

Staff Picks



Imagining the Earth: Nature Poetry that Celebrates Our Planet

From its beginnings poetry has celebrated nature: everything from trees to gardens to mountains to the endless changing seas. Kentucky poet and ecologist Wendell Berry called nature poetry "a secular pilgrimage" and Wordsworth said, "There are spirits in the woods." Enjoy these collections of contemporary nature poems.

Compiled by: Dory L



Birds, Beasts, and Seas: Nature Poems from New Directions

ed. by Jeffrey Yang 808.8193 Bir

Beginning with the ancient Greeks and Romans, this recently published book contains some of the greatest nature poetry of all time. It's also multicultural and multi-ethnic and includes work by Virgil, Tu Fu, Sappho, H.D., Rimbaud and Rilke. Modern poets include Gary Snyder, Anne Carson, Bei Dao, and Roberto Bolaño. A nicely-designed book--it can easily fit inside a pocket while you hike out to your favorite reading spot in the woods.



Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry

Camille T. Dungy 808.8193 Bla

This collection of poetry by African Americans looks at the special relationship many black people have with the natural world. The poems included are not simply pastorals but meditations on the air, soil, water, and trees from the viewpoints of many who have tilled the land and often through the perspective of their ancestors' hard labor. Fine poems by Audre Lorde, June Jordan, Claude McKay, Marilyn Nelson, Richard Wright, and Yusef Komunyakaa are included.



Garden Poems

ed. by John Hollander 808.81936 Ga



This collection showcases poems about gardens both fictive and real. They are varied, ranging from China and Japan to American backyards. There are sections on ruined gardens and city gardens. Gardeners too are celebrated, as are the seasons and also quite intriguingly, gardens of the mind. Get some mud on your fingers, stoop down and smell the poetic roses.



Generations

Pattiann Rogers 811.54 Ro

Unlike most poets, Rogers has a background in science yet her poems are understandable and inspiring to the general reader. She has a deep knowledge of the world's creatures and her descriptions are rich, full, and inspiring. In this book she looks at the continuity of life through time in such poems as "A Mystic in the Garden Mistakes Lizards for Ghosts and Extrapolates on Same" and "The History of Starlight at Night."

 The Oxford Book of Garden Verse  The Oxford Book of Garden Verse

ed. by John Dixon Hunt 821Ox

Gardens have always inspired and sheltered writers, but particularly poets. This book offers over two hundred poems about gardens beginning with two biblical verses that celebrate this combination of the wild and human. Medieval, Romantic, Victorian and modern gardens are also covered. Enjoy this poetry about posies and trees, garden creatures, and plants.

The Shape of the Journey: New and Collected Poems

Jim Harrison 811.54 Ha

This poet from rural Michigan has written about the natural world since his first collection *Plain Song*. Included here are many of those poems along with work from eight other books. After a childhood accident blinded him in one eye, Harrison developed a strong affinity for nature. In a style uniquely his own, he writes eloquently about this subject.



Turtle Island

Gary Snyder 811.54 Sn

This Pulitzer Prize winning book celebrates the natural land we all inhabit. The title comes from the Native American name for our continent that was based on creation myths. In poems such as "Mother Earth--Her Whales," "Anasazi" and "The Wild Mushrooms" Snyder celebrates the natural world.



Why I Wake Early: New and Selected Poems

Oliver, Mary 811.54 Oi

Oliver has claimed the peninsula of Cape Cod as her territory. With utter grace, she writes about the natural world and its creatures: toads, black snakes, bears, deer, even dogs. Her poems are full of wonder. Each of her books offers many beautiful poems to savor and enjoy.
