



Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife

John M. Marzluff, Jack Delap (Illustrations)

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Even as growing cities and towns pave acres of landscape, some bird species have adapted and thrived. How has this come about?

Welcome to Subirdia presents a surprising discovery: the suburbs of many large cities support incredible biological diversity. Populations and communities of a great variety of birds, as well as other creatures, are adapting to the conditions of our increasingly developed world. In this fascinating and optimistic book, John Marzluff reveals how our own actions affect the birds and animals that live in our cities and towns, and he provides ten specific strategies everyone can use to make human environments friendlier for our natural neighbors.

Over many years of research and fieldwork, Marzluff and student assistants have closely followed the lives of thousands of tagged birds seeking food, mates, and shelter in cities and surrounding areas. From tiny Pacific wrens to grand pileated woodpeckers, diverse species now compatibly share human surroundings. By practicing careful stewardship with the biological riches in our cities and towns, Marzluff explains, we can foster a new relationship between humans and other living creatures—one that honors and enhances our mutual destiny.

Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife Details

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Author : John M. Marzluff , Jack Delap (Illustrations)

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Genre : Nonfiction, Animals, Birds, Environment, Nature, Science, Natural History



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From Reader Review Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife for online ebook

Cheryl says

Focused on the homeowners, architects, and city planners who are most likely to be able to implement the changes recommended. The book is large and heavy for its content, which surely isn't a 'green' choice on that level. But if enough ppl read it and subsequently keep their cats indoors, choose the right night lighting, leave some dead trees, snags, brush piles, and understory available, and stop getting uptight about coyotes, dandelions, and snakes, the cost of making the book appealing will have paid off.

A bit scattered, with a style too often influenced by academese (passive construction, too many clauses, jargon, etc.... a bit like the worst you've seen from me), it's not always an easy or quick read. But there are interesting tidbits throughout, including anecdotes of individual birds and encounters, as well as specific scientific discoveries. The chapter 'The Junco's Tail,' especially the part about the speciation of the blackcaps in Europe, is fascinating.

There is a fair bit of science here. For example, urban bird calls & songs are, through cultural evolution, getting higher pitched than those of their cousins in the wild, because higher pitched notes carry better against traffic and other human noises. Also, not only Peregrine falcons, but also Cooper's hawks are becoming more common in human environments, because they are attracted by the birds at feeders. (It's all about natural food chains, y' know?)

The last chapter has some very specific ideas about how ordinary people can help improve wildlife diversity. After all, not many of us get to be eco-tourists in Costa Rica, but almost all of us can watch finches eat dandelion seeds.

The easiest one really, though, is to remember that house cats are *house* cats. Declawing, defanging, giving them bells, nothing works. Letting them outside risks losing them to parasites, diseases, feral cats, and urban coyotes. And house cats in the US kill *billions* of birds every year. Let the hawks and coyotes keep down the rodent population, and keep your purring predator safe indoors.

Tuck says

written by famous author of crow/raven research, written for all natural historians on your block, about birds and animals that live in humans' towns and cities, and suburbia, whatever you might want to consider "that' place it. so first, consider this, as a frame for this topic: usa has 2% of their land in industrial (usually imported varieties of grass, in monochromatic plantings, need constant care, mowing, petrol-chemicals, and water to "look good) lawn, and we spill , SPILL, 17 million gallons of gasoline every year filling up damn lawnmowers. that is more than exxon valdez spill every year. that is more than gulf of mexico blowout every 12 years. well.

so here are nine principals of human/bird/animal good livin' 1. do not covet your neighbor's lawn (meaning that perfect turf is actually a desert with relatively giant inputs of chemicals, sweat and oil to make it look so [and not a crochet game in sight!] and if you can have a variety lawn in height and species, the animals will

love it.

2. keep your cat indoors! {they eat at least a billion birds a year in usa, at least, holy)
3. make your windows more visible to birds (yes, you guessed it, billions die each year from windows)
4. do not light the night sky
5. provide food and nest boxes
6. do not kill native predators
7. foster diversity within your landscapes
8. create safe passages across roads and highways
9. ensure functional connections between land and water

marzluff does a super job of reporting hard science to the lay reader, and this book is full of fun facts pertinent to you and wildlife. cool illustrations by jack delap, chapter end notes to die for, huge bibliography, barely adequate index.

could pair this book with The Urban Bestiary: Encountering the Everyday Wild and My Backyard Jungle: The Adventures of an Urban Wildlife Lover Who Turned His Yard into Habitat and Learned to Live with It and others and you'll be the wildest spot around... ...more

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Sep 04, 2014 Rob rated it liked it

On pages 101--102 the author describes Brewer's blackbirds waiting for Costco to open. It reminded me of the gulls at Wrigley Field that always seemed to arrive around the 8th inning, waiting their turn for all the discarded food.

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Nov 05, 2017 Jennifer rated it it was amazing

Shelves: avian, biology, evolutionish, favorites, futurism, gardening, urbanism, conservation

Now that is what I call a GOODREAD!

What I expected: tips on how to make your backyard a haven for birds.

What I got? So much more!

Like, there is actual research being done on birds in suburbia. Some lineages may even be speciating thanks to humans.

If you are at all tuned into conservationist ideas, you know that human development ain't so great for nature. And, suburbia in particular, could be characterized as a kind of blight. Unless you are a bird...

Well, ok there are certainly many birds who

...more

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Oct 20, 2014 Terry rated it it was amazing

Shelves: bird-watchers, birding, nonfiction

"Welcome to Subirdia" is a fantastic and informative book about bird populations and their sustainability. The author, John Marzluff, is a wildlife scientist and ornithologist living in Seattle. He and students working with him study various populations of birds in the area and the habitats in which they live. Birds are divided into three categories, depending on their adaptability--avoiders (i.e. wood thrushes, warblers), adapters (i.e. robins, cardinals), and exploiters (i.e. pigeons, song spar

...more

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Nov 03, 2015 Amy rated it liked it

"Find the feeder and avoid the feline" is John M. Marzluff's advice to birds, and mostly sums up this book. He thoroughly describes how birds adapt or not to suburban and urban development. I was surprised to learn that the picture is far from bleak--"subirdia" supports a great diversity of bird life, all over the globe. Unfortunately, so many cities and suburbs are starting to lose their distinct geographical distinctions and look like everywhere else-ville, which is reflected in some of the bi ...more

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Aug 02, 2015 Ryan Mishap rated it liked it

Shelves: science-natural-history

A fairly comprehensive look at how the edges of human cities are changing not only habitats and which species inhabit them, but bird evolution, behavior, and interactions. The results of human encroachment aren't all bad nor particularly beneficial. The illustrations are a nice touch, even if the choices of what to highlight--a dead robin, for instance, are sometimes curious.

Speaking of evolution--this book also provides what could be called an introductory primer on social evolution, cultural e

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Apr 09, 2015 Christian rated it really liked it

Shelves: nature-green-books, classic-natural-history

University of Washington Professor of Wildlife Science John Marzluff has become a leading interpreter of the secret lives of birds (especially corvids) through his books *In the Company of Crows and Ravens* and *Gifts of the Crow*. In his latest, *Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers and Other Wildlife*, he looks toward one of the more common human habitats in North America—suburban sprawl—and finds it to be more teeming with diverse plant, insect, animal and

...more

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Feb 27, 2015 Woody rated it it was amazing

In this heavily developed world, as Marzluff points out, remarkably many birds continue to thrive. In addition to sharing research data on bird adaptations to urban environs from a variety of cities, including Seattle, Marzluff clearly lays out "9 commandments" for being good neighbors to birds and other wildlife. These provide tangible ways that we can all contribute to maintaining a more biologically diverse, stable world. This is an important book that will positively influence landscape designs ...more

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Mar 21, 2015 Hapzydeco rated it liked it

Very informative. Gorgeous illustrations. While this book has more of a textbook feel, it should appeal to avid bird watchers as well as those showing an interest in ornithology.

flag 1 like · Like · see review

Nov 26, 2017 Pamela Okano rated it really liked it

Shelves: birds, nature

Interesting book about birds primarily and other animals and their relationship to human settlements. The author points out that some species do quite well with humans nearby and that biological evolution can occur quite quickly, relatively speaking, as demonstrated by the physical differences that already manifest themselves between birds in cities and towns versus the same species out in the wild. Cultural evolution happens even more quickly as birds adapt themselves to human settlements. The

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Feb 01, 2018 Norma J. Engelberg rated it really liked it · review of another edition

Hopeful

Marzluff introduces readers to the diversity that suburban and urban areas can provide to birds that avoid, adapt to or even exploit the environments we build.

His and a variety of other scientists, students and citizen scientists are observing, counting, banding and tracking birds, showing that while a few species are being pushed out of our cities, overall diversity is increasing. An entire section of the book offers many simple and a few not so simple steps we can take to preserve and

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flag Like · see review

Mar 02, 2018 Christy Esmahan rated it it was amazing

A great explanation of how humans and birds (and other animals) cohabit in the suburbs. It gave me hope to read this and see that there are lots of birds benefiting from our interactions, not just being harmed.

Definitely recommend this book!

flag Like · see review

Jan 21, 2016 Wendy Kendall rated it really liked it

The weekend of February 12th, will be the Great Backyard Bird Count. Every year Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world. This book is a wonderful complement to that coming attraction. Its a

...more

flag Like · see review

Oct 28, 2015 Judie rated it really liked it

Most people have heard stories about how wildlife has been negatively affected by deforestation and people taking over natural habitats. For example, seventy five percent of 125 or so native Hawaiian birds present 4000 years ago when human first colonized the islands are now extinct. WELCOME TO SUBIRDIA provides a great deal of information about the effects of human activity on wildlife, particularly birds, as they move into previously natural environments. The changes are not all negative, but

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Jul 14, 2014 DelAnne Frazee rated it it was amazing

Shelves: reviewed

Title: Welcome to Subirdia Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife

Author: John M Marzluff

Illustrator: Jack DeLap

Publisher: Yale University Press

Published: 9-30-2014

ISBN: 9780300197075

Pages: 320

Genre: Outdoors & Nature

Tags: Birds

Overall Rating: Excellent

Reviewed For: NetGalley

Reviewer: DelAnne

There is a saying that nature always finds away. From frogs in changing sex in the Amazon when there is an imbalance. To the crows nesting and living at Urba

...more

flag Like · see review

Jul 28, 2014 Clare O'Beara rated it it was amazing

Shelves: non-fiction, birds-fact

This book mainly focuses on mainland America but also looks at Britain and Hawaii. We see that bird species have had to cope with the spread of urban habitats and some have thrived while others have been lost or reduced.

Species are categorised as avoiders, adapters or exploiters of urban habitats. The author lists nine ways to make our home areas more attractive and helpful to birds. These include putting up nest boxes, adding stickers or blinds to high windows and planting berry bushes in the

...more

flag Like · see review

Feb 09, 2017 John Geary rated it really liked it

Very well written, informative book. It provides a blueprint for future urban planning that could provide hope for us in the future with respect to the environment and climate change. I learned things about the birds that I watch in my own yard and got some other ideas about how to enhance that and make our yard even better for birds and wildlife in the city.

flag Like · see review

Sep 24, 2014 Sylvia Walker rated it really liked it

Shelves: animal, nature, politics-ecology

This is an informative and hopeful book, about welcoming birds into our urban environments. Thirteen years of exhaustive and painstaking study by teams of 8 or 10, the author tells us, went into this book and its recommendations, about how and why birds and other wildlife adapt to our suburbs...or don't. There are the exploiters, who love us, or at least our lawns, the adapters, who find ways to make do, and the avoiders, who just can't thrive amongst us. The author tells ways we can make our sp ...more

flag Like · see review

Sep 10, 2014 Becca rated it it was amazing

Shelves: net-galley

As an urban ornithologist myself, I was thrilled to receive this book. Marzluff is clearly a talented and passionate ornithologist, but to my great pleasure, also a strong writer with a unique voice. I never thought suburban ecology could be so readable!

The stunning illustrations are the icing on the cake. I read Subirdia as an ebook, but would have loved to have seen the illustrations in their full glory in print.

Highly recommended for bird-nerds (I include myself), urban planners, and anyone w

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flag Like · see review

Aug 11, 2014 Melankalia rated it really liked it

Shelves: first-reads, netgalley, garden

As the title suggests, this book includes a great deal of information on how specific species adapt to, or are hindered by life within human communities. Including—but not limited to—topics such as ecology, conservation and evolution, the text details the impact of our modern lifestyle on the health and welfare the bird population. Written in a straight-forward easy to understand style, the book comes across as half textbook, half auto-biographical.

The one minor issue I had was that the book ca

...more

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Feb 03, 2017 Paula rated it really liked it

This was a delightful read, upbeat and informative. Marzluff not only gives us a clear sighted view of the state of bird and mammal populations in the face of unending construction around our cities, but also offers expert advice on how to increase the diversity, and health of those populations. It is much more optimistic than I had considered such a study could be, but we need to take Marzluff's advice seriously. There is just too much at risk to ignore the impact that we're having on nature.

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Mar 25, 2015 Meera rated it really liked it

Smart, lively, and eminently readable. Marzluff's explications of his research are rich and clear, and I especially appreciated his obvious affection and respect for his students and colleagues--this is a terrific illustration of the incremental, collaborative nature of science and also a good primer on basic ecological/evolutionary ideas.

Read in a tent, though the soundtrack was rainsong, not birdsong!

flag Like · see review

Jan 23, 2016 Brooke rated it it was ok

Shelves: environment, science

I'd give this a 2.5 if I could. I loved the illustrations and I valued the message of the book, but I found the book very, very difficult to get into as a lay person. It was like reading 100 ornithology journal articles in a row - I just don't have the background for it. I found Lyanda Lynn Haupt's *Urban Bestiary* to be a much more approachable and enjoyable read - giving me similar kinds of information, but in a simpler and more lay person friendly way.

flag Like · see review

Oct 06, 2015 Joan Colby rated it liked it

A rather dry and academic study of birds. Marzluff makes the distinction between adapters and avoiders, the latter generally being endangered. He cites the common birds that inhabit urban and suburban areas which are often more welcoming than the vast agricultural lands. Several times, he points out the depredation that cats make on birds, killing far more than anything else.

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May 22, 2016 Susan rated it it was ok

Shelves: 2016

Illustrations, while obviously digital and by Illustrator, are excellent. Prose is wordy & dull. Marzluff is far

too narcissistic to offer much on birds and suburban life and realizing that, halfway through the book he turns to the urban scavenger group like deer, bear etc. Unfortunately this book is a waste of time.

flag Like · see review

Jun 26, 2015 Naomi rated it really liked it

Shelves: natural-sciences

An exploration of what types of bird thrive in urban and suburban environments, how to create better environments for a wider diversity of birds and other wildlife, Marzluff often presents surprising facts and findings.

flag Like · see review

Nov 11, 2015 Phillip rated it liked it

Shelves: pacific-northwest, natural-history

First Chapters address birds in urban environment although details are fragmentary and leave you wanting more explicit details. Narrative devolves into rather wandering general urban conversation advocacy not specific to birds, bird habitat,etc

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Jan 25, 2015 Laura Gray-Rosendale rated it really liked it

If you are into birds, this is a wonderful book. I had hoped for a bit more memoir out of the text-- but the stories he relays about birds living on the edges are wonderful.

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Aug 30, 2016 Stan Pedzick rated it really liked it

a good book for the backyard birder. some nice insight as to how humans change their surroundings and how that effects birds for better or for worse.

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