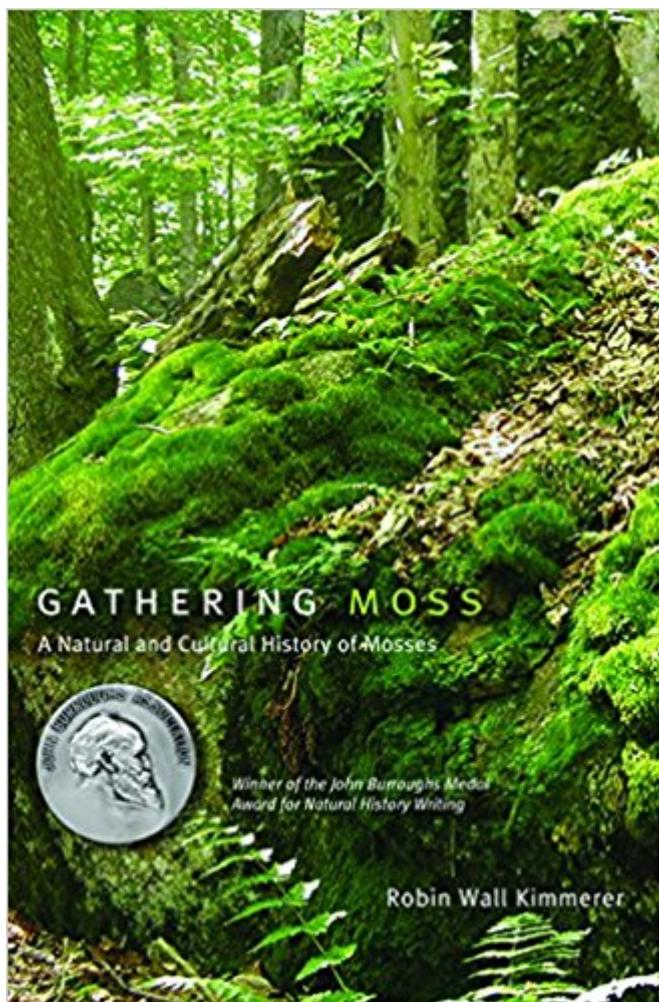


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Gathering Moss: A Natural And Cultural History Of Mosses



Synopsis

Living at the limits of our ordinary perception, mosses are a common but largely unnoticed element of the natural world. Gathering Moss is a beautifully written mix of science and personal reflection that invites readers to explore and learn from the elegantly simple lives of mosses. Robin Wall Kimmerer's book is not an identification guide, nor is it a scientific treatise. Rather, it is a series of linked personal essays that will lead general readers and scientists alike to an understanding of how mosses live and how their lives are intertwined with the lives of countless other beings, from salmon and hummingbirds to redwoods and rednecks. Kimmerer clearly and artfully explains the biology of mosses, while at the same time reflecting on what these fascinating organisms have to teach us. Drawing on her diverse experiences as a scientist, mother, teacher, and writer of Native American heritage, Kimmerer explains the stories of mosses in scientific terms as well as in the framework of indigenous ways of knowing. In her book, the natural history and cultural relationships of mosses become a powerful metaphor for ways of living in the world. Gathering Moss will appeal to a wide range of readers, from bryologists to those interested in natural history and the environment, Native Americans, and contemporary nature and science writing.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Yet this is so much more than a book about mosses. This is a Native American woman speaking. This is a mother's story. This is science revealed through the human psyche. Robin Kimmerer is a scientist who combines empiricism with all other forms of knowing. Hers is a spectacularly different

view of the world, and her true voice needs to be heard."

Something I took for granted suddenly has come alive, because I have been given its story. After reading this book, I took a magnifying glass outside and pored over tree trunks. I have seen Robin Kimmerer's miniature landscape for myself. Yet, this is so much more than a book about mosses. This is a Native American woman speaking. This is a mother's story. This is science revealed through the human psyche. Robin Kimmerer is a scientist who combines empiricism with all other forms of knowing. Hers is a spectacularly different view of the world, and her true voice needs to be heard.

I discovered the writings of Robin Wall Kimmerer through her On Being interview with Krista Tippett - The Intelligence in All Kinds of Life. Both of her books were immediately added to the top of my reading list. Then, in December, just before a trip to the state of Georgia, I decided that Savannah, with its famous Spanish Moss would be the perfect setting for reading "Gathering Moss". I was undeterred when, early in the book, I learned that Spanish Moss is not a moss; it's a flowering plant. Fun fact. A major topic of the book, especially the first several chapters, is scientific research about moss in general and specific details about many different varieties of moss. Sadly, far too many years have passed since my high school course in biology, so most of this detailed knowledge was lost on me. Again, this did not diminish the value of the book. And, if in the future I decide to brush up on my knowledge of plant reproduction, I now have on my bookshelf a very practical resource. The aspects of the book that I thought were absolutely lovely were the descriptions of the connections between moss, other plants, and humankind. To me, this presented beautiful examples and metaphors for the roles, connections, and relationships between humans and the other lives that inhabit our planet. The images will influence me in unknown ways for some time to come.

Loved this book. It gave me a much better appreciation for the miniature portions of forests. I wish there had been colored photos of the mosses rather than just line drawings, which didn't help much with identification.

Combination of deep knowledge with poetic approach. Wonderful read.

As someone who only recently has taken an amateur interest in mosses, I have been looking for an accessible introduction. As someone coming from the humanities, this book turned out to be more

or less the perfect combination of natural history and personal account. The only thing keeping me from giving it a five-star review is that it's slightly too brief and leaves you wanting more. All in all a great, if short, introduction for the amateur bryologist.

Really enjoyed this. A view at an oft ignored world all around us interspersed with a Native American view; holistic and spiritual. I have a new mantra, "See the moss."

Compelling and informative, this book exceeded my expectations. Information is told in a way that it registers and sticks, its significance in larger issues made clear. Stories of the indigenous ways of learning and respecting the environments are well woven in to the book. Great read, and a good reference for anyone seeking to understand better how a forest community works.

I very rarely comment on anything nor review much, but this book is an incredible journey into the micro-world of the mosses. A beautifully written explanation of the hows and whys of mosses, but definitely not in a dry, science-like manner. Ms. Kimmerer blends her scientific expertise with the vision and earth knowledge of her Native American ancestry to create what I think is a masterpiece and a must read for any moss lover, naturalist, or anyone with an interest in "the small world". One of the very best books I've ever read.

Great book, arrived quickly

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