Cultural Factors, Literary Natural Writing, and Environmental Action. Each chapter is further divided into thematic sections presenting books for two audiences: adults and young adults. For example, in chapter seven on Environmental Action, the author presents 10 sections. The first section, "Conservation," describes 60 books for adults and 12 for young adults on the subjects of preservation, restoration, and land use. Each chapter and section has a short introduction and explanation of basic terms, which makes you feel that you are not merely reading through the list of titles. Each citation consists of entry number, author, title, place of publication, publisher, date, pagination and illustrations, ISBN, notes; annotation and recommendation (HR for highly recommended), with a reading level (older teens, mature teens, or adults and older adults) when applicable. For example:

1281. Brower, David. *For Earth's sake : the life and times of David Brower*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1990. 55 p. 0879050136.

Sequel: Work in progress.

The first autobiographical volume by a founder of Friends of the Earth, the League of Conservation Voters, and Earth Institute, and long-time president of the Sierra Club, focuses on the origins of the modern conservation movement. HR.

The book has three indexes providing access by authors, subjects, and titles.

The coherent organization and easy access to needed information indicates that this book was written by a specialist in the subject who was aware of the public's needs for finding environmental sources. The only drawback of *Earth Works* is that it covers only one format, English books. There are a few exceptions for English-Spanish titles that were in print as of 1996, the year the book was published. In spite of the publication date, this book is permanently timely as a guide to help readers find suitable environmental books.

In this time of such environmental failures as the lack of international agreement on climate change (COP 6 meeting in The Hague) and the American Green Party's inability to secure the needed 5% of U.S. votes to ensure governmental support for future elections, this book is even more important. Jim Dwyer's annotated bibliography has three dedications. The first one is to the author's parents for teaching him to write on both sides of the paper. In our era of computers, how many parents are even paying attention to the fact that their children are using both sides of paper? The second dedication is addressed to David Brower "... for challenging his audiences to dedicate a year of their lives to improving the environment." This November, David Brower, one of America's great conservationists, passed away at the age of 88. The author's last dedication goes to all people "... willing to take action for the sake of future generations of all species." Therefore, you as an individual can make a difference by browsing through this book and making decisions about what you should read to expand your own view and help the Earth stay alive.

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