



2024 Reading Challenge

APRIL

A book about
nature, the
environment, or
climate change

A reader from Marblehead read *Ten Birds That Changed the World* by Stephen Moss: This was a very interesting book discussing a variety of birds and how their fortunes have changed due to the changes in climate as well as human interaction. It was not a FUN book, but it was thought provoking and informational.

A reader from Orleans read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: Somehow I missed reading this when it first came out. Yet I know now that it is a very significant book, in many ways. Good environmental choice, but I thought about *Prodigal Summer* by Barbara Kingsolver.

A reader from Spencer read *Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law* by Mary Roach: An always informative and entertaining author. In this book she looks at how humanity and the animal world clash and hopefully try to coexist. I would recommend any Mary Roach book.

A reader from Springfield read *Once There Were Wolves* by Charlotte McConaghy: A wonderful book on the rewilding of the land. The story revolves around wolves and reintroducing them into the wild which causes lots of emotions for the locals. This is a good idea to the biologists

because it would help protect the land. Deer eat the plants and wolves would help control the population of deer. I enjoyed this book and learned a lot about wolves and protecting the wild.

A reader from BEVERLY read *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: I've been meaning to read this for a long time! This just pushed me toward it faster.

A reader from Foxborough read *Seeds of Science: Why we got it so wrong on gmo's* by Mark Lynas: This was an extraordinary book. It was filled with facts and from a well respected scientist who changed his mind on gmo's.

A reader from Dartmouth read *west with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge: My decision to read this book was made because I had a hard time deciding on the topics in Non fiction. As a result I looked up a book that was fiction about weather, climate and animal issues., I learned a lot about 1938 New England hurricane as well as the dustbowl of that time period. Ironically a lot of biology about Giraffes was learned while reading a very interesting story!

A reader from Somerville read *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert: A family saga taking place during the Enlightenment and spanning multiple decades. The story follows Alma Whittaker from her birth to the end of her life at the age of 90-something. Throughout her life she is deeply engaged and interested in science, botany, naturalism. Her story takes us from her father's empire in Philadelphia where she grows into adulthood, over to Tahiti where she searches for answers about her recently deceased husband, and finally to Holland where she contemplates her theory of evolution quite similar to that of Charles Darwin.

A reader from Northfield read *What an Owl Knows* by Jennifer Ackerman: I was surprised to find out that there are 260 species of owls that exist today and they live on every continent except Antarctica. The book enlightens readers about the owls' mating rituals, parenting strategies, nest selection and vocalizations. It was interesting to read about the scientists and their research projects. I found the last couple of chapters to be dull, but overall I enjoyed the book.

A reader from Mashpee read *The Hidden Life of Trees What they feel, How they communicate* by Peter Wohlleben: I found this book to be very interesting. I found it fascinating how trees feel, communicate, live on as families, share nutrients and help each other. I will look at trees differently from now on.

A reader from New bedford read *Black Earth Wisdom* by Leah Penniman: While environmental topics aren't my favorite topic to read about, this compilation of conversations did give me insight into ways that environmental concerns also reach into topics that I am interested in. While the books is long, the topics were diverse enough, the book is organized to be a relatively fast read. it piqued my interest enough that I may bring this genre into a more regular rotation in my reading habit. she wrote it with some interesting facts and ended with a lovely poem. it was the conversations with her interviewees that probably held my attention the least, but that may be because I'm new to the topic.

A reader from FOXBOROUGH read *At the Drop of a Veil* by Marianne Alireza: American woman marries a Saudi man in 1943, soon returning to his home to live in his family's harem.

The book follows as she adjusts (and doesn't) into semi seclusion. The author also narrates the changes in Saudi Arabia as the oil economy grows. Good read.

A reader from North Andover read *Under a White Sky* by Elizabeth Kolbert: It's a scary look at man's attempts to control nature. And about climate change.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert: Excellent but sobering.

A reader from Beverly read *The Man Who Organized Nature The Life of Linnaeus* by Gunnar Broberg: Linnaeus (1707-1778) set about to develop a system to help the world better understand the multitude of plant life on our planet. He spent his life traveling, exploring, experimenting, writing, and teaching. By all accounts he was a pleasant, curious, and optimistic scientist and friend. He would have been a charming person to know.

A reader from East Otis read *The Best American Science and Nature Writing 2011* by Tim Folger: I chose to read this book because of Mary Roach but stayed for all the interesting stories. I didn't realize this is a yearly selection of writing and now I'll seek it out every year.

A reader from Gloucester read *Condor to the Brink and Back* by John Nielsen: We went to the Grand Canyon last summer and saw a tagged condor. It was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. So I found John Nielsen's book brutal in some chapters and miraculous in others. Thank you to all of the men and women who fought and succeeded in saving this amazing giant from extinction. I'd highly recommend reading Condor.

A reader from Amherst read *Alebrijes* by Donna Barbra Higuera: Alebrijes is a good fit for middle grade readers who enjoy thought-provoking, futuristic stories that explore themes of oppression, resilience, and the power of working together, all presented within a richly imagined Mexican folklore-inspired setting.

A reader from Somerville read *The Light Pirate* by Lily Brooks-Dalton: An interesting and thought-provoking read, but I thought it would've been stronger without the "magic" and romance.

A reader from Salem read *Circe* by Madeline Miller: I cannot believe it took me so long to read this book! Nature itself was a character- from Circe's island to the 'wine dark sea' (I really appreciated that the author used that description rather than 'blue,' which the Greeks did not have a word for). This book was lush and overflowing with life- I finished it in about 48 hours, it was so good. Really, really wonderful read.

A reader from Attleboro read *Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore* by Elizabeth Rush: This professor from Brown University chronicles how the rising seas due to climate change are currently transforming the coastline of the United States and dramatically affecting the plants, animals and people residing in those areas.

A reader from danvers read *Into the woods* by Bill Bryson: This book is my escape from the dreary weather I've been stuck with since April 1st. Despite the cold and rain for three days, the authors descriptions of nature, sun-drenched forests and open skies is like a mental vacation to warmer climates, reminding me that better weather and outdoor adventures are just around the corner. is like taking a stroll through the forest with a witty tour guide. He shares fascinating facts in a way that's easy to grasp.

A reader from Rockland read *The Darkness Manifesto* by Johan Eklof: Fascinating read about the effects of light pollution and the absence of light.

A reader from Belmont read *Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell* by Sy Montgomery: This is a delightful and inspiring book. First, it taught me how much there is to appreciate in turtles. Second, to learn of the devotion and knowledge of people who care for these creatures is just heartwarming. Would we all care for each other and the world this way!

A reader from Dracut read *The Dirty Life* by Kristin Kimball: Very interesting read about developing and maintaining a CSA.

A reader from Scituate read *The Maunder Minimum and Sun-Earth Connection* by Steven H. Yaskell: This is a very interesting science based book on the fact that as Sun Solar spots decrease the earth temperature also decreases. This cycle is approx. 100 years and has resulted in mini ice ages such as the world wide cold of the mid 1600's.

A reader from Wilmington read *No Impact Man* by Colin Beavan: Fantastic read on environmental stewardship and how individual action can spawn collective action.

A reader from Roslindale read *Buzz* by Thor Hanson: Wonderful book on the benefits of different species of bees to the environment. An easy read filled with the author's fun adventures.

A reader from Wilmington read *Inside of a Dog: What Dogs See, Smell, and Know* by Alexandra Horowitz: Very well written. Easy to read, yet chock full of science and information regarding how dogs think, react, and perceive the world and us. A thorough journey into the umwelt of dogs, it makes you not only want to adopt a furry friend, but also really sit back and take a moment to fully appreciate your dog and try to understand the world from their perspective. I would say this should be required reading for any dog owner, but also for those who love dogs in general.

A reader from New Bedford read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: This book was wonderfully written. It opened my eyes to the symbiotic relationship between us and the land - something we very much take for granted. It was mixed with folklore and scientific facts, as well as anecdotes from the author's life. The prose in the books were so beautiful. I wished to highlight almost every word so I could hold onto it a little bit longer.

A reader from Amherst read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I am so grateful for this reader's challenge which prompted me to read this book. It has been on my shelves for years. The book describes the author's journey on the Pacific Crest Trail as a young woman with much unresolved grief.

Honest, funny and inspiring. I'm reminded of wonderful trips I did with a friend in the White Mountains years ago.

A reader from Dracut read *Climate Emergency Atlas* by Jamie Margolin: Talked about climate emergency around the world. Easy to read, and very informative.

A reader from Danvers read *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: She packs a verbal punch for a young lady! Her speeches are concise and focused. Impressive!

A reader from dover foxcroft read *The Drowned World* by J.G. Ballard: Amazed that this book was written in 1962, don't think the term "global warming" was used yet. Science fiction is my least favorite genre but this was a pretty good read.

A reader from North Attleboro read *Birdology* by Sy Montgomery: Montgomery makes understanding and learning more about wildlife and pets easy with descriptions of her interactions with them locally & in research endeavors all over the world. In *Birdology* Montgomery explains that birds are the closest relatives to dinosaurs still inhabiting the earth. She explains this thru her works with chickens, hawks, cassowaries, hummingbirds, pigeons, parrots & crows. I enjoyed this book enough to read a second book by Montgomery: *How to Be a Good Creature*.

A reader from Middleboro read *Through A. window* by Jane Goodall: Jane made this book fascinating. She informed me of the way of life of the Gambe chimpanzees. She answered questions I had of the primates. I enjoyed her putting in the not so pleasant graphics on how the babies were ripped from mother's arms and killed. Another great read. I highly recommend.

A reader from Billerica read *Toxic Prey* by John Sanford: This is the 34th in the Lucas Davenport Series. I have always loved Sanford's Prey series, but I especially enjoy them when they also include Letty, Lucas's adopted daughter. Once I started reading this book, I couldn't put it down. One thrill after another. What a ride Sanford took me on. This is a suspense/medical thriller that I hope doesn't happen in the future, but with our advances in science, it is a possible way to eliminate the population by half if not three-quarters. Especially with what happened with Covid. Lucas and his team plus Letty and Hawkins (MI6 agent) are trying to locate Dr. Lionel Scott before he lets loose a deadly virus to eliminate some of the world's population. Both Lucas and Letty have been told by the President of the US that if they need to shoot to kill then they have the okay. They are to do what they need to do to stop Scott and this deadly virus. Read to find out if Lucas, Letty, and their teammates find Dr. Scott, destroy the virus and save the world population.

A reader from Hadley read *No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: This collection of speeches is impressive, especially since they are written by a teenager. An urgent call to action, this collection is at once inspiring and alarming. My only complaint is that I felt like some of the speeches were so close in wording to others that perhaps it would have been stronger if just the more unique speeches were included. Nonetheless it was a very moving and informative book on the state of our environment.

A reader from Worcester read *The Actual Star* by Monica Byrne: This world is so big, so nuanced, so broad and deep, that it's difficult to summarize it for a review. It's a story and a world you live inside and inhabit for a time, rather than a plot whose surface you skate along. It's given me a lot to think about, and I'm sure I'll return to it. Especially as the climate crisis worsens and we all have to contend with that reality.

A reader from WEST BOYLSTON read *How To Be a Good Creature* by Sy Montgomery: Sy Montgomery shows us how to observe and appreciate the individuality and beauty of every living creature. By doing so, we can learn how to be a good creature. I recommend this book. The illustrations are lovely, too!

A reader from Sunderland read *On Animals* by Susan Orlean: Susan Orlean is the author of *The Library Book*, which I also enjoyed very much. *On Animals* is a collection of essays, each about a different animal and its relationship to humans. For example: Susan raising chickens, the life of a show dog, oxen in Cuba, and a tiger hoarder. Easy, interesting reading!

A reader from New York read *How Far the Light Reaches* by Sabine Imbler: I loved this book. It made me want to write, which is such a good quality in a book.

A reader from Woburn read *Exploring Autumn: A Season Of Science Activities, Puzzlers, And Games* by Sandra Markle: This book was not a keeper. I will be removing it from my home library.

A reader from Amherst read *When Women Were Birds: Fifty-four Variations on Voice* by Terry Tempest Williams: an empty room
an hour glass
time can be wasted
without wasting a day.

A reader from OXFORD read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I really wanted to like this book because I enjoy hiking in New England and looked forward to learning about the California trail. Unfortunately I didn't like most of the narrative. The author had a lot of issues and I could not empathize with much of her reflections on her journey. There was little description of the country and nature. I'm sure for some this would be a good read but not for me.

A reader from Belchertown read *reading the forested landscape* by Tom Wessels: I have had this book in my personal library for a couple of years now, and I don't know why I hadn't picked it up. It is a wonderful read. I find myself walking through the woods, considering all the things the author has spoken about. Wondering how the forest came to be as it is now. I highly recommend it.

A reader from Pittsfield read *Life on the Rocks* by Juli Berwald: I decided to read a book about coral reefs after spending time snorkeling in The Bahamas and learning about the bleaching of the reefs. One of the things I loved about this book is that as Juli is learning more about the reefs and trying to save them, she is also learning about and dealing with her daughter's mental health. I loved how she connected them. As she states on pg. 259: "Alarm is a good thing. We need it to

survive. But what happens when alarm goes haywire? You get obsession and you get compulsion..." and this connects directly to the paralyzing OCD that is gripping her daughter. I also loved that there is hope - since when I left The Bahamas I felt hopeless about the reefs, but when reading this book, I had hope again. There is urgency and we need to act soon, but there are also organizations rebuilding reefs with rebar in the water and growing coral in aquariums and trying to figure out how to then put it into the water. I highly recommend this book - it was a wonderful read.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Field Guide to Dumb Birds of North America* by Matt Kracht: Somewhat funny, somewhat crude. I did learn some interesting tidbits about birds. I chose this book because I didn't want to read a book that would give me anxiety about climate change, which it didn't, but it did make me think 1800s humans weren't very caring about wild animals.

A reader from North Easton read *Moonbird: a year on the wind with the great survivor B95* by Phillip Hoose: I enjoyed this book very much. Very insightful and just always makes you think a little more. I love birds. Perfectly written to captivate all ages and understanding of birds and their migratory, feeding, mating habits. Amazing that one little bird can fly 18k miles over a short period. Let's help this bird, all shorebirds and all bird in general. I believe this book should be read in classrooms at all levels, including high school. Get kids understanding and helping. Be a part of the change!

A reader from Melrose read *How Far the Light Reaches: A Life in Ten Sea Creatures* by Sabrina Imbler: This essay collection was a quick, interesting read/listen. The author shares information and stories about fascinating sea creatures and uses well-constructed metaphors to weave those stories into stories of their life. Imbler is a queer, mixed race science journalist and captures some traumatic and some amazing and transcendent experiences here. I'd never heard of salps before, and now I don't think I'll ever forget them!

A reader from Hudson read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: Definitely a bit of a slog, but it's a book I've always wanted to "have read"!

A reader from North Billerica read *Into The Wild* by Jon Krakauer: I didn't like this book that much and I think mostly because I don't know if there was enough material to warrant a book. (It was initially a magazine article. So it felt like much of the material was repetitive or thrown in to just extend the length of the book. Also, I was never able to identify or empathize with the main character, Chris. He just seemed privileged, smart and selfish. And I didn't understand why he threw everything away to head into the Alaska bush. He does nothing to prepare himself for this adventure, like learning about what it will be like to live in nature in Alaska in the summer. He doesn't even bring a map. He does not seem to respect the land at all. Even though it appears to be his dream to go to the Alaska bush and live out an adventure. He tried to live off the land without bothering to try to learn or master the skills needed to do so. He went in so unprepared it was frustrating to read about.

A reader from Pepperell read *What An Owl Knows* by Jennifer Ackerman: I enjoyed this book and learned a lot about owls and what they can teach us about the environment. My

granddaughters are fascinated with owls and now I can share my new found knowledge with them!

A reader from MASHPEE read *The North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Traveling through time, Mason weaves the tales of the numerous inhabitants of a little house in western Massachusetts with the story of the changes in the flora and the fauna of the area caused by population growth and climate change. Mason's language and descriptions are beautifully written.

A reader from Holyoke read *The Sanctuary* by Andrew Hunter Murray: This was a tough read at times as it hit a bit too close to home in some of the early descriptions of a world hit hard by the knock-on effects of climate change. However, the last third of the book felt like straight-up thriller (while keeping the themes of the story intact) and I sped through it in one sitting. I will definitely be thinking about this one for awhile...

A reader from Leominster read *A Country Year: Living the Questions* by Sue Hubbell: The author was a beekeeper who lived in the Ozark Mountains. She wrote about the world of nature she observed around her in one year, from spring to spring. She's a beautiful writer.

A reader from Northampton read *An Elephant in my Kitchen* by Francoise Malby-Anthony: A wonderfully written book about the establishment, challenges and daily happenings in a game reserve named Thula Thula. One main goal was to protect elephants and rhinos from poachers. Accounts of extraordinary animals and lovingly dedicated humans make this a captivating read.

A reader from Westminster read *What Wild Flower Is It?* by Anna Pistorius: This is a very old book published in 1950 however, I'm going to have a ball with this book this spring and summer. The illustrations were beautiful. The descriptions excellent. I'm going to use this as a guide exploring nature in the future and looking forward to it.

A reader from Dudley read *The climate book: the facts and solutions* by Greta Thunberg: It's really hard for me to review a nonfiction book as this is important for everyone to read. I personally have a hard time staying focused on scientific texts, as I typically don't enjoy reading nonfiction. As part of a reading challenge, I went out of my comfort zone and read this and I am glad I did. Greta Thunberg and various others have a lot of insightful information on how we can make changes to help with the current climate crisis now.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I grew up along the shoreline fishing and shellfishing and enjoyed reading about estuaries, salt marshes and wetlands. I have also visited Mary's peak and the Oregon Coast Range with the old growth forests. Message of author 'Take only what you need, take in a way that causes no harm' is so important in preserving this beautiful country.

A reader from Hanson read *The Feather Thief* by Kirk Wallace Johnson: This was very intriguing to see what lengths people would go to, obtaining illegal materials for fly-fishing ties. Also, it was very disturbing to read about the history of how birds and feathers were initially used for women's hats and how that practice put some species into extinction.

A reader from Sandwich read *Blizzard (Translated from the French)* by Marie Vingtras: "I let go of his hand to retie my laces and I lost him." This is a 4 person novel involving a search for a young boy who disappeared in a fierce, blinding blizzard in a remote part of Alaska. Each short chapter reveals a part of the background of the desperate searchers and their secrets. It is this "peeling the onion" technique that draws the reader into the history of the characters and each one needs to prevent the frozen death of the young boy.

A reader from Ludlow read *A Year in the Maine Woods* by Bernd Heinrich: Bernd Heinrich spent a year in the Maine woods, studying and cataloging nature and wild animals big and small. He included drawings of trees, bark, leaves and flowers of early berries as well as squirrels and chipmunks. He was not far from a country store so he was able to snowshoe (when needed) or hike to get supplies. Very interesting read.

A reader from Topsfield read *A Brief History of Earth* by Andrew H. Knoll: A brief, but comprehensive, look into the earth's history - from its earliest days to the current climate. Excellent.

A reader from Newton Upper Falls read *Stars in our Pockets: Getting Lost and Sometimes Found in the Digital Age* by Howard Axelrod: Howard Axelrod spent two years on his own in the Vermont countryside after an injury cost him the sight in one eye. This time away from it all lends Axelrod a rare perspective on what we lose when digital media rather than the world outside becomes paramount in our lives. Axelrod's book doesn't focus on nature and the environment per se, but behind all of his observations is the disconnect from nature too many people feel, and perhaps explains why care and concern for our environment seems so lacking. If you read only one book lamenting the impact of social media on our lives, read Axelrod's book, grounded in specific observations but with a poet's reach.

A reader from Brookline read *The Forest Demands It's Due* by Kosoko Jackson: Besides for the amazing representation in this book, I was not a fan of this debut novel. This is a fictional novel with a magic system, but this system, besides for the fact that it is connected to the forest in town, is not explained at all. The ending also went against the main character's morals from the rest of the novel, so it did not make sense with his character.

A reader from Methuen read *The Curious Nature Guide* by Clare Walker Leslie: I enjoyed this interactive guide so much! Great for adults and children alike. Very informative and fun.

A reader from Edgartown read *Desert Solitaire* by Edward Abbey: This book was published in 1968 and tells about the many adventures and explorations of Abbey as a National Park Ranger in Arches National Monument in the late 1950's. The park is located in SW Utah. Abbey was basically a loner who enjoyed the wilderness and unexplored areas at the time. After a couple of seasons he chose not to return as the park had become so developed and improved.

A reader from Salem read *The Darkness Manifesto* by Johan Eklof: This book was not what I expected. It was more of like a collection of essays. I read an article about the ecological impacts of light and I wanted to learn more. I felt like the book could have had been more cohesive.

A reader from Pepperell read *Out Little Farm* by Peter and Miriam Wohlleben: The idea of growing my own food and having chickens and goats is appealing in theory. However, I know I am not cut out for the amount of labor that goes into such endeavors and this book really confirmed it! Side note: I also read *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg. It is a quick read, a collection of the many speeches she has given warning lawmakers of and imploring all of us about climate change, it's impact on the planet and why we all must do even just a little something to save our planet. If all (or many/most) of us can make small changes somewhere in our daily lives I feel it could add up to big changes in helping Mother Earth survive. Time is not on our side...

A reader from Belmont read *California Burning: The Fall of Pacific Gas and Electric--and What It Means for America's Power Grid* by Katherine Blunt: i work in utilities and thought this was a great read.

A reader from Spencer read *Eruption: The Untold Story of Mount St. Helens* by Steve Olson: 'The 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens was a cataclysmic event. Proper precautions were not taken despite months of observation of volcanic activity, resulting in avoidable loss of life. Deforestation and environmentalism both played significant roles in the Pacific Northwest before and after this immense natural disaster.'

A reader from Milford read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: How far are we past this? Have we again "fallen into a mesmerized state that makes us accept as inevitable that which is inferior or detrimental, as though having lost the will or the vision to demand that which is good?"

A reader from Erving read *The New Atlantis* by Ursula K. Le Guin: I honestly had a hard time following this book. It was almost like a futuristic view of how strict the government would be, maybe on this Atlantis type island, but there's not really much said about outside type stuff, like the beauty of the land. It was more so about this scientist creating some sort of solar energy strong enough to mimic the sun in the dark. Maybe someone else could follow this better and explain it to me lol.

A reader from Melrose read *The Hidden Language of Cats* by Sarah Brown: I enjoyed the book and it was well written. I learned different facts of wild cats and domestic cats.

A reader from Wilmington read *The Earth Moved: On the Remarkable Achievements of Earthworms* by Amy Stewart: *The Earth Moved* is an interesting book describing an earthworms impact on nature, the environment and gardens. I never really every thought of earthworms as possibly being able to impact nature, being so small nor did I every really think of them at all. This book was a fascinating read on a small creatures impact on nature and humans and makes you think of how small things can make a huge impact, even when they are not thought about. I would recommend reading this book.

A reader from North Chelmsford read *Tomorrow's Parties: Life In The Anthropocene* by Jonathan Strahan: While it focuses a lot more on social issues than environmental ones, almost all of the features stories have plots directly impacted by climate change.

A reader from Woburn read *Sharing Good Times* by Jimmy Carter: I loved this book. It was so interesting getting a deeper glimpse into aspects of my favorite president's life.

A reader from Groton read *Gaining Ground* by Forrest Pritchard: Really liked this book. Reminded me of my son, who is doing organic farming, on a smaller scale than Pritchard. My son said he had read this book, too.

A reader from Berkley read *The Island of Missing Trees* by Elif Shafak: This book was really good. It showed the effects war and division can have on multiple generations of families, as well as on plants, animals, and the environment. Plants, animals, and eco-systems all suffer from war and strife, yet no one ever focuses on that side effect of war and human actions.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Annihilation* by Jeff VanderMeer: I found that this novel is fairly polarizing in the SF community but as a mushroom enthusiast and horror super-fan, I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was one of the most atmospheric novels I've ever read, and very strange. Also it was really bleak at times. With all that in mind I can see why it doesn't hit a lot of people right. But I'll be reading the rest of the trilogy.

A reader from Billerica read *No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: I really enjoyed reading the speeches that Thunberg had given in her first year of the school strikes. They were inspiring and weren't overly complicated, perfect for people of all ages and expertise of the reader.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Chasing Fire* by Nora Roberts: Fire jumpers work hard to protect the environment from the devastating effects of wildfires, and, unfortunately, arson.

A reader from Chicopee read *Henry Beston* by The Outermost House: The book chronicles Beston's year in nature on the shores of Eastham on the outer Cape. Experiences with animals, storms, solitude, and a plethora of other natural events shape his hopeful attitude towards the world and serve as a gentle healing for him after his service during WWI.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Planting Wildflowers; A Grower's Guide to Welcoming the Wild* by Jane Moore: Book features practical advice, brief plant profiles, wildflower folklore and history, and helpful resources. It's beautifully illustrated.

A reader from Brookline read *The good virus* by Tom Ireland: Excellent overview of the wild and wacky world of bacteriophages, viruses that infect and kill bacteria. Special attention is focused on the potential of bacteriophages as alternatives to antibiotics to combat serious infections.

A reader from Bedford read *When Women Were Birds* by Terry Tempest Williams: I was unfamiliar with Williams before seeing her name on the April recommendation list. I am blown away by how beautiful this book is.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Moby-Duck: The True Story of 28,800 Bath Toys Lost at Sea* by Donovan Hohn: I was aware that cargo containers go overboard; with this book I learned a lot more about Pacific Ocean currents and the terrible amount of waste that ends up in our oceans.

A reader from Northampton read *H is for Hawk* by Helen Macdonald: This book had me riveted from the first word to the last. Fantastic!

A reader from Dartmouth read *Leave Only Footprints* by Conor Knighton: Having visited several of America's national parks, I was eager to read this book. Author Knighton has written an engaging tale of his adventures in all of the USA's American parks recording his impressions, facts he learned from park rangers and interactions with other park visitors. Especially appealing is the way in which Knighton organized his trip and his chapters to emphasize the various aspects of nature encountered from volcanoes and caves to water and mountains.

A reader from Dracut read *the falcon thief* by michael hammer: An interesting look into falcon racing and the true crime story of a person stealing falcon eggs to further the sport.

A reader from Scituate read *Wild Design: Nature's Architects* by Kimberly Ridley: Reading this book reminded me how beautiful and varied nature is. Enjoyed the vintage illustrations. So glad that nature was a topic to read or otherwise might not have discovered this book at the library..

A reader from Sandwich read *North with the Spring* by Edwin Way Teale: Teale and his wife drove from south Florida to Mt. Katahdin, Maine in a circuitous route from shore to mountains beginning mid-March describing beautifully as they went the unfolding of spring. I read this book as I took a similar journey from Florida north.

A reader from Spencer read *Re-Cycles* by Michael Elsohn Ross: Interesting read about the water cycle and composting.

A reader from Sutton read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I was so excited to read this book, and ultimately disappointed. It felt like it was 700 pages long. There was some interesting parts that I enjoyed, such as the Skywoman vs. Eve part at the beginning and the black ash basket weaving chapter. Mostly, though, it was overly descriptive and I felt she came across as very pretentious.

A reader from Amesbury read *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed: I liked how it was a true account told by the person experiencing the trip. The author shared a pivotal time in her life in which she experienced much growth.

A reader from Brockton read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: The marsh in this book is described so well, it becomes one of the main characters. The marsh raises Kya, protects her and eventually saves her.

A reader from Boston read *The River* by Peter Heller: I have read two wilderness survival stories this year, one fictional and one not. The River is a fictional wilderness thriller, a new genre for me. I was engaged the whole time, but there are enough real stories of survival I think I'll stick to

those accounts. That said, I learned a lot about the behavior and danger of large forest fires, and preparing for/surviving long paddling trips.

A reader from Seekonk read *Spirit Run* by Noe Alvarez: I had never heard of the Peace and Dignity Journey, a 6,000 mile run to renew cultural connections. The book was an interesting look at the author's run (and life) to find peace with his heritage.

A reader from Colrain read *Endangered* by Eliot Schrefer: A story about a girl who takes care of an orphaned baby bonobo in the jungles of the Congo. A gripping, heart-tugging read about the wilderness, the brutal reality of war and the bond between a human and an ape.

A reader from Woburn read *Cast Away* by Naomi Shihab Nye: This is a collection of poem that revolve around littering. This really opened my eyes and I realized that there are a lot of people that can't take the extra few seconds to properly dispose of their trash, It has always seemed to come so naturally to me.

A reader from Derry read *The Great Penguin Rescue* by Dyan deNapoli: Finished reading today "The Great Penguin Rescue" by Dyan deNapoli. Very interesting read about the efforts to save 10k Penguins following a oil tanker disaster off Cape Town South Africa. The author is native of Boston metropolitan area and worked at New England Aquarium as a Penguin keeper. Incredible story, often gut wrenching, of the treatment care and rehabilitation of the Penguins, those that survived and those lost, plenty of loss. A true ecological disaster as not only were the Penguins covered in oil, displaced, their habitat destroyed but also their society of mate for life coupling was cruelly effected. Penguins coupled care for each other, they suffer loss and so these Penguins truly lost everything.

A reader from Derry read "*Mask of the Sun: The Science, History and Forgotten Lore of Eclipses*" by John Dvorak: In anticipation of the solar eclipse on April 8th and to fulfill the April reading challenge, I chose to read "Mask of the Sun: The Science, History, and Forgotten Lore of Eclipses". I enjoyed reading about all the historical figures from centuries past to present who learned and theorized over eclipses. Much has been learned. over the past 3-4,000 years. Especially now with modern technology with inventions like telescopes and photography. In ancient times they recorded information on turtle shells and clay tablets. Eclipses are mentioned at least 8 times in the Bible. These early recordings have helped in pinpointing dates in history. Many superstitions surrounded eclipses as well. Eclipses are unique to planet earth. I was glad I read this book before I witnessed the eclipse on 8 April. I watched it up in northern NH where it was at 98.6% totality. It was pretty awesome. Learning more about this celestial phenomenon ahead of time made it even more enjoyable.

A reader from Yarmouth Port read *Of Time and Turtles* by Sy Montgomery: Wonderful how people work to rescue and save vulnerable animals. A fascinating read.

A reader from Chicopee read *The Parrot and the Igloo* by David Lipsky: A very long winded book about how the government and big companies knew about global warming and health issues decades ago, yet chose to ignore science and cover it up. Until they couldn't anymore. Sad

book about how government is misleading and companies that are in it for the profit despite what they know they're doing to your health.

A reader from Plymouth read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: This book can change your relationship with our planet. So wise.

A reader from Westfield read *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult: This book was about nature in the way that it taught me about the works of honey bees. There was a lot of background, explanation, and education on how the honey bees work / live / ect. and how it correlated to the main characters lives. Very interesting how they connect the two and how similar we can be to honey bees.

A reader from Northampton read *Blight - Fungi and the Coming Pandemic* by Emily Monosson: Fungi are everywhere ---- everywhere. Most are harmless, but some are killers - of animals (bats and white nose syndrome), of plants (the fusarium fungus destroying banana plants) and even we humans (candida auris - an infection with a high mortality rate). A warming environment, introduction of a plant or animal from a different geographical environment is sometimes all a dormant fungus needs to begin its destructive path. This is a very clear, well-presented book for all of us non-scientists.

A reader from Norton read *The Heat Will Kill You First* by Jeff Goodell: Eye-opening book about the dangers of heat in a warming world.

A reader from Wilmington read *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold: I dare you to read this book and NOT feel the need to get outdoors.

A reader from Blandford read *A Blizzard of Polar Bears* by Alice Henderson: This is the second book in the Alex Carter series. Alex is a field biologist who studies endangered species and what is causing their decline. There's danger and mystery in the book but also facts about Polar Bears and the environmental changes that are impacting them. Easy to read, entertaining and educational.

A reader from Plympton read *How It Began: A Time-Traveler's Guide to the Universe* by Chris Impey: A book about nature, in that it describes the universe, and its beginnings. Though not for everyone, this is a book that describes in as close to layman's terms as possible while maintaining its scientific integrity, the origins of the universe and the complexities of the discoveries, theories and understanding of how it all began. I am a retired middle school science teacher and really enjoyed this book, so it is kind of for science geeks in that sense. But if you are so inclined, it was well written, with some humor, and clear explanations. Many diagrams are included but to be honest, not really helpful. But for me, it was the ultimate book on nature!

A reader from Topsfield read *Prodigal Summer* by Barbara Kingsolver: I love this book so much, the way the different characters connect with nature, the descriptions of the coyotes and how they work together to care for their young, and the relationships. It is a must read for any nature-lover.

A reader from Chelmsford read *climate justice* by mary robinson: Disappointing as wanted a good overview of why our current climate change is happening. Too technical

A reader from Springfield read *Stop Saving the Planet! An Environmentalist Manifesto* by Jenny Price: This book is perfect for people anxious about the future of humanity (which should be everyone!). Instead of focusing on the individual efforts a person can make to 'save the planet' this book really emphasizes the importance of holding massive corporations and governments accountable for being complicit in doing most (and truly, it is A LOT) of the damage.

A reader from EDGARTOWN read *Song of the Lark* by Willa Cather: Here the Lark is our heroine and a coming of age story as she makes her way from small town life to one with much bigger horizons. Cather writes eloquently of the lands in which she travels including the ancient Indian cave dwellings.

A reader from Dracut read *A walk in the Woods Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* by Bill Bryson: Bryson brings a well descriptive, slightly satirical look at hiking the Appalachian Trail. I am in awe of people who actually complete this adventure and enjoyed reading the trials and victories of this notable work of nature.

A reader from Wakefield read *Better Living Through Birding* by Christian Cooper: I was drawn to this book because I love birds (though I am not a birder). It was much more a memoir than I thought it would be, but a fascinating glimpse into the author's life and travels, and it only increased my appreciation for the birds with which we co-exist.

A reader from Wakefield read *what an owl knows* by Jennifer Ackerman: It's very cool to learn about owls.

A reader from Easton read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: This is a look into past and present observations of nature through the seasons. Special awareness of how modern life impacts animals and insects too often in a negative way.

A reader from Wakefield read *The Story of More: How We Got to Where We Are and Where to Go from Here* by Hope Jahren: A passionate case for why we should care about climate change, but could be frustrating to those who already do care. Jahren tries to inspire people to make individual sacrifices, but after all the stats she spouts about the magnitude of the problems, it's hard to see how my individual choices would make a difference. I wish she had focused more on demanding specific actions from our government, as she makes it clear that systemic change is needed.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *System Collapse* by Martha Wells: The 7th book of the Murderbot Saga, the most relevant aspect is that it introduces a new level of complexity to the Murderbot. The description of how it has to try to recover and deal with an Anxiety attack that force it to a shutdown, and the afterwards process of recovering it's own confidence, is quite compelling. Everyone who has ever gone through a traumatic experience and have had to deal with the effects impairing their judgement can relate.

A reader from Hopkinton read *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* by Frans de Waal: It's a history of how humans have viewed animal intelligence over the last hundred years in particular (with some excursions into the past), illustrated by a lot of experiments and observations, primarily chimp but also other animals from birds to fish to mammals.

A reader from Rockland read *The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays on a Human-Centered Planet* by John Green: What an interesting take on the effect of humans on the planet with personal essays (reviews). John Green is amazing in fiction, and is no less amazing in non-fiction.

A reader from Georgetown read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I thoroughly enjoyed this book, WAY more than I originally thought. It isn't a genre I typically read but I was sucked in! She did a great job of explaining and storytelling her time on the trail while also talking about her life up until her time on the trail! Very captivating read. Definitely recommend.

A reader from Longmeadow read *Roots Shoots Buckets & Boots* by Sharon Lovejoy: I liked reading this book. It was about simple ways to create a garden area or plot with children actively participating in the planting and care. I learned that simple containers can be an easy starting plan for the beginner. And making a teepee or secret hiding place is easy with the proper supplies and plants. I look forward to trying some of the selections in the book. I also learned that if you count the number of cricket chirps in 15 seconds and add 40 the total equals the temperature. A lot of very interesting notes such as this were enjoyable and enlightening to read.

A reader from Feeding Hills read *Beaverland* by Leila Philip: This book came highly recommended by a reader who encouraged me to consider it instead of reading Walden again. It was definitely a worthwhile read and enlightened me to the role that Beavers play in the environment. The parts that explored trapping culture were sad. I also learned a lot about stone walls in New England and will always view them from a different perspective knowing that they were mostly built by enslaved native americans. This book definitely provided a lot of food for thought, but I still do want to reread Walden!

A reader from Hopedale read *A Blizzard of Polar Bears* by Alice Henderson: A novel of suspense mixed with environmental causes of polar bear populations, global warming and more. Enjoyed this one.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate • Discoveries from A Secret World* by Peter Wohlleben: *The Hidden Life of Trees* was very enjoyable and informative at the same time.

A reader from Hudson read *Cool Food Erasing Your Carbon Footprint One Bite at a Time* by Robert Downey Jr., Thomas Kostigen: This book features a unique approach as to how one can reduce carbon emissions by choosing some food over others. It provides tips on what one should do starting today to improve the climate by reducing food waste, by being a more informed shopper and by repurposing leftovers. I especially appreciate the recipes included in the book.

A reader from Rochester read *Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery: Sharing Sy Montgomery's interactions with octopuses and other sea animals woke in me an understanding of how similar

we living creatures are, and how unique. We see the intelligence and emotions of octopuses that we had never even considered before.

A reader from Providence read *If Nietzsche Were a Narwhal: What Animal Intelligence Reveals About Human Stupidity* by Justin Gregg: A very engaging read about the commonality and differences between humans and animals in regards to behavior and cognition.

A reader from Allston read *The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating* by Elisabeth Tova Bailey: Book was given to me by my mom! Thought it would fit perfectly for the nature challenge. Will keep my eyes out for snails from now on!

A reader from Westport read *Of Time and Turtles* by Sy Montgomery: I learned a lot about turtles and I liked that the author wrote about Massachusetts specifically. She would go kind of off topic sometimes but it was interesting overall.

A reader from Woburn read *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne: I expected to really love this book, but it turned out to just be pretty decent.

A reader from Chelmsford read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: This 1998 recounting of Bryson's and his friend Stephen's attempt to walk the Appalachian Trail is known for its humor. Bryson does discuss serious environmental issues such as climate change, animal extinctions, deforestation and other concerns. This book serves as a warning for all of us to take action wrapped in his humor, observations and hope. A must read.

A reader from Pepperell read *Weather* by Jenny Offill: I wanted this story to be about climate anxiety but it was more about the reaction to the 2016 election.

A reader from Dudley read *Our House is on Fire: Scenes of a Family and a Planet in Crisis* by Greta Thunberg, Svante Thunberg, Malena Ernman, Be: I was afraid to read this at first. Climate change is scary, and like many others, I have made small changes in my lifestyle and what we choose to buy as a family. I had heard of Greta Thunberg, but did not have a great concept of her beginnings, or how much of a family matter her stand takes. I became more intrigued learning about her and her sisters mental health challenges, and I think it is admirable of them to share that piece and what kind of an impact she is capable of making because of who she is as a person.

A reader from BREWSTER read *Upstream* by Mary Oliver: Beautiful poetically written essays on nature and more.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery: Super informational! It provided an amazing look into the life of an Octopus, a creature that I haven't given much thought to before. It made me want to go snorkeling or at the very least, take a trip to the aquarium!

A reader from Beverly read *The Fox and the Forest Fire* by Danny Popovici: A beautiful story about a young boy who adjusts to his new home near the forest and learns how nature takes it

upon herself to rebuild after devastation. Written and illustrated by a volunteer firefighter which provides a unique perspective.

A reader from Agawam read *The Sakura Obsession* by Naoko Abe: This book was a mix of a biography of Collingwood Ingram, who helped to "save" Japan's cherry blossoms, and a history of Japan's changing relationship with cherry blossoms over the centuries. I found the author's discussion of Japan and the symbolism surrounding cherry blossoms during World War II particularly enlightening.

A reader from Basking Ridge read *An Earth Bot's Solution to Plastic Pollution* by Russel Ayto: Cute and fast read.

A reader from Beverly read *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah: It was enlightening to learn more about the droughts dust bowl and depression.

A reader from Natick read *A Life on Our Planet: My Witness Statement and A Vision for the Future* by David Attenborough: The first half of this book is a memoir of David Attenborough's life as a naturalist and his witness statement as he has seen the degradation of our planet over the course of his life. The second half is a summary of all that we can still do to save our planet. It was both sad and terrifying to read, but also hopeful to know that we still have the ability to halt the effects of climate change. Now if only those in charge will do something about it before it is too late.

A reader from South Hadley read *Trace: Memory, History, Race, and the American Landscape* by Savoy, Lauret: The prose is so much more lyrical than I realized it would be! It's part memoir and part nature book, and I'm learning a lot, but it's slower reading than I expected because of the prose. But I'm enjoying it!

A reader from Braintree read *The Hummingbirds' Gift* by Sy Montgomery: Wonderful chronicle of the saving of abandoned baby hummingbirds, from rescue to flight. Full of great description and information of how these wonders of nature capture our interests.

A reader from Woburn read *Walden or, Life in the Woods* by Henry David Thoreau: How grateful I am to have read this entire book and not just the gems of wisdom that are often quoted. Nature, in whatever deteriorating state that it is in must be experienced mindfully in order to have an impact on our being.

A reader from West Boylston read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Great way to tell a story of time and relationships by weaving together nature and inhabitants in one setting. Life shows it's ups and downs, for humans and nature, but in the end we all persevere in our own way.

A reader from Beverly read *Elizabeth Kolbert* by H is for Hope: A very easy read but packed with information about all the research and entrepreneurial effort that is going toward living with climate change. There are so many really smart people in the world developing things that we never dreamed of. Battery powered airplanes that are already in use for small hops and

deliveries! And on and on with new ideas and realities. I never would have read this without the reading challenge forcing me out of my comfort zone. Thank you.

A reader from South Hadley read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: **Enlightening and entertaining read about hiking the Appalachian Trail.**

A reader from Northampton read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: **I loved this book. I re-read it just for the challenge!**

A reader from Plymouth read *Red Sky in Mourning* by Tami Oldham Ashcraft: **This is a sad but fascinating story about two people sailing together around the world.**

A reader from North Brookfield read *River* by Elisha Cooper: **A nice story about a naturalist going down the Hudson River and talking about her discoveries. Basically a children's book but I enjoyed it.**

A reader from Arlington read *Held by the Land: A Guide to Indigenous Plants for Wellness* by Leigh Joseph: **Excellent book that helped traditional indigenous thoughtways and relations with plant life interweave into Western understandings.**

A reader from Brookline read *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah: **This is my first Kristin Hannah book and it was incredibly well written. I appreciate her writing as the subject matter was heavy and complicated, however she keeps the story interesting and having you come back for more. Elsa's journey was harrowing yet powerful. My absolute favorite character was Loreda as she portrayed a strong young women in a time of harsh sexism. This book was also wildly educational. I appreciate how much research she puts into her books and am excited to read another by this author!**

A reader from Brighton read *Under the White Skue* by Elizabeth Kolbert: **This book was hard for me to get through, but I ended up learning some things about nature and the world.**

A reader from Arlington read *Spirit Run* by Noe Alvarez: **I liked hearing about the author's background and about some of the other runners. The least interesting part of the book was the run itself. This book only felt loosely on theme, and I wouldn't have counted it if it weren't on the suggestions list.**

A reader from Burlington read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: **I had heard such great things about this book, but it didn't sound like my cup of tea. From day 1, I could not put it down! I loved the descriptive language used to give the reader a real sense of the environment and how much it played into the character's feelings, development, and lifestyle. I loved this book and can't wait to read it again in a couple of years!**

A reader from Amesbury read *Miseducation* by Katie Worth: **An interesting look at how climate change is taught in America. The author's clear disdain for climate deniers made a somewhat dry subject more entertaining.**

A reader from Hanover read *The Three Ages of Water* by Gleick, Peter: The history of water on planet earth. Though our abuse of this most vital resource is vast, there is hope for the future - cleaning up plastics, reducing dumping, etc.

A reader from Wilmington read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: This is a non-fiction account of Bill's journey as he and his friend hike the Appalachian Trail. He writes not only about the experiences while hiking, but mentions a lot of history at different parts of the trail! The relationship between the author and his friend makes the story quite interesting and at times comical. I'm not a hiker by any means but I truly enjoyed this book. I am so glad this challenge is forcing me to find books outside my typical genre. Thank you Massbook.org!

A reader from Franklin read *Dry* by Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman: While the story takes place in Southern California, which I would love to visit, I would not like to be there at the timing of this book. This is a fictional account of what could happen if we are not careful with our resources. Southern California runs out of water, and everyone is trying to survive but many will not. Told through the eyes of teens trying to work together and survive, emotions run high and the reader cannot predict what will happen next.

A reader from Lincoln read *What an Owl Knows: The new science of the world's most enigmatic books* by Jennifer Ackerman: I was amazed immediately in the introduction: baby owlets, like human babies, spend more time in REM sleep than adults. How do you measure REM sleep in an owl?!

A reader from Haverhill read *What the Bees See* by Craig P. Burrows: Bees perceive a different range of wavelengths of light than humans, with their vision extending into ultraviolet wavelengths that human's can't see. *What the Bees See* features photographs taken using a technique called ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence (UVIF.) Because bees have compound eyes and very different brains, we have no way of knowing or representing exactly how they see the world, but the photos do reveal patterns on flowers that are invisible to humans and may have evolved to attract bees and other pollinators. While the photographs are beautiful and fascinating to look at, the accompanying text leaves something to be desired. The photos are poorly captioned, with many of the plants only being identified in an index in the back despite there being ample room to have done so by the photos themselves. Furthermore, the latter section is devoted to pushing a trendy "superfood." I'm all for highlighting the agricultural importance of a species in order to advocate for its conservation, but it's possible to do that without resorting to dubious claims about health benefits, especially with an organism so massively important to humans as the western honey bee. Despite the title and the subject of the photographs, there was actually very little about bee perception or neurology. It was fun to flip through for the photos, but overall I wouldn't recommend it as a good resource on bees or beekeeping.

A reader from Northfield read *The Invisible Rainbow: A History of Electricity and Life* by Arthur Firstenberg: So much information in this book! The author did a good job in describing the facts and backing them up with graphs and statistics. Electricity is not the only harmful source for the environment: radiowaves, telegraph, and radar all play a role. And some of these go back hundreds of years. Heart disease, diabetes, flu, and cancer have direct links to electromagnetic radiation.

A reader from Wrentham read *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer: This book was just an ok read for me. It seemed like the book went into too many details at some points and I found myself skimming the book during those times.

A reader from SOUTH HADLEY read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: Ok. I think I waited too long to read this book, so it was hyped up for me. I had to keep reminding myself that this book is a memoir, and is told through the author's perspective as the events occurred. It is not a novel. It would have really disappointed me as a novel. I didn't like how nonchalant the use of drugs was handled, but again...this is the author's actual experience so I cannot expect it to be changed. It was kind of lackluster overall but I'm glad I finally read it.

A reader from West Boylston read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Great way to tell a story of time and relationships by weaving together nature and inhabitants in one setting. Life shows it's ups and downs, for humans and nature, but in the end we all persevere in our own way.

A reader from Sandwich read *The Last Fire Season* by Manjula Martin: I felt really mixed about this one. It was a great reading challenge - I appreciated learning so much about wildfires. The author interweaves personal experiences with the California wildfires with information from many sources and communities regarding wildfires and fire management. All of that was fascinating - and depressing. However, there was too much time and location hopping for me. And the author's personal journey with pain and her political stances interfered with the wildfire narrative. There were a few too many things trying to be stuck together into one book. However, again, I really enjoyed learning more about the wildfires. Thanks for the challenge!

A reader from Mattapoisett read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: This book was an interesting mix of the history and science of the Appalachian trail and one man's story about hiking it. I really enjoyed his story as well as learning as I read.

A reader from Amherst read *Cascade* by Maryanne O'Hara: Loosely based on the taking of land by the state of Massachusetts to build the Quabbin Reservoir which would provide water to the eastern part of the state. Pretty good story revolving around the town of Cascade as they deal with the possibility that their town would no longer exist if chosen as the reservoir site. The main character is a woman artist who has aspirations to live in the city-New York or Boston and become an illustrator. Unfortunately her life has taken her in a different direction so that looks unlikely. The town was once a booming summer theatre venue but is now very desolate but the towns people try to keep their spirits up as they strive to save Cascade.

A reader from Salem read *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler: I don't think this looked so plausible when it was first published, but it feels very close now. Spoiler, sorry--but the wildfire near the end felt especially close to reality. Its message feels more philosophical than environmental. Maybe at the time of release it could've felt like a call to action, but now we're entering "Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbook" territory--do they sell those anymore? I think I'm going to try to pick up Abbey's "Monkey Wrench Gang" before the end of the month. On the one hand, I'm with Lauren; we need to prepare for what's coming. On the other hand, I'd

like to believe there's still something to fight, and I think that's where the Monkey Wrench Gang might come in.

A reader from Essex read *Garden Spells* by Sarah Addison Allen: Light, enjoyable read with a magic apple tree and mystical plants.

A reader from Foxborough read *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey: A middle-aged couple homesteads in 1920s Alaska after a miscarriage upsets their lives. One day, they make a little girl out of snow which disappears overnight. The next day and for days after they catch glimpses of a beautiful little girl hiding from them in the woods. The wildlife, scenery, cold, darkness, separation, difficulty, and wonder of the Alaska frontier, and its connection to Faina, and how the characters approach, survive, and appreciate the world around them is large enough that it would qualify for this category.

A reader from Arlington read *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* by Elizabeth Kolbert: I have read many books about the environment, particularly around global warming and climate change but for this month wanted to go in a different direction which is I chose this. Reading the early chapters about the history of paleontology were enlightening, I had no idea the asteroid theory wasn't agreed to until 1991, a year after my birth! The book also sent me back to my childhood interest in dinosaurs. The author does rightly point out we are the cause for many species extinctions currently, hence the naming of the Sixth Extinction, the Anthropocene extinction. I would like to be optimistic, as the researchers at the end, that we can find a way to solve these problems that we caused.

A reader from Andover read *clade* by James Bradley: Really interesting and thought provoking book.

A reader from New York read *Not Too Late* by Rebecca Solnit and Thelma Young Lutunatabua: "The seven year old knows the magic of strawberries. We're going to be fine." This book started out really sad and disheartening, but truly did move the reader through a story of hope and how to prevail. It inspired and taught and I'd highly recommend to anyone.

A reader from Burlington read *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir: Very similar to Weir's *The Martian*, this book looked at how Earth might go about preventing an alien race from destroying the sun (and in the process saves another alien race from the same problem). Especially interesting were the discussions about what level of global destruction would be considered acceptable, and how some moves towards the ultimate goal caused other climate change problems.

A reader from Quincy read *How to be a Good Creature: A Memoir in Thirteen Animals* by Sy Montgomery: An interesting read that for me made me look at non-traditional pets in a new light. As the author discusses the influence creatures such as tarantulas and octopuses have had on her life. I'm not sure this is relatable for a lot of people, but it was a sweet read.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Great Displacement: Climate Change and the Next American Migration* by Jake Bittle: This was a very interesting book about how climate change has already

affected many people across the country and how it will get worse in the years to come. The most interesting part for me was the discussion of where people have and will move FROM and where they have and will move TO as climate change gets worse. Some of the things people have endured (flooding, severe weather, erosion, wildfires) are getting worse, and making it more necessary to choose locations to move while keeping these things in mind. The horror stories where people bought houses sight-unseen or with no knowledge of the potential downfalls were eye-opening. I wish anyone the best of luck and hope they do their homework when moving.

A reader from Mattapoisett read *How To Be a Good Creature* by Sy Montgomery: I enjoyed this book. Sy Montgomery shares moments from her life linked through animals she has either studied/loved. Each chapter featured a different animal. I enjoyed hearing her life experiences and what each animal brought to her in life.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Hidden World of the Fox* by Adele Brand: A combination of Ms. Brand's personal experience with fox watching around the world and results of research from other like-minded fox lovers. interesting and informative. Learned that the first foxes in the world were in North America with the appearance of mammals, then migrated around the northern hemisphere where red foxes originated in Hungary and then migrated back to North America over the millenia. Wonerful!

A reader from Ipswich read *The Day the World Stops Shopping* by J.B. Mackinnon: I was hoping this book would motivate me to think twice before shopping and it has! The financial, environmental, and emotional impact of overconsumption is devastating and it was interesting to read about potential effects on the world if we as humans ceased to consume as much as we do.

A reader from Wakefield read *Eat, Poop, Die: How Animals Make Our World* by Joe Roman: This isn't something I would have picked up on my own outside of doing the challenge. It was a pretty decent read with some interesting facts about how animals have huge impacts on the ecosystem just by doing exactly as the title describes--eating, pooping, and dying. It was a pretty easy read, nothing too technical so that someone without a science background like me could easily follow and appreciate the text.

A reader from Lowell read *Prodigal Summer* by Barbara Kingsolver: A book I never would've thought to read if it weren't for the challenge, but I'm glad I did! An entertaining story full of nature, farming, and entomology that shows how connected we really are.

A reader from East Sandwich read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: This was an impactful book with excellent writing. It is the type of book I will recall often, especially when I experience the affects of climate change. I loved how the author intertwined and paralleled a story about grief and love - both for another human and for the animals.

A reader from Dudley read *The Sun Is a Compass: A 4,000-Mile Journey into the Alaskan Wilds* by Caroline Van Hemert: I enjoyed this read of the author taking me on the adventure with her. It was a true story representing nature in all it's beauty and danger and how she moves from

researcher to explorer. It must have been a unique experience to have with your spouse. My husband would love to go on this type of journey.

A reader from Franklin read *The Conscious Closet* by Elizabeth Cline: This book provided a deep dive into the environmental harms associated with the manufacture, maintenance, and disposal of our clothing and offered numerous practical strategies for individuals to reduce their environmental impact.

A reader from North Dighton read *Left Out in the Rain: New Poems 1947-1985* by Gary Snyder: Snyder's poems are both Buddhist and ecological in nature, exploring the interrelationships between humans and the land.

A reader from Hyannis read *No one is too small to make a difference* by Greta Thunberg: Loved this book about climate change.

A reader from Northfield read *speaking with nature-awakening to the deep wisdom of the earth* by sandra ingerman and llyn roberts: While i did find this book interesting as both authors live off of the land and spiritually feel connected to both nature and the animals i did have a hard time getting into it. once i did i very much felt connected. i already feel spiritually connected to earth, this was a great way to know that i am not alone.

A reader from SOUTH YARMOUTH read *Tinkers* by Paul Harding: Such beautiful descriptions of nature and memories and thoughts about so many things. In a month where I lost two close friends, this was a peaceful book to read.

A reader from Rindge read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: The novel is beautifully written. The story is of a lost woman following a endangered group of arctic terns on their migration from the Arctic to the Antarctic. It comments on global warming and over fishing the ocean.

A reader from Fall River read *Weather* by Emmy Kastner: A magical little read about the wonders of the weather!

A reader from Canton read *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia E. Butler: It was very good and it was interesting to see the parts of this futuristic society that already exist. This book was written a while ago and it's set in the 2020's so not everything is exactly accurate but the way things are going this could be a very realistic near future.

A reader from Spencer read *Climate Change and Our Earth* by Kathy Furgang: This is a great overview of how climate change affects animals, plants and people all over the earth.

A reader from Amherst read *The Last Animal* by Ramona Ausubel: I never thought I would fall in love with a 4,000 year old baby mammoth, but alas! This was a wonderful story with a unique mix of science and family.

A reader from Sharon read *A Walk Around the Beach* by Debbie Macomber: I just loved this book! It was among Debbie Macomber's best.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Sectets of the Octopus* by Sy Montgomery: Amazing photography. Octopuses are intelligent, unique creatures. It was really interesting to learn about them. Unfortunately, some excerpts of the book are repeated in multiple sections word for word. Overall, I learned a lot about octopuses.

A reader from STOW read *The Heat Will Kill You First* by Jeff Goodell: Adds a medium discussion of the science.

A reader from Orleans read *Our Fragile Moment: How Lessons From Earth's Past* by Michael Mann: A lot of technical descriptions to wade through, but interesting & a good warning to keep ahead of the issues around climate change.

A reader from Foxborough read *How Far the Light Reaches: A Life in Ten Sea Creatures* by Sabrina Imbler: I really enjoyed this book. It was an interesting mix of learning about the oceanic environment while also hearing stories of the author's own life.

A reader from Boston read *Gathering Moss* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: An amazing read all year round, but especially during earth month! Braiding Sweetgrass is my favorite book of all time, so I knew I'd enjoy this one. I recommend Robin Wall Kimmerer to anyone. Literally anyone. But especially anyone who wants to hear beautiful descriptions of the world around us, combined with Western and Indigenous scientific knowledge, all presented in an accessible, highly enjoyable way. I certainly appreciate the sidewalk crack mosses much more than I did before! For next month's challenge, I'm hoping to read a graphic novel by Liana Finck or Leela Corman.

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *Desert Solitaire* by Edward Abbey: Another old favorite; glad to have a reason to read it again. I love his descriptions, stories, and a wee tad of eco-terrorism.

A reader from Braintree read *Endangered Eating* by Sarah Lohman: This was a fascinating book about historical American foods that were near extinction which are being brought back and the cultures around the foods.

A reader from Stoneham read *The Last Animal* by Ramona Ausubel: This book was more about familial relationships than the environment but very enjoyable. It helped to illustrate the difficulty of being a mother and wanting to make contributions to society and how those two things are often at war.

A reader from North Dighton read *Nature and Walking* by Ralph Waldo Emerson & Henry David Thoreau: These essays drove the point home that as human beings, we are so entrenched in our societal expectations that we have lost side of the nature around us. While there are responsibilities, that must be attended to, the world is out there, waiting. The beauty, the inherent spirituality, and the peace that comes alongside it. I find myself needing to take a walk in the woods very soon.

A reader from Grafton read *The Mind of a Bee* by Lars Chittka: It was fascinating to learn so much about how bees live in this world. This book explains their senses, consciousness, personalities, communication, and ability to learn. Written in a way that was more casual than a textbook but with thorough explanation, it was easy to read and I gained a lot from it.

A reader from Berkley read *The River* by Peter Heller: This is a novel, full of detailed descriptions of nature which are enjoyable in themselves, but are also essential to the story of two young men on a vacation by canoe in the Canadian north. They encounter conflict with some other campers, including an attempted murder and they have to outrun a huge forest fire. It takes until page 60 for the interpersonal conflict to begin. Various musings by the protagonist foreshadow the action right to the end.

A reader from Dedham read *Paradise: One Town's Struggle to Survive an American Wildfire* by Lizzie Johnson: This is a very detailed investigative piece of journalism about the events leading, during, and after the Camp Fire that destroyed the town of Paradise, CA and the surrounding towns. You follow the stories of firemen, policemen, town officials, hospital personnel, and civilians. The author also talks about the history of the power lines and the power company that owns them, the droughts that have hit California, and the history of the Paradise area. The book shows how all these histories and the decisions made by people over a hundred years ago, local, state, and federal governments, and a company created the perfect storm for the deadliest fire in California history.

A reader from Andover read *Spirit run* by Noe Alvarez: This book was hard I could not get into it at first but once I kept going I learned a lot about people and nature how the land changes.

A reader from Reading read *The Heat Will Kill You First* by Jeff Goodell: Comprehensive and readable account of how extreme heat affects our ecosystem, economy and communities.

A reader from Amherst read *Tenacious beasts wildlife recoveries a change how we think about animals* by Christopher J. Preston: Really interesting book recommended by my son who would like to do the type of work described in this book once he finishes his masters degree.

A reader from Everett read *Entangled Life* by Merlin Sheldrake: A little dense overall, but a great overview of the intricacies and mysteries of fungi.

A reader from Sharon read *Into the Abyss an Extraordinary True Story* by Carol Shaben: Nonfiction account of a plane crash in northern Alberta, Canada and the four people who survived. Very gripping!

A reader from Bourne read *Under a White Sky* by Elizabeth Kolbert: "Under a White Sky" by Elizabeth Kolbert is a thought-provoking exploration of humanity's impact on the environment and the various strategies we employ to mitigate the damage we've caused. She challenges readers to reconsider our relationship with nature and confront the consequences of our actions. This book was enlightening and informative. Definitely a must-read!

A reader from SCITUATE read *American Wildflowers; A Literary Field Guide* by Susan Barba (Editor): This is a collection of beautiful watercolor images of wildflowers scattered amid essays and poetry selections from writers we all know and love as well as from writers we want to know. This book is a feast for the mind and heart.

A reader from Quincy read *Spirit Run: A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America* by Noe Alvarez: This book has beautiful descriptions of nature. I wish it focused slightly more on the goal of the spirit run because I would like to know more!

A reader from Springfield read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer uses Indigenous teachings and stories, science, anecdotes, and personal experience to weave a love letter to nature and the world. She posits that only through reciprocity in using the land (the Honorable Harvest), gratitude for what we take, and mindfulness in what we leave behind can we repair the damage done to our climate and environment. Written both scientifically and poetically, the book was a pleasure to read, giving me much to consider.

A reader from Northampton read *Wild Beauty* by Anna-Marie McLemore: Very interesting! My dear friend loves this author, so I was excited to see what was up. I liked the metaphor usage.

A reader from Arlington read *The Bird Way: A New Look at How Birds Talk, Work, Play, Parent, and Think* by Jennifer Ackerman: This was an eye-opening collection of observations on birds and how they solve problems, work together in communities or on their own, and many other accounts of their social and survival skills. Learning about the incredible range of unusual bird behaviors makes us realize how much there is still to learn about all animal behavior and the intelligence that is not always recognized in the non-human creatures all around us.

A reader from Hadley read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: One of those books that makes me think differently afterward for a long time. I look forward to continuing to learn from it and revisiting it and other sources of Indigenous perspectives on land, nature, and our relationships with them.

A reader from Groton read *The Parrot and the Igloo* by David Lipsky: This had some interesting information about climate change and the propaganda of climate deniers.

A reader from Melrose read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I learned so much from this book, and it was a powerful reminder of what we've lost and how we can learn from other cultures. I didn't expect to enjoy this as much as I did.

A reader from Groton read *Under a White Sky* by Elizabeth Kolbert: I have never read a book on climate change before and I thought that this author presented the ideas in an easy to digest manner. I also appreciated the realistic idea that simply curbing emissions is not enough and that there need to be negative emissions efforts as well.

A reader from Boston read *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben: This book provides extraordinary detail about research into the sentience of trees, reshaping our understanding of the natural world.

A reader from Reading read *Adrift* by Lisa Brideau: I wanted to select fiction and found this when I searched. I don't usually like futuristic science-fiction, but I liked the sound of this one. It imagined what Canada would be like in the 2030s due to severe climate change.

A reader from Spencer read *Under a White Sky* by Elizabeth Kolbert: I find myself thinking about this book often after I finished it. Kolbert does a great job of introducing and explaining the climate technologies being developed that often sound more like science fiction than fact.

A reader from Boston read *Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot: So delightful. Most chapters were nice standalones, making this is a lovely, easy read. After having watched the TV adaptation on PBS recently, I was glad to be able to enjoy the written version.

A reader from Florence read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: A beautifully written book regarding ecological consciousness of indigenous people, their reverence for the earth and all living plants and animals who supported their way of life and who sustain all current residents of earth. Thru stories and legends she details historical and present indigenous ways that promote respect, gratitude and reciprocity with the earth. She gives examples and discusses the extreme harm and greed in current society that has broken and destroyed air, water and land systems, that if unchecked and corrected will destroy all life on earth (climate change). She offers examples of indigenous intervention and care that are helping to restore some of what is lost.

A reader from Lowell read *The Ministry For the Future* by Kim Stanley Robinson: Very good!

A reader from Maynard read *The Sense of Wonder* by Rachel Carson: Carson explains how she instilled the knowledge and wonder of nature in her grandson by exploring it with all senses.

A reader from Needham Heights read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Well-written mix of science, memoir, and Native America culture.

A reader from Sandwich read *Greenwood* by Michael Christie: This richly layered story of a family's history aligns with our current environmental issues. The theme of withering, weathering and survival encompasses not only our connection to nature, but our human connection as well.

A reader from Springfield read *The Climate Book* by Greta Thunberg: Even though this book is a few years old, a lot of the view points in it stand true. Climate change is real and we must continue to fight against it.

A reader from Fairhaven read *Planeta Blu: rise of Agoo* by Blessed, Tem: This amazing YA graphic novel was written by a member of my graduating High School class. The art is beautiful,

the story is engaging, and I can certainly see this being optioned for a movie or animated series. Are you listening Netflix? :)

A reader from WAKEFIELD read *Cod: a biography of the fish that changed the world* by mark kurlansky: The first half is historical, tracing cod's role in national affairs and conflicts; the second half documents the decimation of the species (and other ocean fish) due to overfishing and the technology that goes with larger fishing vessels. quite terrifying. "Are we headed for a world where nothing is left of nature but parks?...It is harder to kill off fish than mammals. But after 1,000 years of hunting the Atlantic cod, we know that it can be done."

A reader from Chicopee read *King Solomon's Ring* by Konrad Z Lorenz: In the author's own words, "For I take very seriously the task of awakening, in as many people as possible, a deeper understanding of the awe inspiring wonder of Nature."

A reader from Springfield read *Stop Saving the Planet: An Environmentalist Manifesto* by Jenny Price: Very fun, snarky, and invigorating perspective on making a difference in our economy and in every environment we interact with.

A reader from Sandwich read *Spirit Run* by Noé Álvarez: Compelling story about finding yourself and the your worth.

A reader from Medford read *The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating* by Elisabeth Tova Bailey: I definitely learned a lot of facts about snails--details about their procreation and powers of healing--that I didn't know before.

A reader from Berkley read *Smokejumper: A Memoir by one of America's Most Select Airborne Firefighters* by Jason A. Ramos: So good! I highly recommend this one. Very informative! A great memoir about this wildfire fighting hero!

A reader from Tewksbury read *The Heat Will Kill You First* by Jeff Goodell: Climate change is no longer an abstract idea. It's real and it's here and people are dying from it. Our planet is burning and we need to fix it.

A reader from Attleboro read *all creatures great and small* by james herriot: I thought the book was extremely boring. I had heard so many good things about the pbs show. I was very disappointed.

A reader from Hatfield read *No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: This is a collection of speeches she gave in 2018-2019, thus there is a lot of repetition. However, this makes her point crystal clear.

A reader from webster read *Fox and I* by Catherine Raven: Fox and I is part nature guide, history book and a biography. The book is also an honest documentation of how we, humans, have set ourselves aside from the natural world, The book invited me to look at and experience nature through the eyes of the writer and the animals. It made me want to visit our national parks. A wonderful inspiring, sometimes funny and sometimes sad book.

A reader from Wrentham read *Song for a Whale* by Lynne Kelly: Parts of this book I really enjoyed, other parts seemed a little too far fetched. Overall I enjoyed the story and learning facts about whales.

A reader from Gardner read *The Stranger in the Woods* by Michael Finkel: This month I read *The Stranger in the Woods* by Michael Finkel. The biography is about Christopher Knight who lived in the woods in Maine for 27 years (1986-2013). This story was fascinating and the author is one of the few people that Christopher Knight spoke to about his time living in the woods. I love stories about survival so I was intrigued by Knight's story especially once I learned that he made his camp very close to a summer camp and multiple lake houses. Knight's survived off of non-violent robberies and very intense self-imposed rules which led to his success in remaining hidden for so long. The first hand accounts of the author speaking to Knight in jail were also so interesting.

A reader from Arlington read *How the World Really Works: The Science Behind How We Got Here and Where We're Going* by Smil, Vaclav: How often does a grocery shopper shopping for chicken look for the electric chicken instead of the gasoline chicken in the same way that someone shopping for a new automobile looks for an electric automobile rather than a gasoline powered automobile? This book motivates this kind of question in explaining how modern society, specifically the energy economy, functions. Using a chicken as one of numerous examples, the author calculates the amount of diesel fuel required to produce a chicken from inception and transport it to a dinner table. The author does the same for tomatoes showing the difference in the amount of fossil fuel depending on how and where the tomato originates. At one level, the author's approach is amusing, but it challenges readers to appreciate how relatively uninformed readers may be in making energy consumption choices such that readers believe their choices have one impact when those choices actually have a very different impact. While much of the book focuses on energy, the book addresses scientific literacy more generally including understanding climate change. The author challenges readers to consider how policy makers and political leaders may advocate for policies that cannot produce the results the proponent believes will happen. I believe the recent flooding in Dubai validates the author's assessment of general scientific literacy. There were readily accepted mass media reports that cloud seeding caused the flooding. Only later and in less prominently placed articles did one read climate/weather scientists explaining in relatively simple terms how cloud seeding could not produce the scale of flooding happening in Dubai. I believe that the author would contend that greater scientific literacy would have made more people skeptical of the initial cloud seeding reports. What I especially appreciate about the book is that the author is not at all condescending. The author informs without shaming. The author does not tell readers what policy choices they should or should not support but rather guides readers in seeing how their choices can be more informed choices.

A reader from Sharon read *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler: A classic but wouldn't reread.

A reader from Weymouth read *Two Women and a River The Quest to Preserve, Protect and Restore the Weymouth Back River* by Mary F. Toomey: This was an excellent retelling of a local treasure that was saved by incredible selfless women.

A reader from Plainville read *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster* by Bill Gates: I enjoyed reading this book as an introduction on how to improve climate change, but I wish he had more information on how us as individuals could improve climate change.

A reader from Dracut read *An Inconvenient Truth* by Al Gore: Interesting read. To hear the warnings of 20 years ago and not much has gotten better.

A reader from Malden read *The Future We Choose* by Christiana Figueres: I appreciate the positive mind set this book promotes along with real time suggestions about how an individual can help our planet.

A reader from East Longmeadow read *Birding To Save The World* by Trish O'Kane: This new book (February 2024) tells how a woman personally overcame the devastating affects of Hurricane Katrina and evolved into a formidable advocate for social justice. What started it? A discovery of birds, first in New Orleans and then in Wisconsin. As a PhD student in Madison, the author morphs into an activist determined to save her local park from development. Along the way she finds out just how important the park is to her local neighborhood, starting an afternoon program of exploration for grade schoolers. We all have our "local patch" we like to visit, and her tale is spiritual, emotional, and inspirational all at the same time. If you like birding this is a book for you.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *An Immense World* by Ed Young: Fun book that made me rethink the world.

A reader from Dallas read *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* by Bill Bryson: A surprisingly funny book about rediscovering one's passion while connecting with nature. A perfect spring time read, it offers lots of insights about the Appalachian trail while weaving in the author's captivating real-life hiking adventure.

A reader from Beverly read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I LOVE Cheryl Strayed's writing. This book really made me want to get out in nature (but also appreciate the comforts of the indoors). The Appalachian Trail might be a little more doable for me but this book definitely inspired me!

A reader from Dartmouth read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers: My favorite part was the story of the protesters who climbed and lived in the tall trees to try to stop them from getting cut down.

A reader from Belchertown read *Owls and Other Fantasies: Poems and Essays* by Mary Oliver: 3.5 stars. Not my favorite collection by Mary Oliver, but she is still the queen of nature poetry/writing.

A reader from Medford read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: It was much different than I was expecting! I don't want to give away the ending but it was good :)

A reader from Pembroke read *Small Wonder* by Barbara Kingsolver: This book of essays is articulate, thoughtful, emotion inspiring about nature, humans, families, and how these all intersect. I found her words and descriptions very though provoking and I know the issues raised will keep coming back to me. She does not ignore, but explores the complexity of the political, moral, and economy-focused aspects of the causes and effects in regard to nature and climate change.

A reader from Dartmouth read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: This was ok for me. I liked the parts where they were actually on the trail. The author was very funny, and I appreciated that. All of the technicalities were too much though, I thought. It made the store a bit boring for my liking.

A reader from Reading read *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* by Annie Dillard: This non-fiction book is an exploration of nature, faith, and philosophy. With sections for each of the four seasons, the story spans a year and includes reflections on life, as well as observations of various plants, flowers, and nature elements near Tinker Creek.

A reader from Andover read *Composting Basics* by Eric Ebeling, Carl Hursh, Patti Olenick: This book is a very concise, reader friendly book with many beautiful photos on beginner's composting. It discusses details about determining your composting needs: big bin versus small bin, outside versus inside, and bin placement. What to compost: high carbon items are brown--dried leaves, twigs, newspaper, straw, sawdust, napkins, and other paper products. While high nitrogen are green: grass clippings, kitchen food scraps, yard trimmings. and green plant parts. It advises to layer 2 parts green to one part brown. Compost dirt can be used in a garden or flower bed, on your lawn, in small containers or pots, as mulch, and around trees. There are many types of bins to select from: garbage can bin, commercial bins, and tumbler bins, which are turned by hand to speed up composting. Methods of rotation and turning the bin contents are described. Bins to build include wire composting bins, and pallet bins. Building the compost pile and the thickness of the layers are discussed. Compost activators are sold and used to accelerate the process, but most experts agree they are not needed, since nature will take it's course and decomposition will occur. Worm composting is also included.

A reader from Spencer read *Fuzz* by Mary Roach: I found this book interesting to read. The issues raised are not new but the solutions to them are. The fact that the issue of animals determined to be pests are mostly decided by humans and how it affects their lives. Whether humans are responsible for diminishing the animals habitat or for introducing them to an environment that is not native to them it is now up to the humans to determine what to do about this problem. I was unaware that there are government agencies dealing with this and studying how to deal with this problem humanely. The final question that sticks in my mind was how and who gets to decide which species should be saved and which ones should not.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Circe* by Madeline Miller: Really fun an engaging book! Through the point of view of Circe, the deity/witch of Greek mythology, it does a fascinating work in re telling g many of the classic myths. Seeing how Gods grow bored facing eternity, while mortals have to live and die in am Instant, they appear to live with more intensity.

Furthermore, seeing that these mighty heroes (Odiseo, Aquiles, Dedalo, Teseo) were really flawed individuals, presents a new perspective of what "greatness" means. Written in an easy and funny style, is a totally enjoyable read.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Sebastian Barry* by Days without end: A tale set between the 1850s to the 1870s, follows the history of an Irish kid that has to leave Ireland and move to the new nation of the USA looking for an opportunity to live. Writing in the same style as if was the character telling his story, the book dives directly to address many sometime overlooked situations. The kid leaving his homeland due to the Famine enforced by the English government; the extermination of Native Americans that dare to exist in the land they have lived for generations and that is now being claimed by newcomers; the prostitution, commerce, lawlessness and religion playing a key role in the shape of the new country. The book is sometimes hard to read, but it shows how despite everything the characters have to endure, it's still possible to find happiness.

A reader from Hanson read *Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults* by Robin Wall Kimmerer adapted by Monique Gray Smith: Lovely book to learn about the interconnectedness of plant life with human existence. Loved the indigenous creation stories and graphics within the book to help remember these important lessons to integrate them into my own life. Highly recommend for young adults as well as adults. Her original book (not YA) is great, too.

A reader from Yarmouth Port read *Aednan* by Linnea Axelsson: An epic poem about the changes in the way of life of the Sami people of northern Scandinavia. A wonder of a book.

A reader from Oxford read *Not the End of the World* by Hannah Ritchie: A readable and reassuring take on climate change. The author clearly states her sustainability priorities and explains how her choices support those priorities.

A reader from Mattapoisett read *The Lost Art of Reading Nature's Signs: Use Outdoor Clues to Find Your Way, Predict the Weather, Locate Water, Track Animals, and Other Lost Skills* by Tristan Gooley: Very informative, if British-centered. My favorite section is on reading clouds to predict the weather.

A reader from Wakefield read *The Ministry for the Future* by Kim Stanley Robinson: The intertwining of personal and policy chapters was a very intriguing setup, and as someone who doesn't like non-fiction, the policy parts still had me very drawn in. However, after thoroughly enjoying the first 2/3rds of this book, I started losing some interest towards the end because it extended for way too long and got a bit repetitive/bloated.

A reader from Rochester read *Thinking on my Feet* by Kate Humble: Through the simple act of walking, Humble connects a step at a time with the seasons, the environment, the climate and people of divergent cultures. Experiencing the world at a walking pace isn't an indulgence, but a necessity, she writes, whether to find solutions to life's problems or for the mere joy of it.

A reader from Melrose read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: This book was an insight into the values of the Indigenous Tribes of our country. It told so many stories of our

relationship with animals, trees and plants. It teaches a respect for Earth that we must all adopt quickly in order to protect the world we live in!

A reader from Weston read *At Home In The Rainforest* by Diane Willow: I loved the book because it taught me about the Rainforest. I liked how it showed animals on the different levels of their habitat on the pages in the book.

A reader from Dracut read *How To Reduce Your Carbon Footprint* by Joanna Yarrow: This was a good book with easy, quick ideas for helping to reduce your carbon footprint. It's an older book so some of the ideas seem outdated but it's easy to follow along and understand the concepts. It provides simple and effective ways to assist in helping.

A reader from Webster read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: The author, descended from Native Americans, is a botanist and teacher. She combines Indigenous teachings, Science and the knowledge she has obtained from plants to impart these teachings to her students and her own children. Interspersed throughout the book are Indigenous stories passed down from generation to generation. These stories, applied to modern life, make for an interesting addition to the book. I would recommend this book to anyone wishing to learn about the connection between Science and the wisdom plants.

A reader from Indian Orchard read *The Great Divide* by Cristina Henríquez: This book taught me a ton about the trial, tribulations, and strife that took place in building the Panama Canal.

A reader from Wilmington read *At Home in the Rain Forest* by Diana Willow: It gave me a lot of information about habitats and animals in the rain forest.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Climate Book* by Greta Thunberg: This book is definitely a must-read. If you are someone, like me, who has historically and/or presently held some sort of privilege, reading this book seems like an ethical obligation - five stars.

A reader from Plainville read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: I had never read this but have heard about it since high school biology class. Very powerful, and also a sobering wake-up call about how humans are interfering with the balance of nature.

A reader from South Hadley read *Life Everlasting* by Bernd Heinrich: Subtitled 'The Animal Way of Death,' the author explores the natural recycling process of death to new life as it occurs in nature through the many steps of decay. He tells the story of nature's 'undertakers' by which he means beetles, maggots, vultures, and many other creatures including the plant world of fungus. His writing style is accessible, and he patiently explains complicated processes. He also explores human contributions and disruptions of natural recycling and touches on the ethical issues of life and death - all this in 200 pages plus an index. I enjoyed and recommend this book, but I warn the reader -- some creatures and descriptions are quite messy!

A reader from Milton read *Return of the Osprey* by David Gessner: I enjoyed this book and was surprised to discover that it was more about natural observation than about facts about Ospreys.

Gessner writes about living and seeing from his family home on Cape Cod. It left me with several great thoughts about enjoying the moment and observing what is around us.

A reader from Hopedale read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: Enjoyed this read and made me excited to go on more hikes this year!

A reader from Cumberland read *Son of the Wilderness: The Life of John Muir* by Linnie Marsh Wolfe: Very dry in parts (a biography). I'd be interested in reading a book by John Muir himself. Amazing how much he was able to travel back then and he was very forward-thinking about ecology and preserving land for all of us to enjoy in this country for the future.

A reader from Berkley read *The River* by Peter Heller: What a canoe trip!

A reader from Sharon read *Termination Shock* by Neal Stephenson: The book explores a future where geo-engineering is used to try to reverse the effects of climate change. A rogue billionaire constructs a "gun" to shoot sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere to help reflect sunlight back into space, attempting to mimic the actual effects seen after the Mt Pinatubo eruption in 1991, which lowered global temperatures by more than a degree. Globally, this geo-engineering helps some countries while hurting others and various nations debate and then take action to both increase the scope of this geo-engineering and to sabotage the systems.

A reader from Brewster read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: I enjoyed this book so much. Margaret Renkl's writing is as beautiful as her brother's collages that grace this lovely book. It made me slow down and start taking the time to look at all the things around me.

A reader from Santa Cruz read *Valley of Redwoods* by Robert Piwarzyk and Michael Miller: Great book about redwood trees and distinct natural habitats that are so interesting to explore on the Northern California coast, especially Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. Essential book for understanding the natural and cultural issues of this dynamic landscape.

A reader from Woods Hole read *Global Warning* by Steven B. Frank: This book was about some kids who write and ratify a climate amendment to the Constitution. It gives people the right to live on a planet free from pollution. Overall the plot was very engaging and I enjoyed it from start to finish.

A reader from Beverly read *The Lost Words* by Robert MacFarlane & Jackie Morris: A fascinating poetry book aimed at "keeping alive" words removed from the Oxford Junior Dictionary, nearly all of which were nature based, such as otter, heron, or acorn. Beautiful illustrations accompany each page, and it serves as a reminder and enticement of the outside world, even as technology keeps encroaching and drawing us further indoors.

A reader from Ayer read *braiding sweetgrass* by robin wall kimmerer: Such a beautiful book. Her prose makes the science easy, relatable, and lovely.

A reader from Chester read *Dont Cry Tai Lake* by Qui Xiaolong: I got this book to meet the requirements but ended up liking the book very much. I will look for others in the series.

A reader from Erving read *The Story of More* by Hope Jahren: Very interesting read. Making research and science about climate change accessible. Like that the end included practical changes that individuals could do.

A reader from Melrose read *An Immense World* by Ed Yong: 'How animal senses reveal the hidden worlds around us.' Absolutely fascinating to learn about the great diversity of animal senses and try to imagine how they experience the world. The science got a little heavy for me at times but it was well worth reading.

A reader from Reading read *Land of Milk and Honey* by C. Pam Zhang: Beautiful prose and incredible dystopian story.

A reader from Belchertown read *Rocks and Minerals* by Smithsonian Institution: My grandfather was a geologist, and I have always wanted to learn more about geology, so I took this month's challenge as an opportunity to really study and read all the way through this field guide at long last. The pictures and descriptions were very helpful and I have learned a lot. Looking forward to more time in the field!

A reader from Charlton read *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey: What a beautiful book. It described how humanity is both insignificant as a part of our vast and unknowable universe but also powerful and destructive in the way we inhabit the earth. What is happening in and on our world is largely a result of human choices. 'The planet is shaped by the sheer amazing force of human want, which has changed everything, the forests, the poles, the reservoirs, the glaciers, the rivers, the seas, the mountains, the coastlines, the skies, a planet contoured and landscaped by want.'

A reader from Waltham read *Sustainable Thinking* by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich: A challenging book to read. There is good content in there, but Aldrich is vehemently confident that by taking action, we can somehow reverse the damage continually being done by the vast numbers of people who are not interested in doing what they need to reverse the climate situation, or who are actively working against efforts, which I just can't bring myself to believe. In addition, her positioning of libraries as the potential saviors of society runs smack up against the vocational awe issues that our field has been discussing for the past several years and there's no apparent recognition of the issues inherent in giving us yet one more thing that *we* are responsible for leading the charge on to save the world.

A reader from Gill read *Blackfish City* by Sam J. Miller: Speculative fiction set in a city in the middle of the ocean filled with people made refugees by the disruptions of climate change. An ensemble cast of characters that I found underdeveloped.

A reader from Seekonk read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Kimmerer has such a lovely way of bringing the scientific and the poetic together as one which makes for a truly special reading experience. It's hard to finish this book and not feel compelled to run outside and lay in the grass or dig your feet into the sand or embrace the rough bark of a tree with overflowing gratitude and love. The concept of reciprocity and community between nature and

humans is so vitally important in our current individual-focused capitalistic society. This book is a gentle yet urgent call to action that will surely leave an impression long after finishing.

A reader from Monson read *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge: I enjoyed the novel especially the characters Woody Nickel, the Old Man and Red. Many old sayings used in the book were familiar to me because I often heard my grandparents and mother use them. There were so many difficulties during the cross country trip transporting the giraffes to the San Diego Zoo, but a successful ending. Giraffes are my favorite animals.

A reader from Ipswich read *The Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery: I really enjoyed this book and was inspired to learn more about ocean life.

A reader from Hull read *The Drowned World* by J.G Ballard: Sounds like it should be great; post apocalyptic novel about climate change but it was so boring I read a different book hoping it was about climate change but ended up just being a post apocalyptic mystery so I had to go back and push myself to finish this book. Giant iguanas and scientists but so boring. Glad I got through it.

A reader from Harvard read *The Ministry for the Future* by Kim Stanley Robinson: I didn't really feel like a non-fiction read, so I opted for this speculative fiction book by Kim Stanley Robinson that appeared on several recommendation lists for climate change reads. Unfortunately, this was not the book for me. It felt like a series of essays crammed full of climate science (but written without analysis or context) with the occasional fictional narrative thrown in. Frank's perspective was interesting (the opening chapter was gripping and high stakes), and I wish the book was solely about him. A big long slog that I unfortunately cannot recommend.

A reader from Blackstone read *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese: I learned about a totally different climate and culture. It was a long book but worth the time.

A reader from Cambridge read *Chasing Shadows: My Life Tracking the Great White Shark* by Gregory Skomal and Ret Talbot: An interesting look at the great white and its reemergence off the Cape through the eyes of the area's leading scientist.

A reader from Watertown read *OMFG, Bees!* by Matt Kracht: Informational and entertaining.

A reader from Whately read *A Year In The Woods* by Torbjorn Ekelund: The author leaves work one day a month, camps one night in the forest and returns to work the next day. Each chapter is a separate month and he describes his experiences each month. It was an enjoyable read. His quote at the end was perfect. 'Sometimes you have to be big enough to realize how very small you are.'

A reader from Andover read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: This is my favorite reading challenge book so far. The author describes his experience hiking the Appalachian Trail while also providing its history, information about flora and fauna, and other interesting facts. It is a highly engaging and witty book that impresses upon the reader to explore and appreciate nature.

A reader from Northampton read *Ten Birds That Changed The World* by Stephen Moss: I feel like the title might be a bit of an exaggeration. Some chapters were definitely better than others, especially the guanay cormorant - that was a wild story.

A reader from Northampton read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: So glad I finally got around to this one. I usually don't do well with audiobooks, but this one just worked for me. I loved hearing her tell these stories.

A reader from Ercing read *a Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: During Bryson's Appalachian Trail hike, he noted many environmental changes, especially in the lives - and deaths - of trees (e.g. elm, American horse chestnut). He also commented on the changes in wildlife especially birds as a result of the changes in the growth. Changes in climate were also becoming more prominent at the time of his hike. And we are certainly seeing the effects of that on our lives today. Bryson is an engaging writer; I have enjoyed every book I have read.

A reader from Southampton read *Desert Solitaire* by Edward Abbey: A good story teller and pleasing sketches of favored desert landscapes. I would consider reading another of his books but, I did not care for him in some circumstances, such as when he killed a rabbit with a stone. It was senseless. He is wonderfully descriptive of the National Parks and loves them. I enjoyed that he hated the smell of hot asphalt.

A reader from Rochestr read *Braiding Sweet Grass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: The author combines her botanical knowledge with the wisdom of indigenous people to educate us about the interdependence of all living things on the planet. The book details the respect that indigenous people have for all living things and educates as to how we can apply that respect and knowledge to our own lives.

A reader from Berkley read *Vertical vegetables & fruit : creative gardening techniques for growing up in small spaces* by Rhonda Massingham: For this month's challenge, I read a variety of vertical gardening books. I found Massingham's book to be the most practical and useful for my purposes. Massingham explained the conditions ideal for small spaces, specific climates, and a variety of plants. The illustrations supported the information provided by showing how to grow and water the plants I was interested in. This was great read for a gardener who has not had much luck growing food in the short time allowed in New England weather.

A reader from Worcester read *the overstory* by richard powers: About people's relationship to trees and what we don't know about how they live. Beautiful stories interwoven around the need to preserve nature.

A reader from Harwich read *Cape Cod Wildflowers: A Vanishing Heritage* by DiGregorio & Wallner: Delighted to find a few of these wildflowers on my property, but disheartened to read that so many Cape Cod wildflowers are, in fact, vanishing...

A reader from Springfield read *What Moves the Dead* by T Kingfisher: This book made me nervous to be around hares and fungi. As a person who thinks mushrooms are cool this was a really intriguing fall of the house of usher retelling.

A reader from Amherst read *The Best American Science and Nature Writing 2023* by Carl Zimmer, ed.: I love the Best American series so much - such a great way to read a lot of fabulous, important nonfiction writing all in one place.

A reader from Berlin read *How to be a Good Creature: A Memoir in 13 Animals* by Sy Montgomery: This was my first read by Sy Montgomery. I will likely read her works in the future. But I enjoyed this little memoir where Sy recounts the 13 animals she's learnt life lessons from. It made me think of all I've learnt from the animals around me.

A reader from Berlin read *The Great Pacific Garbage Patch* by Laura Perdew: I learnt about the GPGP when I was working with a student a few years ago (I'm a writing tutor). And since then I've been intrigued in a dismayed way - dismayed that humanity has created so much trash that we have giant garbage patches. I learnt that it's not like... a giant garbage island. But rather it's a lot of small plastics, microplastics, it's at different levels. Yes, you can see a layer on the top that is trash but it's not as I "imagined" it - like a giant fatberg (also a human-made phenomenon I am fascinated by). There have been attempts at cleaning up the ocean but basically we use so much plastic that every piece of the earth is contaminated with it.

A reader from Melbourne read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: This book beautifully combines science and Native American lore regarding the environment and respect for the earth. It is a clear-eyed view of nature's beauty, fear for the environment, and hope for the future.

A reader from Sharon read *What An Owl Knows* by Jennifer Ackerman: There is so much that humans don't know about owls, but this book outlines what we do. After reading this book, I have a much greater appreciation for owls and a better understanding of the impact that climate change has on their survival.

A reader from Northampton read *Forest Bathing: How Trees Can Help You Find Health and Happiness* by Qing Li: I really enjoyed this book about shinrin-yoku, aka 'forest bathing,' aka the scientific ways that being in nature is beneficial to us humans. I don't know if the science holds up or if any of the studies were peer reviewed, but that doesn't really matter to me. Reading this book has been a great reminder to spend more time outside and away from screens. And it's really cool to think about being in the woods as aromatherapy!

A reader from Beverly read *The Care of Creation* by R. J. Barry, editor: This was a great collection of essays, looking at earth-keeping from many different aspects and angles. Especially interesting were the essays that told about particular projects that were being done to protect and preserve the environment.

A reader from Florence read *Nature Underfoot* by John Hainze: A wonderful argument for the respect and moral consideration of the world's smallest organisms by a former pesticide developer. Hainze has a lively writing style, making "earth science" interesting and compelling. I enjoyed the entire book, but the heartfelt final chapter (where the argument for compassionate

care of all living beings are based in religion, ethics, and philosophy) was so touching and inspirational. This is a book I highly recommend.

A reader from Sharon read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: I found this book on a list of fictional nature/environmental books.

A reader from Oxford read *the stranger in the woods : the extraordinary story of the last true hermit* by michael finkel: Not my typical read. I found it on a recommendation list. It was a little unbelievable that he survived 27 years alone in the woods of Maine only a mile away from civilization. Now after reading the book I'm curious as to what he is doing now that he is back in the real world. Definitely recommend.

A reader from Melrose read *As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to Standing Rock* by Dina Gilio-Whitaker: A very readable treatise on Native American's relationship to and advocacy for the land, and related environmental justice issues (or lack thereof). 5/5

A reader from Arlington read *Sprout Lands: Tending the Endless Gift of Trees* by William Bryant Logan: This book left a deep impression on me. It paints a vision of hope. Logan crosses the world, seeking the forgotten knowledge of living with and learning from the trees. Everywhere he goes, he finds that people are actively trying to regain that knowledge, and to find a better way to live. The trees know how to repair the Earth, and it is up to us to listen to them. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in nature and culture.

A reader from Middleboro read *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: I didn't realize it was a compilation of speeches, this made it very repetitive, but all of her points are so eye opening!

A reader from Whitinsville read *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Dr. Kimmerer is an amazing writer and a wonderful human. This book was medicinal for me, highlighting the ways my materialism and consumerism have made me overlook the possibilities for environmental reciprocity in my own home. She makes me excited to continue learning about the earth around me.

A reader from Stoneham read *Mother-Daughter Murder Night* by Nina Simon: Good sense of place, on California coast. Good character development.

A reader from Boston read *Consumed* by Aja Barber: Disliked this book.

A reader from Stoneham read *Radical By Nature: The Revolutionary Life of Alfred Russel Wallace* by James T. Costa: Wallace was a naturalist who developed the theory of the origin of the species simultaneously with Darwin. He also developed modern ideas about the environment well ahead of most people.

A reader from Tyngsboro read *Tom Brown's Guide to Healing the Earth* by Tom Brown, Randy Walker: This book was okay. I wouldn't read it again. This was about a man, who was instructed

as a boy, by a Native American who spent 60 years roaming north and South America learning about nature and the earth. It would have been way more interesting if he he told more stories about grandfather rather than patting himself on the back the whole time.

A reader from Somerville read *Cloud Cuckoo Land* by Anthony Doerr: The overall theme of this book is conservation but not just of the Earth. While that is an important plot point, this book also focuses on conservation of the human experience. How we can't let time and change simply delete the things that made us human. It's definitely an interesting idea and it was well done.

A reader from Woburn read *The Light Pirate* by Lily Brooks-Dalton: This was an incredible and slightly terrifying read. While it is a work of fiction, there are so many moments that feel plausible in the world of climate change and global warming. Really engaging read.

A reader from FOXBOROUGH read *Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story from Despair to Possibility* by Rebecca Solnit & Thelma Yound Lutunatabua: A hard look at climate change but through a lense of hope. The book acknowledges the difficulties of working for change, the despair of seeing a large problem head on, but how people and organizations can use that to motivate and find others interested in working with hope towards something better. It was uplifting. Highly recommend.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Fatal Conveniences* by Darin Olien: Olien warns about the chemicals in everyday products and the effects they can have on our bodies and the environment. He offers some alternatives and common-sense workarounds. It's made me think about the choices I make.

A reader from Braintree read *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* by Elizabeth Kolbert: An interesting read about the impact of humans on our environment. I appreciated how the author (a scientific journalist) regularly switched from her personal experiences to the history of our environment. I'm not sure why my local library has this marked as "YA".

A reader from SANDISFIELD read *Vesper Flights* by Helen MacDonald: I found these essays inspiring, hopeful and a quiet respite from harried life. My wonder of nature and birds in particular was recharged. Now I find myself spending time simply watching the various songbirds flit back and forth in the woods and my home.

A reader from Rochester read *Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell* by Sy Montgomery (illustrated by Matt Patterson): A beautiful, ultimately hopeful book about incredible creatures and the incredible people doing their absolute best to save them.

A reader from Stoughton read *The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline: Very good, very timely book. Climate change ravages the earth and makes it so people cannot dream, except the Indigenous community.

A reader from Salem read *The Monkey Wrench Gang* by Edward Abbey: The summary sounded like a fun enough romp--I'm a fan of the A-Team and Ocean's 11, and this is a bit like that but with despoilers of the southwestern wilderness as the target of the titular gang--but the racism

and sexism (sometimes outright misogyny) peppered throughout make for a sour aftertaste. Fighting back: good; lack of intersectionality: bad.

A reader from Salem read *The Canopy Keepers* by Veronica G. Henry: My third attempt at this month's theme, veering into fantasy. Again with fighting back against the harms of climate change, but this time it's the actual trees and wildlife fighting back, along with the help of some humanoid (part-tree, part-fungus?) people living underground in Sequoia National Park. This one is interesting, but it's trying to do a lot in a relatively short amount of pages. I would've liked more time getting to know the main character, a firefighter who lost her parents to a wildfire in the park decades ago; she gets more character development than anyone else, but it still isn't really enough. I also would've liked to get to know her brother better (he was rescued by the mushroom people in the same wildfire).

A reader from Lynnfield read *The Vortex: a true story of history's deadliest storm, an unspeakable war, and liberation* by Scott Carney and Jason Miklian: A well-paced, but difficult read about a tragic cyclone hitting what is now Bangladesh in the early 1970s and the political and social fallout of the event. The authors give a sobering look into how a natural disaster can play a major factor in geopolitics, a scenario that is already becoming increasingly common as climate change causes more strong storms around the world.

A reader from Attleboro read *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren: I loved this book! One of the best I've ever read. I learned so many new things about plants and the environment.

A reader from Stoughton read *You Are Here: Poetry in the Natural World* by Ada Limón et al.: This collection of 50 poems by 50 diverse contemporary US poets expands the definition of nature poetry to explore the many different ways Americans relate to the natural world today.

A reader from Worcester County read *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the teachings of plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: So many people told me to read this, so I finally did. So glad I did! I learned a lot about traditional beliefs, how our relationship to the environment is meant to be a give-and-take---all grounded in solid science. (Kimmerer is a professor with a PhD in botany.) The book isn't preachy, or new-age flowery, or despairing. It gives us hope. What we need now, in the US, is a Native American president!

A reader from Wakefield read *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah: A great look into the lives of workers during the dust bowl and great depression. Really interesting to see people's views on government assistance despite their hardships.

A reader from NAHANT read *Greenwild* by Pari Thomson: Maybe it's a little bit of a stretch to pick a Children's fantasy novel about nature for the April Challenge...However, a book where the main character has nature magic, can walk through a magical door into a botanical garden, and then befriend people who communicate with animals? I thought this would do. There's a message about being good to the planet too. But, at its core the book is about friendship and saving your family. I loved it. As a former Children's Librarian, I couldn't stop reading it. I just have to wait until June for the sequel.

A reader from Brookline read *The Good Rain: Across Time and Terrain in the Pacific Northwest* by Timothy Egan: Egan is an excellent storyteller in this collection of essays of his adventures in OR and WA. It's really about water: rainy weather and rivers. I learned how much has been lost from the impact of water, weather, logging, people, and the Army Corps of Engineers on the land. He mixes in culture, history (social and geologic,) politics, and anthropology and really portrays the ways the indigenous tribes were exploited and cheated out of their fisheries and forest. If you want to learn more about the treasures of the Northwest, Puget Sound, the Cascades, Columbia River, and growing areas (apples, cherries, and wine grapes), this is for you!

A reader from Beverly read *Better Living Through Birding* by Christian Cooper: I really loved this book. It was a pleasant mixture of memoir and birding insight. It was super cool to hear about his time spent working with Marvel! This book made me excited to check out his show *Extraordinary Birder*.

A reader from Salem read *where the forest meets the stars* by glendy vanderah: Really enjoyed.

A reader from Amherst read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Written in beautiful prose, this book is filled with fascinating natural history. I particularly savored the descriptions of the native plants of the Northeast, for example, the trillium and bloodroot of the early spring. I listened to the audiobook and I'd like to come back to the written book, so that I can reflect upon themes of gifts, gratitude, responsibility, and reciprocity.

A reader from Brewster read *The little book of bees* by Hilary Kearney: I found this book really informative! I learned things I never knew. I used to think all bees just made honey but I didn't know there were 20,000 different kinds!

A reader from Brewster read *The little book of bees* by Hilary Kearney: This book made me happier than anything I've read or done recently. There should be a lot more books like it. The illustrations were helpful, memorable and splash. The thing was chalk full of information that directly targeted stereotypes about bees and helped you feel their importance in all areas of nature. I hope it shows many people how giving to nature is important even without the promise of honey which is only made by two of the 20,000 species. LOVED IT!!!

A reader from Greenfield read *the day the world stops shopping* by J.B. Mackinnon: I really appreciated the various angles the author took to work through this thought experiment. The interviews and statistics he provided throughout were really helpful to spark my own critical thinking.

A reader from Wakefield read *Field Study: Meditations on a Year at the Herbarium* by Helen Humphreys: I liked this quote from the book: "There is so much to be joyful about in this world, and we need to feel a certain amount of optimism or joy to do what needs to be done to effect change. Despair is not a great motivator, but hope is."

A reader from Mashpee read *The Future We Choose; Surviving the Climate Crisis* by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac: This month was a nice challenge; this genre is new to me. Overall, I enjoyed this book. It was organized in a reader-friendly way and made some excellent

points and examples. The book begins where we are now and what the world could look like in 2050, depending on our chosen path. My takeaway moment was the section about the ten actions. This section explores what we need to do to help the earth from reaching the tipping point. The part that resonated with me was being a citizen, not a consumer. I need to be more vigilant about my consumption of products. I didn't realize how much damage happens to the earth by making a cheap product. I am rethinking how I spend and looking deeper into the companies I give my money to. At times, I felt doomed, but the authors gave hope by exploring ways to slow down warming and created a timeline that gave small, doable ways to start today.

A reader from Newton Highlands read *After the Flood* by Cassandra Montag: Believable dystopian novel set in the aftermath of climate change.

A reader from Salem read *Fuzz: When Nature Breaks The Law* by Mary Roach: I was pretty disappointed with this book to be honest. I thought it was going to be more focused on potential solutions to human-nature conflict, but I think Roach tackled too many topics to give any single one of them the detail it deserved. For many of the chapters, there was no real mention of a solution, which I understand is not her fault, but it left me feeling really unsatisfied. I also expected it to be more of an informative writing style, but Roach put in so many narrative tangents that I felt like I was reading her daily diary, complete with gossip and some rather offhanded remarks about people (for example, she writes two paragraphs about how the loggers she met were "not your typical lumberjacks" just because they were on a diet, and constantly-- like every two pages-- discusses how people from other cultures were "rude" to her, just because she wasn't getting the answers she wanted). Wasn't a fan, and honestly wouldn't recommend it to others.

A reader from Brighton read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: This book pushed me to add more nature-related books to my to-read list!

A reader from Oxford read *Not the End of the World* by Hannah Ritchie: This book was an interesting view of environment issues such as global warming, population, farming, plastics, etc. It presented a more positive view of where we are at now - we tend to rely on the fear-mongering presented by the media.

A reader from Boston read *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver: This book is about a monarch butterfly population coming to winter at a farm in rural Tennessee instead of their usual Mexico due to changing climate and natural disasters making their usual overwintering habitat inhabitable. This story brings climate scientists and religious farmers into clashes as the scientists try desperately to prove that the presence of the butterflies is an overwhelming bad sign while the farmers take it as a 'miracle' from above and use the butterflies for tourism. For me, this book had far too many religious references and was not an enjoyable read despite the subject matter of changing migratory patterns being very interesting and relevant to the struggles we face with the climate today.

A reader from Gloucester read *Floral Folklore: The Forgotten Tales Behind Nature's Most Enchanting Plants* by Alison Davies: This book delves deep into folktales from around the world that center around flowers. The art in this book is gorgeous and I highly enjoyed reading it.

A reader from Wrentham read *H is for Hawk* by Helen MacDonald: I had taken an Ecological Literature class in the past and this was a recommended read that I never got to. It was interesting to learn about hawks and falconry, interlaced with a discussion about class systems, climate change, and literature.

A reader from Somerville read *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming* by Paul Hawken: Really happy to have finally read this book. It was gifted to me pre-pandemic and I FINALLY had a reason to read it. I combined both the gifted book and audio book so it was my first experience reading a physical book with an audiobook copy at the same time (and when I say "the same time", I mean "When I couldn't sit and read the physical book like while driving or doing laundry, I'd listen to the audiobook" :))

A reader from Foxborough read *The Story of More* by Hope Jahren: Very well written book, adjusted for young people to understand, about one of the most important subjects to humans right now, climate change.

A reader from North Bethesda read *Crossings: How Road Ecology Is Shaping the Future of Our Planet* by Ben Goldfarb: Just a fascinating topic I had thought almost not at all about - how roads impact flora and fauna. Animals cut off from migrating across a highway so they don't have as many animals to breed with and then they inbreed to the point of species collapse. The sounds being too loud for mating calls of birds to be heard. And then how we make a problem and then try to solve it but maybe make things worse. Humans are so great. And of course how other countries do all this better than the US. And most interestingly the so called third world countries we look down upon - because their road development is newer, they can do innovative new things taking the environment into account - like raised highways so animals can walk below and roam freely. Such an interesting read.

A reader from Ipswich read *Polution and the Death of Man* by Francis Schaeffer: Schaeffer says that what we believe about nature effects our response to it. He says that the current response of pantheism is not a good solution because pantheism does not differentiate among living things. He sees the Christian response as the correct one, but not as the rape of nature, rather as being faithful stewards of it for God its Creator.

A reader from Hanover read *The Fifth Season* by n.k. Jemisin: 5 star. Can't wait to continue the series.

A reader from Boston read *The Wager* by David Grann: Incredibly well researched and woven together beautifully. I can't believe this is a real story. Nature can be violent and cruel.

A reader from Chelsea read *Silent Spring* by Carson, Rachel: This writer/scientist was ahead of her time, with an understanding of manmade-caused damage to the planet and its inhabitants.

A reader from Reading read *The Heat Will Kill You First* by Goodell, Jeff: Goodell is the prince of describing imminent climatological disaster in a measured, easily consumable, beautifully written way so that even though his message is a bummer, you don't mind reading about it....

A reader from Chelmsford read *The Blue Machine* by Helen Czerski: This was super interesting and comprehensive book about how the ocean works. It digressed a bit too much for my tastes, but was educational nonetheless!

A reader from Worcester read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Fabulous read. Spooky nature writing? Yes, please!

A reader from Wilmington read *No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: Very powerful to read all her speeches put together.

A reader from Brewster read *The Early Years* by David Attenborough: Wonderful!

A reader from Holden read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: *Silent Spring* is quintessential work of popular ecology which really started the modern environmental movement in the 1960s. Carson's imagery of a world without nature as an unintended but avoidable consequence of insecticide use is eye opening and harrowing. It is no wonder that the book's publication created such an uproar!

A reader from Danvers read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Loved the way this read. The multiple perspectives were super interesting and I loved the song intervals.

A reader from Blackstone read *Floral Folklore* by Alison Davies: So interesting hearing all the myths related to different flowers - gives a new appreciation when I see them bloom!

A reader from Beverly read *Our Wives Under the Sea* by Julia Armfield: It was a quick read with cool atmosphere. After discussing it in book club I realized I liked it more than I thought.

A reader from Amesbury read *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert: I'll never think about the word "mastodon" the same way again.

A reader from Cambridge read *Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery: Such a fascinating read.

A reader from Ipswich read *The Comfort of Crows: A Backyard Year* by Margaret Renkl: A thoughtful group of essays about observing the natural world around us and noting the changes in climate, including the decrease or loss of some species. Notice that the little things nurture gratitude.

A reader from Somerville read *Weather* by Jenny Offill: I'm kind of sick of reading navel-gazey books by white women from NYC about the 2016 election, but, you know! I don't know if I've read any cli-fi I've found particularly compelling so far.

A reader from ALLSTON read *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert: I was a bit late to this book, but that only made it more impactful, and frankly, depressing. I never thought I would care so much about the extinction of frogs I had never heard of, but the first chapter came in swinging. I think everyone should read this at some point.

A reader from Rockland read *The Hungry Tide* by Firdous Bamji: **Insightful, interesting, and well-written.**

A reader from South Hadley read *A Landscape of War: Ecologies of Resistance and Survival in South Lebanon* by Munira Khayyat: **A fascinating and visceral look at how people and landscapes evolve and adapt during times of occupation, violence, and deliberate destruction. A reminder that after and through all things, nature finds a way to survive.**

A reader from Sandwich read *Dry* by Jarrod Shusterman & Neal Shusterman: **A great YA book that really gets you thinking about the environment and humanity.**

A reader from Amherst read *Richard Powers* by The Overstory: **Lovely, lyrical, made me think!**

A reader from Quincy read *Madhouse at the End of the Earth* by Julian Sancton: **It was really well written, it was a bit dense for a while but it explained the history of what happened really well. I also appreciated the photos included at the end!**

A reader from Scituate read *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate Discoveries from A Secret World (The Mysteries of Nature, 1)* by Peter Wohlleben: **Interesting book, but I think the translation may leave something to be desired. It is clunky and confusing at times, but still worth it. Trees are such awe-inspiring creatures!**

A reader from Beverly read *Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law* by Mary Roach: **A very interesting review of how people interact with nature and the legal/policy implications.**

A reader from Duxbury read *Endurance* by Alfred Lansing: **Not technically about the environment, but I learned more about Antarctica and ice than I ever have before by reading this.**

A reader from Gill read *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Thurnberg: **Inspiring!**

A reader from Berkley read *Remarkably bright creatures* by Shelby van Pelt: **The relationship between Tova and Marcellus was so touching. I enjoyed all the character connections.**

A reader from Mansfield read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: **Beautiful descriptions of life in the marshes, the birds and insect life. Interesting story line, all in all, a very good read.**

A reader from Dorchester read *The Nature Fix* by Florence Williams: **How nature has an impact on the brain.**

A reader from Webster read *Garbology: Our Love Affair with Trash* by Edward Humes: **An eye-opening read about the history and increase in trash production and waste removal.**

A reader from Derry read *The Soul of an Octopus* by Sy Montgomery: **The main location in the book was the NE Aquarium. On my next visit, I'll definitely look for the octopus tank.**

A reader from Hubbardston read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: Fiction, about a woman who is studying arctic terns. She follows them from Greenland to Antarctica. Due to climate change, in the book (which takes place in the near future) she is studying them because it may be their final migration, as they are nearly extinct. This storyline is intertwined with her personal narrative, there is more going on than appears on the surface.

A reader from Attleboro read *How to Save Everything* by Elizabeth Kolbert: It was a very informative book. I learned about some things in the environment that are having an impact on pollution, and some things I can do to help.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: Margaret Renkl has taken the reader on a year's journey into nature. During the course of the four seasons, she has described her feelings and interactions between herself and her 'Wild Neighbors.' The author also relates how the crow's behavior is similar to human behavior and their ability to look after and care for their species.

A reader from Reading read *The Carbon Footprint of Everything* by Berners-Lee, Mike: updated from the 2010 edition.

A reader from STOUGHTON read *Where the Deer and the Antelope Play* by Nick Offerman: Excellent!

A reader from San Leandro read *Eleutheria* by Allegra Hyde: This novel kept me hooked from beginning to end. It's an interesting mash up of climate change dystopia and lit fic with a through-line of queer romance. It clearly takes inspiration from the current state of the world, including a President who stares into an eclipse and goes blind as a result! If you're (like me) still too intimidated to attempt a Kim Stanley Robinson tome, start with this instead.

A reader from Westborough read *The Snow Leopard* by Peter Matthiessen: This was a true story of the author's journey through the Himalaya region on a scientific trip to study the blue sheep. The hope was that he and his party would spot the elusive rare snow leopard. It was a gorgeously written narrative of the harsh environmental conditions they faced as winter was closing in, and of his own inner journey. I had to get a blanket, I'd get so cold reading it.

A reader from Montague read *North Woods* by Mason: The constant in this fascinating book is the land. People, animals, insects pass through. Disease changes the plants. But the land remains and holds all the secrets. Some people can hear them. Most of us are too busy to be so in tune with the earth.

A reader from Reading read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Though this is not a book about Nature per se, it contains some of the most beautiful nature writing I've read. Climate change is also an element as the story evolves.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: This was an awesome read. My favorite quote: in *The Sound of Silverbells*: "a teacher comes they say when

you are ready and if you ignore its presence, it will speak to you more loudly, but you have to be quiet to hear.” I learned so much about indigenous customs and some history of various crops.

A reader from Boston read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers: Not something I would have picked up without this prompt. Good overall story just not quite my pace/style.

A reader from Forestdale read *Sacred Nature: Restoring Our Ancient Bond with the Natural World* by Karen Armstrong: An interesting perspective linking several of the world's religions with their view/connection to nature. Too much focus on the religion. Not enough depth of any of the connections or lack of connection.

A reader from Seekonk read *Daylight Come* by Diana McCaulay: This book made me stop and think about how our choices 60 years before the start of the book could affect our children's children. Though the text feels dystopian at times, it's actually hopeful. There is a way for us to slow down and fix the climate crisis before it's too late.

A reader from Billerica read *Lighting the Way* by Chantel Bilodeau: I read this anthology to use it for lesson planning for one of my theatre courses, and I was blown away by the scope of this anthology and the artists involved with it.

A reader from Southampton read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: What a beautiful, life-changing book. This has me completely rethinking my relationship with nature. This book felt all the more personal listening to the audiobook read by Kimmerer herself.

A reader from Turners Falls read *Live Green* by Jen Chillingsworth: Better than I thought! Great ideas for a variety of people wanting to live greener.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Shark Heart* by Emily Habeck: Good.

A reader from Lawrence read *A Thousand Mornings* by Mary Oliver: A book about nature, the environment, or climate change.

A reader from Georgetown read *The Ministry for the Future* by Kim Stanley Robinson: Quite a book to get through. Falls somewhere between fiction and nonfiction in its style. As the events in the book take place in the not too distant future, the effects from climate change heightened my sense of global awareness of the situation. Both sobering and hopeful.

A reader from East Sandwich read *The Backyard Birdwatcher's Bible* by Christopher M. Perrins: Good book. I especially liked the chapter on birds in art.

A reader from Gloucester read *H is for Hope: Climate Change from A-Z* by Elizabeth Kolbert: Wonderfully readable and truly filled with hope for our endangered planet and future.

A reader from Wakefield read *High Exposure: An Enduring Passion for Everest and Unforgiving Places* by David Breaschears: This book was recommended to me, but I might not have got to it without the book challenge. And it was very interesting. I am most impressed by the Sherpa's

who help the climbers. I feel like they have the most skill because they are doing challenging climbs AND carrying most of the supplies, setting up, cooking, etc. Amazing.

A reader from Foxboro read *Snowglobe* by Soyoung Park: I could not put this book down! It was a fascinating different look at climate change and how the 1% make sure they stay comfortable.

A reader from Beverly read *Track of the Cat* by Nevada Barr: Audiobook.

A reader from Franklin read *A Drop in the Ocean: A Novel* by Jenni Ogden: The book follows a woman who rents a cabin for a year on an island in the Great Barrier Reef region of Australia, after receiving notice that her research funding is cut. It was an interesting read about her journey on the island and the many things learned along the way. The nature surrounding the island has given her a new perspective on life.

A reader from Fairhaven read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: Great juxtaposition of memoir, humor, science, and history.

A reader from Foxboro read *Unraveling* by Peggy Orenstien: Such an interesting read!

A reader from West Yarmouth read *The Last Ranger* by Peter Heller: I thought this book was so readable and entertaining, and I really enjoyed learning about the wolves of Yellowstone.

A reader from Falmouth read *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren: What a great book!! You will never look at trees the same way again. Hope Jahren is an amazing scientist and had to work so hard for all that she has done in her field! Such an inspiration!

A reader from Reading read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: Neat that it is set in MA! I love being and working outside-gardening, hiking, walking, planting. Easy to place myself in the book!

A reader from Seekonk read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: Engaging nonfiction account of a woman's struggles with her personal life so she takes on hiking.

A reader from Brooklyn read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: Really great book! Not what I expected to read for this month's entry but ended up fitting the theme perfectly.

A reader from North Easton read *Remarkable Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt: After finishing *The Soul of an Octopus* recently, I didn't think I had it in me to read another book about octopuses. I was wrong! The book was charming and the storylines with the various characters was so engrossing. I didn't want it to end.

A reader from Forestdale read *ink blood sister scribe* by emma torzs: Loved the book, the elements of nature aligned with the magic of the books.

A reader from Naples read *Damnation Spring* by Ash Davidson: *Damnation Spring* joins Richard Powers' *The Overstory* as an epic novel about our interactions with trees. Set in the late 1970s

when the United States is moving aggressively, if belatedly, to address the industrial horrors that have ravaged the country. A close up and personal account of how this plays out in the lives of the people who live and work in the land of the trees.

A reader from Malden read *Primates: The Fearless Science of Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, and Birut Galdikas* by Jim Ottaviani: **Learned a lot about primates!**

A reader from Braintree read *endangered eating* by sarah Lohman: **Very interesting read.**

A reader from Longmeadow read *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments* by Aimee Nezhukumatathil: **I'm not really one for non-fiction, so this was the perfect find because it shared true facts about animals and plants through short stories from the author's life. Rather than reading straight facts, the reader reads a story as well.**

A reader from Readville/ Yarmouth read *Alfie and Me* by carl safina: **The book describes details about a baby screech owl the author rescues, rehabilitates and befriends. I enjoyed learning along with the author about Alfie's habits, talents and adventures.**

A reader from West Simsbury read *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard: **Beautifully written with tender images of the forest. Everyone should have to read this book. Makes you look at the forest floor in a whole new light. Makes perfect sense.**

A reader from Hampden read *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss: **Recommended. The Lorax was published in 1971 which was a time when very few people were writing about environmental impacts and climate change. Clearly Dr. Seuss was ahead of his time when he wrote this cautionary tale about disrupting the balance of nature. However, he did give advice on what we must do, "But now," says the Once-ler, " Now that you're here, the word of the Lorax is perfectly clear. UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." I enjoyed the opportunity to read another banned book.**

A reader from Braintree read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: **Enjoyable.**

A reader from Newton read *The Day the World Stops Shopping* by JB MacKinnon: **Ever since I finished this book I have thought about it almost daily. It's one of those books that changes your entire outlook on a topic, in this case it's consumerism. The book did a great job of analyzing consumerisms impact on our planet from many different lenses, including social justice and equality which I thought was a nuanced but important take! Overall a great read for Earth Day!**

A reader from Brookline read *Fire Weather* by John Vaillant: **This book was already on my list after hearing the New York Times' podcast on their 10 favorite books of 2023. As NYT promised, the book (at least parts of it!) reads like a thriller, and Vaillant does an amazing job of making the fire seem like a character in itself. There is so much here to learn about the nature of fire, the way human behavior has made fires larger and more damaging, and the history of warnings we've received about putting so much carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. Towards the end, I started to limit myself to reading 10 pages a night just because there was so much**

information to take in. Definitely an important read, especially as we start to see more news about wildfires and witness the skies turning orange in NYC from outbreaks in Canada.

A reader from North Weymouth read *Beatrix Potter's Gardening Life* by Marta McDowell: Extremely enjoyable and full of helpful information about gardening, plus little known facts about the flowers and vegetables Potter chose for her multiple gardens.

A reader from Hopkinton read *ishmael* by daniel quinn: The story proposes that the root cause of planetary destruction is the human belief that Earth was made for us.

A reader from AUBURN read *At the Edge of the Orchard* by Tracy Chevalier: This is a beautifully written drama of a pioneer family from Connecticut moving to Ohio to stake their property claim by planting apple trees. The father wants to cultivate premier eating apples but the alcoholic mother only wants hard cider made. The story then moves to California. It's a story of betrayal, love, abuse, redemption and conservation of domestic plants and enormous California trees. The trees are so large that unscrupulous business people felled trees so they could fit 20 people dancing on the tree stump. They charged admission for visitors to to the sacrosanct forests for the novelty of dancing on the tree stumps...

A reader from Middleboro read *The Year of the Flood* by Margaret Atwood: This was a re-read for me and the second book in the MadAdam trilogy where a combination of climate change, corporate greed, genetic mutations and an engineered plague has decimated humanity. A commune that managed to survive must navigate a new world.

A reader from Hartland read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers.

A reader from Wrentham read *Things You Can Do: How to Fight Climate Change and Reduce Waste* by Eduardo Garcia & Sara Boccaccini Meadows: Some great ideas, that are beautifully presented. I really appreciated that the authors were not afraid to tackle the strain that the meat industry puts on the planet.

A reader from Hanson read *The Outermost House* by Henry Beston: It was not my type of book to read yet I found it interesting to hear of his experiences during his stay at the small isolated beach cottage on Cape Cod.

A reader from Milford read *An Immense World* by Ed Yong: This is one of the best science books I've ever read. It challenged so many of my preconceived notions about the world. It helped me understand how much we humans miss when we assume that existence is only as narrow or broad as our perception of it. Highly recommended.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I had this on my TBR list for a long time and finally got around to reading it for this prompt. While I didn't find it to be a great read, I liked learning about the Pacific Crest Trail and following along with her journey.

A reader from Dracut read *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds & Shape Our Futures* by Merlin Sheldrake: An interesting book about how integral fungi is to the world and what we can learn from better understanding these organisms.

A reader from Beverly Hills read *Dry Storeroom No. 1* by Richard Fortey: A little difficult to get into, but a fascinating look at the people and collections of the Natural History Museum in London. Written by a retired scientist there, Mr Fortey examines the many ways that the natural world has evolved, and helps man to study climate change and how we might be able to respond to it.

A reader from Amherst read *The Serengeti Rules* by Sean B. Carroll: As a science teacher I love that this book explores the history behind many of the topics I teach. It is written in a way that is accessible to anyone, and very interesting! I enjoyed the stories woven throughout and the fact that all the different topics were connected through the theme of regulation.

A reader from Dartmouth read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: In this novel, the author tells her story of traveling the PCT alone while reflecting on her past. *Wild* immerses you in the author's life through the 1100+ mile journey by both describing the wilderness she traversed and the internal struggles she is fighting to overcome. I found myself rooting her on to complete her journey.

A reader from Lincoln read *wild* by Cheryl Strayed: Cleverly written and enjoyable.

A reader from Lowell read *Crossings* by Ben Goldfarb: What an interesting book on a topic that rarely gets an afterthought. *Crossings* is a book about how human infrastructure affects the wild environment.

A reader from Ludlow read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I was gifted this book years ago and ultimately lent it to my mother to read because she is an avid hiker. When I saw this book was on the April Recommendation list, I jumped at the opportunity to finally read it myself. I enjoyed the book, and although, I would personally never hike the PCT, I found Cheryl's drive and bravery infectious. The book inspired me to set goals and to not wait for the right moment or wait for someone to accompany me on my own journey to achieve the goals I set for myself. With regard to the theme for the month of April, I also enjoyed learning about the PCT and its vast landscape as well as the impact the unpredictability weather plays on one's backpacking journey.

A reader from Andover read *A Psalm for the Wild Built* by Becky Chambers: So many of the sci-fi books set after environmental collapse are frightening and bleak. This book and its sequel looked at what becomes possible when we take another path. It made me wonder what it would take for us to see this different path.

A reader from Saugus read *A Walk In The Woods* by Bill Bryson: I don't read much non-fiction nor am I a hiker, but I really enjoyed this book. I got to enjoy nature without leaving my home. I also learned some things about different parts of the country in the process.

A reader from Worcester read *What Moves The Dead* by T. Kingfisher: This book may not be a non-fiction about nature, but it certainly contains plenty involving the fungi kingdom. This book is a retelling of The Fall of the House of Usher but the downfall is caused by a sentient fungi who inhabits its hosts. A surprising amount of mushroom references in here.

A reader from Boston read *As Long As Grass Grows* by Dina Gilio-Whitaker: This past month, I had the absolute pleasure of reading the book *As Long As Grass Grows*, which I picked up several months ago at an annual anarchist book fair here in Boston. Although I'd previously been aware of the importance of centering Indigenous (and Black/Latine/socioeconomically deprived) communities and practices in the fight against climate change, this book more thoroughly explored the multitude of examples of why Indigenous approaches to addressing climate catastrophe is so important, as well as specific ways Indigenous communities are being uniquely affected by climate destruction.

A reader from Wilmington read *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau: this has been on my to be read list for a bit of time as my wife's from concord so this book is pretty famous in relation to the town of concord. unfortunately, i HAAAATED this book. i knew nothing about the author nor the work except the famous quote about going into the woods and it being about nature. the first thing i disliked about the book is how high and mighty the author thought it was so easy to be a farmer and how cheaply he indicated it was to grow things and basically farm a small lot of land near his cabin. i grew up in a family of farmers and i have first hand experience as a child tilling/working the land. it is extremely hard work and that assumes the weather will cooperate, if it doesn't, you may end up with nothing for the easy. the sheer gall or audacity to stand on a pedestal and tell off ALL farmers especially around when he wrote the book how easy it was... that freakin bothered me. to me, it was some soft ivy leaguer who never had a hard day working the land in his life. after i finished the book, i researched his life. SUUUUURE ENOUGH he went to harvard and lived quite the life. i mean he wasn't rich and often had to be assisted financially.. but having read enough authors/writers from the 19th century, that was pretty much a common thing and probably for all time. authors/artists are often starving during their lifetime and often don't see their rise or popularity until long after they are dead. i wished i liked it more and i see why people enjoy it... i just personally did not find it enlightening as much as anything else i've been reading. still i'm glad i checked the box off the list that i read this book.

A reader from Dracut read *The power of life cycle assessment* by Aclca: All about modeling and calculating the impact of climate change.

A reader from Hampden read *The History Of Bees* by Maja Lunde: The book takes place in 3 periods of time. Past, present and future. It is descriptive about bees work around the queen. In the future part bees are no longer. Interesting but a little disjointed going back and forth over different periods of time.

A reader from Lowell read *Crow Planet* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt: A fascinating account of crow behavior but over and above that a heartfelt call to observe the natural world wherever one may inhabit it.

A reader from Wakefield read *The Nature Fix* by Florence Williams: Oh I so struggled with this book. It felt like a really long and drawn out essay. While yes the overall idea is interesting, I really didn't feel like it needed to be as long. It just felt repetitive and so the message got a little lost.

A reader from TEWKSBURY read *H Is for Hawk* by Helen Macdonald: A look into a completely different lifestyle. Very interesting and absorbing story.

A reader from Lawrence read *radiant heat* by Sarah-Jane Collins: Interesting novel. It's both a mystery and an account of the wild fires of Australia.

A reader from Braintree read *Not That Fancy* by Reba McEntire: Great read of Reba's life on her farm growing up along with her favorite recipes.

A reader from Waltham read *Land of Milk and Honey* by C Pam Zhang: "Land of Milk and Honey" delves into how humanity's relationship with nature impacts our planet's well-being. Through vivid storytelling, it portrays the complex interactions between people and their environments, highlighting the consequences of environmental degradation and climate disruption. The narrative weaves together themes of sustainability, resource exploitation, and the resilience of ecosystems. I loved how it focuses on the food chain and the importance of sustainable farming habits. This is a dystopian book but the details on food and cooking make you think about your own relationship with food and if you take everything you eat for granted and what it would be like without certain flavors.

A reader from Pepperell read *Fen, Bog and Swamp* by Annie Proulx: A little dry, but author tried to engage the reader with historical anecdotes.

A reader from Scituate read *When Women Were Birds* by Terry Tempest Williams: A beautiful book on nature and the women which draws its truths about women from the natural world.

A reader from Hanover read *The Great Transition* by Nick Fuller Googins: *The Great Transition* by Nick Fuller Googins forces the reader to feel guilty for inaction now for what we can anticipate as a global climate changing future catastrophe. Set in the near future when people have built higher and higher sea walls and fought endless fires to control the effects of climate change on the environment, Emi Vargas is living the fruits of the Great Transition. Both of her parents who fought to save the world have different opinions to the now future. Her mom feels the fight is not over until there is revenge on those who profited from climate issues and exploited the victims of climate change. Her dad feels he has done his part and now wants to live and raise his daughter with the benefits of his past labor. In searching for their missing mom/wife, Emi and her dad must live with the repercussions of her mom's actions and the moral dilemmas that inaction of climate issues have caused in the future.

A reader from Danvers read *Our History is the Future* by Nick Estes: This book takes the long view of Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline. It looks at the protests in 2016 (that are still ongoing) and how this has built from historic protests by Indigenous peoples towards sovereignty and land.

A reader from Andover read *The Castafiore Emerald* by Herge: Tin Tin books are always fun to read and learn about past views of culture and history (some very nonPC).

A reader from Braintree read *Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell* by Sy Montgomery, illustrated by Matt Patterson: "Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell" by Sy Montgomery, illustrated by Matt Patterson is an amazing read. This nonfiction narrative of Sy and Matt's volunteering to help and more importantly live with and learn from turtles during the pandemic is full of heartbreaking and heartwarming stories and characters (human and turtle), hope and despair, and a compelling discussion of time and the lessons we can learn from long-living turtles. Learn about the conservation, rescue and care of turtles, but from Sy's compassion and thoughtfulness and Matt's detailed illustrations also discover, from diverse people, tragedies and potential threats, threads of hope and awe considering what has been and can be accomplished.

A reader from Sutton read *Bewilderment* by Richard Powers: Powers' treatment of the grief over the loss of Alyssa was lovingly portrayed in the bond that strengthened between her husband and son through their shared awe of nature and science and their understanding of each other.

A reader from South Hadley read *Greenwood* by Michael Christie: Compelling reading of the linkage of three generations of 'created' family through their interactions with trees.

A reader from Quincy read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I was excited to read this book- I heard so many wonderful reviews, but I was disappointed. Some chapters were so interesting how the author likened plants and nature to every day life and family. Unfortunately most chapters just felt like the connection was being forced for the sake of the book. I blame myself for not being a fan of poetry, I guess- this book felt like poetry, rather than prose. Nothing wrong with the book, it is just not what I enjoy reading.

A reader from Pepperell read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: Margaret Renkl is the backyard naturalist I aim to be, and her writing both soothes and inspires, particularly as she walks the line between grief and hope. I read this slowly throughout the month, savoring its beauty and thoughtfulness as she navigates the seasons. Her words echoed in my mind while I walked through the woods, watched the birds, and looked to the ground for telltale signs of spring here in Massachusetts. She reminds me ever more to pay attention, to notice, to take care. Her brother Billy's artwork is a gorgeous companion to each essay, making this book a keepsake. It's one I'll return to perhaps as meditations throughout the year and would recommend to anyone who loves the natural world.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert: I loved this! Very informative.

A reader from TEWKSBURY read *braiding sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmer: Amazing and really gave insight on how well indigenous people of North America took care of the land.

A reader from South Hadley read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Sorry-I entered this for the incorrect month!

A reader from Winchester read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: so so good.

A reader from Cambridge read *Big Tree* by Brian Selznick: I really enjoyed how easy the book was to get though and how existential it was. It was short but at the same time had a lot of depth to it and wasn't pretentious in it's environmental message. Even the smallest seed can grow into the biggest tree.

A reader from West Roxbury read *A Man's Skin* by Hubert: I'm inspired to read more of Hubert's work.

A reader from Hudson read *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster* by Bill Gates: Gates is very good at describing why we have climate change, what we as individuals and as societies can do right now to counter the effects of climate change, and the technological breakthroughs that will have to be made in the future. The book contains a lot of important information, and on the whole is positive in its outlook.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Farmer's Wife* by Helen Rebanks: An amazing book that takes you through the life of a wife of a farmer. Her story growing up and how it shaped her life was refreshing but also makes you realize you are right where you are meant to be.

A reader from South Yarmouth read *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey: Brilliant, beautifully written!

A reader from Montague read *The Piedmont Almanac: A Guide to the Natural World* by Dave Cook: I picked up this book when I moved to North Carolina as a way to orient myself to a natural environment that was similar to the Northeast in some ways but very different in other ways. The book sat on my shelf unread for nearly 20 years. Now I am back in Massachusetts and thought I'd give it a read before finally discarding it. I am so charmed by some of the essays that I've decided to keep it for the time being. There is an updated version published by Mystic Crow, a small press in Durham, NC.

A reader from Wellfleet read *Fairweather Eden* by Michael Pitts and Mark Roberts: I'll admit, it's a bit of a stretch submitting this as an entry for a book about nature, the environment or climate change. Fairweather Eden is really about prehistory and the discovery of evidence of human existence half a million years ago at the Boxgrove archaeological site. But it inevitably raises questions about the environment these early humans knew, how they effected it and were effected by it and why they're no longer with us.

A reader from Tewksbury read *Weather* by Jenny Offill: So this book was pitched as a climate change book, but there was very little discussion on climate change? I thoroughly enjoyed it though - one of my favorite books of the month.

A reader from Fitchburg read *Year of No Garbage: Recycling Lies, Plastic Problems, and One Woman's Trashy Journey to Zero Waste* by Eve O. Schaub: This book really makes you think of

the waste you create as a consumer. It brings to light some concerns with packaging, recycling and "green products" as well. Very eye opening for environmental consciousness.

A reader from Barnstable read *The Tide: The Science and Stories Behind the Greatest Force on Earth* by Hugh Aadersey-Williams: I actually bought this book a few years back but never managed to read it. It fit perfectly for this month's challenge and I am so glad I have now read it. Fascinating look at the tides, blending the 'science' with the myths, legends and stories about the tides over the centuries. I thoroughly enjoyed it!

A reader from Berkley read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: This book is still relevant decades later.

A reader from Dracut read *The Golden Swift* by Lev Grossman: The second in a wonder duology for middle readers. Lots of talking animals, but not the traditional somewhat overused animals like lions or horses. These are endangered animals from all over the planet. The kids are trying to help them and find that even when your intentions are good things don't always go the way you hope.

A reader from Boston read *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* by Elizabeth Kolbert: Explores the current mass extinction event and the impact of human activity on the planet's biodiversity. Kolbert provides a compelling narrative that weaves together scientific research, history, and personal anecdotes to illustrate the severity of the ecological crisis we face. It's a thought-provoking and sobering read that sheds light on the urgent need for action to protect our planet.

A reader from Reading read *The Hummingbird's Gift* by Sy Montgomery: This is a delightful book to read in the spring. It's essentially an excerpt I think of a longer book or essay, packaged in a small format and illustrated. It's perfect for the spring because you want to get outside, and this is a short read which will impel you to get outdoors and watch for (and start feeding) hummingbirds. They are amazing creatures, as you'll learn reading the book, and the interaction between a pair of orphaned nestlings with incredibly dedicated carers is wonderful. Read this and put a smile on your face.

A reader from Wakefield read *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens: I really enjoyed this book. I think that the marshes and the southern environment was definitely one I was intrigued to learn more about. The marsh plays such a pivotal role in this book, as does her intimate knowledge of it, and I feel that it was the perfect accent of nature to abide by this month's theme.

A reader from New Salem read *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert: This book was interesting, but very dry. Had too many technical terms. Good book to go to sleep with.

A reader from Edgartown read *An Inconvenient Truth* by Gore, Al: This 2006 book is as relevant as ever.

A reader from Billerica read *How to Be a Good Creature* by Sy Montgomery: Simple, sweet, and if I was in a sad mood I definitely would've cried while reading this.

A reader from Weymouth read *The Battle of the Labyrinth* by Rick Riordan: I was truly surprised to find this Percy Jackson installment heavily focused on the environmental impact of mortals. This book was well-paced, the character development made sense, and as always, it was full of humor.

A reader from Salem read *The Age of Miracles* by Karen Thompson Walker: This book was a fun read but not the most well-written. It examines what would happen if time slowed down.

A reader from Middleboro read *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben: Both my father and brother are arborists so naturally I had to choose a book about trees for this month. I enjoyed how the author painted a picture of trees as living organisms not unlike animals with hierarchies and an overall goal of survival. As someone who grew up doing tree identification on nature hikes, I was reminded of several species that were favorites and it was fascinating to hear how certain species conquered over others throughout history. I listened via audiobook and enjoyed the narration by Mike Grady.

A reader from Amherst read *Of Time and Turtles* by Sy Montgomery: This was a beautifully written book that really moved me. I had thought very little about turtles and turtle rescue, and this changed my mind forever. The portrayal of the turtles opened my eyes to their resilience, ability to heal, their longevity and beauty. Likewise, for the turtle rescue people--how dedicated and strong they have to be to do this year after year, when so many of their attempted saves do not work, so many turtles still die, and they have to be brave enough to release turtles they love because that's the best thing, even though they'd like to protect them forever. Beautiful read--I highly recommend it!

A reader from Arlington read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: I decided to go back to the beginning of the environmental movement with Rachel Carson's ground-breaking book. It was a terrifying read, even decades later and with many of the chemicals long-since banned. We have not learned our lesson. In fact, things have gotten even worse. Where would we be if *Silent Spring* was never published? Would we still be here or would we have destroyed ourselves completely?

A reader from Northboro read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: I work as an environmental educator and have been familiar with this book and its concepts for years, but this was my first time reading the book. This book is still a ground-breaking read even 62 years since the publication!

A reader from Hull read *No One is Too Small To Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: A short, but important book which collects some of Greta's speeches.

A reader from Norfolk read *Heat & Light* by Jennifer Haigh: Novel about impact of fracking with sections on Three Mile Island too. Told from various points of view - the workers, the landowners, the dealers who convince the landowners to sell their rights, activists.

A reader from Norfolk read *Birnam Wood* by Eleanor Catton: I rarely don't finish a book but I had to put this one aside. The language was too dense and too complicated. Too wordy in trying to describe simple acts or situations made it hard to follow and get to the gist of the story. It had tons of great review and has won a number of awards but I couldn't get through it. The story was intriguing as well and I looked forward to reading it. too bad...

A reader from Boston read *To Change a Planet* by Christina Soontornvat: This is a picture book, but I'm listing it here as I found it wonderful for kids - reading to and giving copies to littles ones in my family. Help them to understand what One Person can do to help Change a Planet.

A reader from Salem read *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed: I really enjoyed this book about not only the technicalities of the physical hike but the journey of self-discovery.

A reader read *The Disaster Tourist* by Yun Ko-eun: This was my first book by a Korean author, whose work was translated into English. It was a tough read both because this month's topic didn't resonate with me and because I was familiar with some of the geo references. This is why we read:)

A reader from Boston read *This Changes Everything: Capitalism Vs The Climate* by Naomi Klein: Very eye-opening read.

A reader from Blandford read *The Call of The Wild/White Fang* by Jack London: At times, the descriptions could be a bit wordy or even repetitive, but the story could be thrilling most other times. A great tale about the nature in all of us.

A reader from PEPPERELL read *American Eclipse* by David Baron: A perfect read right before the total solar eclipse we experienced at the beginning of the month. This book takes us back to 1878 and follows three scientists as they experience a total eclipse in Wyoming and Colorado. One of the aspects that I found most intriguing was Maria Mitchell's journey. I had never heard of her before, so it was fascinating to learn about her role fighting for women's rights in the scientific community and drive to demand respect demonstrating that women are as capable as men in the field of science.

A reader from Amherst read *Upstream: Selected Essays* by Mary Oliver: I enjoyed this book. Her writing is lyrical and her observations about nature, life and authors was moving.

A reader from Winchester read *No One Is Too Small To Make A Difference* by Greta Thunberg: This book left me feeling very guilty and hopeless. These speeches in which she calls for radical change are already five to six years old, and I feel bad for my children who will inherit a different Earth. Reading this gave me a much needed reminder that I can and should be thinking of the planet in my everyday decision making.

A reader from Wrentham read *Eleanor Catton* by Birnam Wood: I liked it!

A reader from Beverly read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" was a groundbreaking work of environmental importance, depicting in detail the effect that herbicides

and pesticides were having on birds, soil, water, and other species. It was a fascinating read, even 60 years later. Even though it led to the discontinuation of some chemicals, like DDT, it is depressing to think about the power that these chemical companies still have. Now we're genetically modifying monoculture crops to be able to use more poison, while ignoring the impact on bees and butterflies... and humans.

A reader from Dartmouth read *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters: I wasn't entirely sure when I picked up *The Berry Pickers* what I would find. I expected there to be more nature in the book, which is why I chose it as my April read. The actual berry picking was very minimal to the story and I found more of a gut wrenching story of a kidnapping. The writing was great, but there was a lot information over a long span of time. Parts of it were tough and sad, but overall it was a good story to read.

A reader from Belchertown read *Climate Anxiety No More* by Alexa Ingram: This was the only book I could bring myself to read on the subject of climate change this month. While I was super excited to discover it, I feel like it fell short. I actually felt MORE anxious reading the first half of it. It felt like the author tried to cram too much information and not enough explanation into a very small section of the book. So many things needed to be expounded (and cited! So many citations were missing!). The workbook sections was a bit better as there were some good activity ideas involved, but I almost feel as though some of those activities counteracted what was said in the first section. For example, in the beginning, the author basically said we can't worry much about driving our car because when we have no other way to get around, but one of the activities was finding alternate, low-energy ways of getting to work. I guess it was just a swing and miss for me, but it was interesting to read.

A reader from South Hadley read *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl: This book consists of a series of 52 short essays, one for each week of the year, arranged chronologically by season. Some of them are observations about her garden or the birds at her feeder, others are thoughts about the environment and the harm done by introducing non-native species, others are meditations on the natural world. If I owned this book I would keep it near my window and read one essay per week through the year. My only problem with it is that Renkl is based in Nashville, and grew up in Alabama, so the species she writes about are not necessarily the species we encounter here in Massachusetts. Otherwise, a lovely book.

A reader from Northampton read *how to avoid a climate disaster* by bill gates: many solutions and none of them one size fits all.

A reader from South Hadley read *Weather* by Jenny Offill: *Weather* is an existential slice of life of the narrator and others reacting to a Climate Change apocalypse. The writing is superior. I would read again. So hard to describe this book.

A reader from Brighton read *After Henry* by Joan Didion: not totally topical, but the book touches on forest fires, George H.W. Bush's environmentalism, and the state of journalism (perhaps heralding the fall of print in an age of climate change) all from the POV of a Californian.

A reader from Longmeadow read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Kimmerer: Loved it.

A reader from Beverly read *Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters: Weaves in the land of Nova Scotia and Maine along the blueberry fields of Maine.

A reader from Lexington read *silent spring* by Rachel Carson: Thank you Rachel Carson for telling the world about the pollution in our water. If not for that supposedly 'hysterical woman' telling her well researched tale of corporate and government missteps with pesticides and other contaminants there might not be much left of our world. Two honorable mentions also read this month with 21st dangers uncovered in our food were - *The New Fish: The truth about farmed salmon and the consequences we can no longer ignore* (Simen Saetre), and *ultra processed people: the science behind food that isn't food* (Chris van Tulleken).

A reader from Derry read *Into the Storm* by Tristram Korten: A thrilling account in the tradition of "Perfect Storm", of the search and rescue attempts of two different ships floundering in an Atlantic Hurricane. The changing effects of global warming come into play, as do slacking regulations for maritime safety, privatization and corporate greed. All the while the heroic tradition of selfless Coast Guard personnel, risking their lives, living in harms way all to preserve and protect the lives of merchant sailors. Truly inspiring book of human triumph and tragedy in the face of the unspeakable strength of raging weather.

A reader from Sharon read *The Hot Zone: The Terrifying True Story of the Origins of the Ebola Virus* by Richard Preston: A detailed account of the origins of the Ebola Virus. Extremely scary to read, but hard to put down.

A reader from Middleboro read *Adventuring together* by Greta Eskridge: This book is a great reminder on how important it is to build relationships with your children, and how we can use adventuring to do so.

A reader from Belchertown read *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett: *The Secret Garden* was a film I watched over and over again as a kid. I dreamed of discovering my own little garden oasis and was convinced there was one just beyond the wild grapevines on the mountain behind my house. For years I have wanted to read the book *The Secret Garden*, and I finally prioritized it this month because it fit the theme perfectly.

A reader from East Bridgewater read *How to Say Babylon* by Safiya Sinclair: This is a touching and inspirational memoir, written by a young woman who grows up in a Rastafarian household. Sinclair, who is incredibly smart and brought up in an impoverished home, yearns to break free from her strict and abusive father and the limited roles available to women under his rules. She ultimately finds herself through writing poetry and a new world is opened to her as a result of her beautiful talent, but it's a world that is still fraught with dangerous pitfalls. The writing is gorgeous due to Sinclair's skill with poetry and the story is compelling, heartbreaking, and hopeful. Highly recommended.

A reader from Weymouth read *Aesop's Animals: The Science Behind the Fables* by Jo Wimpenny: Zoologist takes a scientific approach to determine whether Aesop correctly attributed

certain characteristics in the animals of the fables. I found the academia to be slightly tedious and was more interested in the chapters where there was little scientific testing.

A reader from Worcester read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carlson: I enjoyed this book, although it was very disturbing to read about the damage to all species with the amount of pesticides that we have used over the years. I think this book, written awhile ago, should be read by everyone. A wake up call to the damage that is done to the environment.

A reader from LOWELL read *Fire Weather* by John Vaillant: Amazing telling of the 2016 Fort McMurray fire and a compelling musing on human obsession with fire, and what that has done and will do to our planet.

A reader from Beverly read *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson: Was going to re-read "Wild" but thought I'd try Bryson. Glad I did ... funny, entertaining, eye-opening. Although I doubt I'll ever hike any of the Appalachian Trail, I definitely got a good idea of what I would experience if I change my mind ... loved his walking partner; kept me on edge when he was lost and I couldn't stop reading until he was found! Just might try another Bryson ... any suggestions?

A reader from Turners Falls read *A walk in the woods* by Bill Bryson: Really enjoyed this book. I have walked part of the trail and when I lived in North Adams we did a few rescues on the trail. It was neat to hear about other parts of the trail.

A reader from hudson read *Amazon Adventure-Tiny fish Saving Rainforest* by Sy Montgomery: Book for all ages. Explains how the international aquarium fish business is helping to preserve one area of the Amazon from other invasive and destructive industries!

A reader from Rockland read *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer: Good book, very tragic. Probably wouldn't have read if not for this challenge, so I'm glad I did.

A reader from Burlington read *The Great Displacement: Climate Change and the Next American Migration* by Jake Bittle: This was at once a very enlightening and a very depressing book. It seems clear to me that not only does civilization as we know it have no future past 100 years, but also humanity has no power to figure it out by then, let alone decades earlier when it would be necessary to change course. It makes me sad for my children. One very important thing I learned about man-made climate change: it's not just about how we have raised the temperature of the oceans and aerosolized the atmosphere that makes weather events more severe. It is how we have literally shaped the world according to civilization's needs with no regard for nature. There are many examples in this book about how modern civilization has removed all buffers for storms, which incidentally have always been just as severe, but were mitigated by nature itself. We have also made mistakes (such as oil spills) which ruin the ecosystem for decades. It is clear to me that such results are man-made and must be controlled or stopped altogether.

A reader from Lynnfield read *Of Time and Turtles: Mending the World, Shell By Shattered Shell* by Sy Montgomery: Still technically reading this because it's been a busy month, but I'm really enjoying it so far! Learning so much about the Turtle Rescue League in Southbridge MA, and the

amazing work they do in healing and protecting an endangered but resilient species. It's deepening my love of turtles!!!

A reader from Bolton read *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville: I found the middle of the book too digressive from the main plot, but understand that this was also meant to be informative to an audience that knew less about whales and whaling than we do now.

A reader from Uxbridge read *Dirt to Soil* by Gabe Brown: Not my usual type of book, had trouble getting through it.

A reader from Cambridge read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: What a gorgeous book. Every chapter/essay transported me into the world of plants, animals, algae, and sweetgrass. The evocative imagery and the lyrical writing create the perfect blend of urgency and call to action as well as bringing out inspiration and admiration from the reader.

A reader from Somerville read *The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis* by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac: This book got more and more helpful as it went on. It started with imaginary scenarios of what may happen by the end of the century depending on whether we miss or hit our target emissions goals. I found these scary and utopian respectively, which was their purpose, but otherwise entirely unhelpful. I did not find many of the 10 action items they suggested helpful since many of them involve a change in attitude one most likely already has when picking up a book titled 'The Future We Choose.' Additionally, living in an area with so many public transportation options and one of the country's most walkable cities has left little room to take their emissions-related suggestions. The most important part of the book is the last 5 pages which outline clear steps everyone can take to do their part. Personally, I am going to take their suggestion of a meat-free day of the week and investigating my investments to ensure they are supporting green companies.

A reader from Seekonk read *H is for Hope: Climate Change* by Elizabeth Kolbert: This was a very informative book about climate change arranged as a children's alphabet book. One of the interesting terms that was introduced was leapfrogging. If India would skip past all the methods of producing electricity that the US has used through the years and go directly to solar and wind power, they could provide electricity to the millions of households who have no electricity without contributing to further climate change.

A reader from Medford read *Six Weeks to Zero Waste: A Simple Plan for Life* by Kate Arnell: A very accessible plan to move toward zero waste. I appreciated her approach--not preachy or complicated. I have started to work on my own plan--although it may take me longer than 6 weeks!

A reader from Harwich read *Land of Milk and Honey* by C Pam Zhang: Scary reality in the distribution of resources.

A reader from Stanford read *What the Animals Taught Me* by Stephanie Marhon: Heartwarming stories about our relationships with animals.

Included are stories of love and healing from a farm animal sanctuary. Unconditional love is the main theme.

A reader from Springfield read *The Climate Book* by Greta Thunberg: This book is life altering and eye opening in a way no other book I've read has done. It is such a thorough exploration of all the interconnected causes and effects of climate change. Seriously this book needs to be required reading for everyone.

A reader from Danville read *the Nature Fix: why nature makes is Happier Healthier and more creative* by Florence Williams: A fantastic take on the benefits of Nature and how it can lower stress and cortisol levels. Would highly recommend to learn how nature can have impacts on the brain.

A reader from Holyoke read *The Comfort of Crows A Backyard Year* by Margaret Renkl: This is a great book of facts about birds and bees and flowers and trees, in addition to all kinds of wildlife. The author tosses in a lot of personal stories; some are humorous and some are poignant. A very interesting and enjoyable book that will likely be on my list of books to read again someday.

A reader from Wilmington read *Ecology: The Study of Ecosystems* by Susan H. Gray: I like how it gave you tips on how to save the Earth. I liked learning about the different ecosystems.

A reader from Florence read *Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World* by mark kurlansky: A little slow in places but some great trivia about the fish and fishermen.

A reader from Worcester read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: To know this book was written decades ago yet is still applicable in so many ways is astonishing. This made me think hard about what I eat and put on and near my body.

A reader from Hull read *Nature Poem* by Tommy Pico: This was not your typical nature or poetry book, but did not disappoint. Pico's poems are full of humor, pop culture references, and endless surprises, including the introduction of his alter ego as narrator who resists the stereotypes and cliches associated with the natural world and Native Americans. Pico is a provocative voice for a new era in poetry. (I highly recommend Pico's audio book for this read).

A reader from Dennisport read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Enjoyed the stories about nature from a Native American Storyteller.

A reader from Brighton read *Rooted: Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature, and Spirit* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt: Haupt takes an opportunity to explore the dynamic connections we have with our natural environments, and the truths revealed by scientists and spiritual guides throughout the ages.

A reader from Haverhill read *hummingbird salamander* by Jeff Vandermeer: This one took me a while to read due to its short chapters and back and forth narrative.

A reader from SOUTH HADLEY read *Where the Deer and the Antelope Play* by Nick Offerman: This book is divided into thirds: the first third is Nick's hike in glacier National Park with 2 friends, the middle is his work on an English dairy farm, and the last is his RV trip with his wife during COVID. I really liked the first and last sections; the middle one was slow. But he does address a lot of climate and environmental issues (along with a lot of political commentary).

A reader from Charlton read *Owls of the Eastern Ice* by Jonathan C. Slight: I really enjoyed this book. It covered the detailed work of tracking and monitoring rare species and raised awareness of these birds. The adventure story in the background of traveling in and out of Russia made the narrative flow.

A reader from Yarmouth Port read *Six Walks: In the Footsteps of Henry David Thoreau* by Ben Shattuck: I loved following along and seeing Thoreau's walks through the modern lense...how they have changed with the population growth, but how his words can still ring true even today.

A reader from Newton read *Turn the Tide* by Elaine Dimopoulos: Turn the Tide is a book about a girl named Mimi who moves from Massachusetts to an island in Florida and gets inspired by the Wijisen sisters from Bali to ban single-use plastic bags on her island. With the help of some friends, Mimi starts a climate movement and makes changes on the island. This book, which is beautifully written in verse, is an amazing example of an inspiring book that focuses on environmental activism and making changes in your community.

A reader from Rockland read *Climate Change* by Mark Maslin: Detailed, pertinent, and easy-to-understand information about the global challenges of climate change.

A reader from Salem read *Where The Deer and the Antelope Play* by Nick Offerman: I enjoyed Offerman's clever and passionate musings on nature and our relationship with it.

A reader from Danvers read *Rooted* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt: Beautifully written but a little loft and woo-wooy, and I am for that. My favorite part was on the shoes or promoting lack thereof!

A reader from Hopkinton read *Life between the Tides* by Adam Nicholson: I love tide pools, and I love the ocean, but this book just didn't grab me. It was well written, included literary references, anecdotes, and old tales; however, it was a slog to get through.

A reader from South Weymouth read *The Light Pirate* by Lily Brooks Dalton: Interesting idea but I felt like it jumped around too much for my enjoyment.

A reader from Moorestown read *New and Selected Poems* by Mary Oliver: I was familiar with Mary Oliver's "Wild Geese" and absolutely love it but did not know more of her work. I found on a list that she writes with significant themes of nature and picked this book. They were indeed lovely, thought-provoking, reverent of nature, and also heart-breaking in equal measure. Surprised to find the phrase about one wild and precious life is from her. Bonus: Mary Oliver is an adopted New Englander.

A reader from Medway read *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett: This book wasn't specifically ABOUT the environment, but nature - and cherry farms in particular - played a central role in the plot.

A reader from Maynard read *She Sold Seashells* by Wolfgang Grulke: I learned about Mary Anning one of the first women to study fossils. The photos and illustrations in this book are beautiful, a fitting tribute to this independent scientist.

A reader from Worcester read *in the shadow of the mountain* by silvia vasquez lavado: I enjoyed reading about the authors journey to climbing Mount Everest in the face of a lifetime of struggle.

A reader from southborough read *How to Be a Good Creature* by Sy Montgomery: Animals have taught Sy how to be a good creature in the world we live in. Love and compassion to all around us.

A reader from Hamilton read *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I loved this book: part memoir, part botanist discussion, part retelling of creation stories and First Nation traditions, this book reorients the reader to look at the world in a deeper context to the author's culture and nature. Kimmerer includes First Nation authors, stories, scholars, and historical events, to recount her relationship to nature and ceremony. I love her misremembering her father's tradition of offering coffee, her childhood memories of strawberries, and her use of the Windigo as a device to discuss greed, imbalance, and disharmony. While examining humanity's relationship with nature, Kimmerer leads us to a more inclusive view of the world. By inviting the reader to learn about the gift of sweetgrass, the economy of giving, and the power of storytelling, we all benefit from the many questions raised both personal and global to examine our view and relationship to nature. Additionally, I loved that this book leaves room to envision the environment around us in a way that includes hope, gratitude, and joy.

A reader from Milton read *Finding the Mother Tree Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* by Suzanne Simard: Suzanne Simard was fascinated with nature from the time she was a little girl. She discovered, researched, and taught the connections between fungi, the soil, and the trees when it was not common for women to be in the field of forestry - not all that long ago. She learned that trees communicate and care for each other. They have intelligence and recognize their kin. Her work has been a foundation for modern forestry practices, for protecting forests, and inspired the movie Avatar. Who would have known that fungi was so important!

A reader from Plainville read *The Displacements* by Bruce Holsinger: ::womp womp:: Not a fan.

A reader from Webster read *The Lost Art of Reading Nature's Signs* by Tristan Gooley: I'm very grateful for this reading challenge because this month challenged me to pick up a book that I likely never would have, otherwise. Overall, I was pretty pleased with the bits that I learned from this book. The author is based in the UK, but he provided plenty of examples where we could apply them to the US. I do have to share a line from a review that I saw in passing on the Good Reads app though, saying the title should be: "Some vague tips about noticing your landscape, if you find yourself in the middle of a long walk in Britain without the aid of a GPS." This made me chuckle because I can see their point -- at times I was frustrated by the information I thought

the author was about to share, and then... it just fell flat. He would speak to weather elements and tolerance of plants in certain conditions but right when you think you might reach the specific nugget of information to help you spot something of real use, it stops short. That being said, I did learn quite a few things that I appreciate and will be more mindful of as I take longer hikes and walks throughout our beautiful state in each of the seasons (well... maybe except winter). Here are some of my favorite things I learned:

1. The bark of a tree will often appear noticeably darker on its north than its south side.
2. One four-leaf clover is lucky; lots of them in one area is a sign of herbicide use.
3. Hydrangeas can cope in both alkaline and acidic conditions -- their color will often indicate which condition is present:
 - a. vivid blue = acidic
 - b. mauve = neutral
 - c. pink = alkaline
4. In an open area, longer grasses indicate the direction of the most recent winds. Shorter grasses will indicate direction of longer trends.

Lastly, an honorable mention (that I already knew) -- Mosses can point the way north.

A reader from Quincy read *50 Things to Do in the Urban Wild* by Clare Gogerty: Feels kind of like a kids activity book but for an adult audience, but in a good way. A bit obvious at times but a nice wholesome kind of read, with some good ideas thrown in.

A reader from Chelsea read *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I will be reading this book again many times. It is a whole new way of seeing the world for me and there was so much to process. I see Sweet Grass in so many things now and it shows how interconnected the world is.

A reader from Boston read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers: This book was greatly out of my comfort zone. To find a book to read for this month's challenge, I went on Goodreads, and one it suggested was *The Overstory* by Richard Powers. I really enjoyed how all of the character's stories were so interconnected with each other and the natural world. I really enjoy books that really focus on the characters, so I really liked that about this book, but I did find it to be very slow and sometimes the wording seemed a bit muddled or dense. I overall liked this book even though it was not the type of book I normally read.

A reader from Pepperell read *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed: Cheryl Strayed's powerful memoir *Wild* is a riveting account of her encounters with adversity in the wilderness. I loved this book and its emphasis on the power of nature and the importance of preserving it. Strayed endures both physical and emotional challenges while encountering wildlife, all of which highlight the connection between humans and the natural world.

A reader from Salem read *A Thousand Mornings* by Mary Oliver: I didn't love this book as much as I was hoping to, but still enjoyed its refreshing and peaceful tone and several individual lines and imagery that Oliver used to invoke natural elements and mundanely fascinating experiences. I appreciate her efforts to show just how much magic there is in the everyday, in one of a thousand similar mornings.

A reader from Hopkinton read *A Psalm For the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers: A beautiful and moving story.

A reader from Bellingham read *In the Company of Crows and Ravens* by John M. Marzluff: In the Company of Crows and Ravens is about how corvids and humans have evolved together and have overlapped/influenced one another's cultures. This book is filled with interesting facts about birds who hold so much mystery in our stories and tales about them. There's a bunch of beautiful art throughout the book by Tony Angell!

A reader from Shelburne Falls read *Harvest for Hope* by Jane Goodall: I spent the mid-2000's reading similar books on the ethics of food production, and this brought back memories. Sad to see how much is still true since its 2005 publication, but hopeful to see some changes in 2024.

A reader from West Hartford read *Life In The Garden* by Penelope Lively: Such a beautifully written novel that makes all the gardens described come to life. The senses are awakened with sights, sounds, smells, joys. I have loved gardens and gardening all my life and I have a deep respect for the earth and all its wonders. I enjoyed Penelope Lively's kinship with nature and her tremendous knowledge. She is a wonderful storyteller.

A reader from Melrose read *The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire That Saved America* by Timothy Egan: A fascinating look at the history of forestry in America. A great read for those who enjoy reading non-textbook histories.

A reader from Beverly read *Living without plastic* by Brigette Allen and Christine Wong: Discouraging to hear how little plastic is actually recycled. I was glad for some practical tips for reducing my use of plastic. While some of the tips would be a stretch for me, I can certainly buy a cutting board made of wood since I need a new one and use my silicone storage bags instead of buying more ziploc bags. I am inspired to do more to help planet Earth.

A reader from North Reading read *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future* by Mary Robison: I grabbed this book from the April challenge display at the Flint Memorial Library in North Reading, and I'm glad I did! Robison centers the stories of people, nearly all women, who live in areas where the effects of climate change are undeniable. I wish more leaders and everyday people would listen to these stories so they can be inspired to act big and act now to save our planet.

A reader from Chelmsford read *Leaves, Roots, and Fruit: A step by step guide to planting an organic kitchen garden*: Initially it was the beautiful, inviting photographs that drew me to this book. I enjoyed reading this thoughtful and researched practical guide to starting a back yard raised bed garden. The author encourages the reader to plan and grow a garden that works for you, whether all out large or small in one container. She shares her perspective of growing varied plants together and thinking of how plants grow naturally in nature. The author has inspired me to think more simply about my gardening. A good read for sure!

A reader from Somerville read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: This was darker than I expected, almost a collection of ghost stories, a book about how history haunts a place, and how the natural environment changes and continues on through generations of human life. Also a quintessentially Massachusetts novel!

A reader from Berkley read *New England Waterfalls: A Guide to More Than 200 Cascades and Waterfalls* by Kate B. Watson & Greg Parsons: I was excited to find a few waterfalls that I wasn't aware of. My family plans vacations around where there are waterfalls we can visit.

A reader from Boston read *The Morningside* by Tea Obreht: The Morningside ended up being less about the environment than I expected, based on the description. I'm actually really glad to have learned a dystopian cli-fi *setting* doesn't necessarily mean that the book itself has environmental themes.

A reader from Dartmouth read *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt: Loved the book! Really liked the author's style of writing and I'm not normally drawn to fantasy, so I was really surprised how much I enjoyed the book.

A reader from Lowell read *the book of nordic self-care* by elisabeth carlsson: Good tips for aligning lifestyle and mindset with nature and seasons.

A reader from Methuen read *The Bear* by Andrew Krivak: The girl was born on the summer solstice as was I. Having the most daylight of the year is a gift. And, so is this tale. The girl and her father - the last two humans alive, living in and with nature. Bears learning from their mothers about a promise that they must honor. Respect for life. Andrew Krivak speaks with simple and eloquent prose as he narrates the girl's story. The father buries the girl's mother on the summer solstice on top of the mountain. Years later, the girl buries her father next to her mother on the summer solstice. She has learned to survive thanks to her father's guidance and teaching her to respect what nature shares with her. One summer solstice when she is very old, she breathes her last breath while sleeping under the stars. A year later, after a long journey, a bear finds and buries the girl between her parents on top of the mountain; then having honored her life (the last human life), he begins his westward trek. There is a kind of spirituality in this story. The story pulled me along, and later I questioned how this could happen. Why are the humans gone, but the animals are still here? How long would this take? Is this our someday future? I cannot imagine the girl's thoughts as she lived into old age alone except for nature. Is this Post-Anthropocene tale the future of humanity? And, is our present earth-warming trend the beginning? I realize that this "time" is millions of years off, or is it? Please read this story!

A reader from Leominster read *No One is Too Small to Make a Difference* by Greta Thunberg: This book of essays/speeches is impactful and powerful. It is fascinating that a young adult possesses such knowledge and passion about climate change. I enjoyed listening to this book, but found that the speeches were repetitive in nature, and often the same speech was in the book multiple times, which was frustrating to listen to.

A reader from Salem read *Migrations* by Charlotte McConaghy: Engaging!

A reader from Quincy read *You and the Universe* by Stephen Hawking: Nice facts about space at the end. Could have been more substantial within the book.

A reader from Worcester read *Ramp Hollow: The Ordeal of Appalachia* by Steven Stoll: A strong analysis and argument regarding the destruction of enclosure practices in West Virginia, related to enclosures internationally that wreck the ecological-human means of agricultural subsistence and their autonomous ways of life.

A reader from Cambridge read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: What a gorgeous book. Every chapter/essay transported me into the world of plants, animals, algae, and sweetgrass. The evocative imagery and the lyrical writing create the perfect blend of urgency and call to action as well as bringing out inspiration and admiration from the reader.

A reader from Newton read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I enjoyed this change of pace read - it is definitely outside of my typical reading genre and took me a good amount of time to finish, but it made me rethink about the role humans have climate change and our relationship with our environment. I was in the mindset of humans have no positive effects on nature, but hearing a new perspective from a culture/background unlike my own, written so poetically was refreshing :)

A reader from N DARTMOUTH read *Where the Forest Meets the Stars* by Glendy Vanderah: I loved this book and her style of writing. This is the first time I've read this author.

A reader from Easthampton read *Nature Poem* by Tommy Pico: A book-length decolonialist poetic anti-meditation that's full of questions, history, humor, and heartache. I listened to it in the Libby app and Pico's reading is excellent.

A reader from Melrose read *Lost City of Z* by David Grann: This book contained multiple surprising elements and I loved how much I learned about the history of the Amazon, colonialism, and Percy Fawcett.

A reader from Byfield read *Trash Vortex How Plastic Pollution is Choking the World's Oceans* by Danielle Smith-Llera: Read with my 5th grade class - incredible non-fiction with solid information and an easy-to-read text.

A reader from Salem read *What an Owl Knows: The New Science of the World's Most Enigmatic Birds* by Jennifer Ackerman: I am intrigued by owls and was happy to come across Ackerman's newish book that was specific to these magnificent animals. The book included so many new things to me - who knew owls were colorblind? Learning more about these fascinating creatures and how their story can inform us as a society as to climate change and the environment made for an enjoyable read.

A reader from Woods Hole read *Fungi of Naushon* by Lawrence Millman: I don't usually read nature/environment books, so was very happy with this "challenge." I will definitely take a better look at mushrooms in the wild.

A reader from Spencer read *Of Time and Turtles* by Sy Montgomery: Loved this book, I was given the book as a gift due to my love of all things turtle. It was interesting to read about all the local work being done to help turtles and to see that the Turtle Rescue league was so close.

A reader from Pembroke read *The Stranger In The Woods:* by Michael Finkel: Christopher Knight became a hermit in 1986 living in the Maine woods until he was caught stealing food in 2013.

A reader from Granby read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson: I have had this book for years but never started it, this seemed a perfect time. Carson was way ahead of the times with her research into how chemicals were and are affecting all life on this planet. Although we know how dangerous these chemicals are, we are still subjected to many of them due to business practices that value profits over the health of our citizens. For all the years that we have been aware of them, just today there is an article about 5 food additives that are not allowed in Europe but are to be found in food sold here in the US. This book is pretty sad to read, actually.

A reader from Ipswich read *The Hungry Ocean* by Linda Greenlaw: Great read. Read the Perfect Storm years ago. Loved her account.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Magic Kingdom* by Russell Banks: This book was not exactly what I expected but I really liked it. It is historical fiction but seems like nonfiction. Very thoroughly researched so it's enjoyable like fiction but I felt like I learned a lot about the history of the land that eventually became Walt Disney World. Definitely with a very human spin. Lots to think about about how we treat nature and how we destroy it to our own ends and often in the name of a greater good.

A reader from Brookline read *The Great Displacement* by Jake Bittle: This book is in a very different genre from my usual fare. When I read non-fiction I tend to select academic works as opposed to journalistic ones. This book did a good job of showing the different ways that the climate drives human migration within the USA. It provides a good sketch of what we can expect to see more frequently in the near future.

A reader from Gill read *On Animals* by Susan Orlean: Very good read. Entertaining.

A reader from Parkland read *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver: Amazing novel based on the controversial effects of climate change in the rural setting of Appalachia. Barbara Kingsolver writes with such beautiful, lyrical prose to describe both the characters and settings of the lives of Dellarobia Turnbow, her husband, Cub, and the local farming community. I learned so much about the 'flight behavior' of the monarch butterflies and even researched the question of What if monarch butterflies go extinct?

A reader from ashburnham read *Green Living* by Jen Chillingsworth: Beautiful book with good tips on living more sustainably.

A reader from Lowell read *The Worth of Water* by Matt Damon, Gary White: The information was interesting, and it was hopeful to learn that efforts to increase access to clean water have been impactful. Could have been 25% shorter.

A reader from NORTHAMPTON read *Were doomed now what?* by Roy Scranton.

A reader from South Hadley read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: A wonderful look at indigenous culture intertwined with the scientific world.

A reader from Northfield read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I was familiar with this impactful book in bits and pieces, which is how I often read non-fiction. For April, I journeyed through this book beginning to end. Honoring stories, honoring all interactions within and among species, honoring what is ancient, what is in our present and perhaps our future, presenting graceful ways to be in right relation...This book is a treasure and I know I will return to it again and again. My father was a botanist and, in addition to being welcomed to Kimmerer's gift of knowledge and perspective, Braiding Sweetgrass called to mind and heart glorious times with my dad.

A reader from Westminster read *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben: I appreciate trees and after reading this book, I appreciate them more. Peter Wohlleben kept me entertained with his metaphorical, upbeat, and humorous lessons on so many aspects of trees.

A reader from Brookline read *Isabel in Bloom* by Mae Respicio: A sweet middle-grade novel about a girl who moves to California from the Philippines and revitalizes the gardening club at her new school. It felt a tiny bit saccharine, but I did have fun with it.

A reader from Barnstable read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Wow. Just wow. I savored each chapter, reading each night as its own little vigil. So beautiful mixing folk stories with facts and history.

A reader from Wellesley read *A Half-Built Garden* by Ruthanna Emrys: This is the most somehow hopeful cliff book I've ever read, and it's becoming an annual reread.

A reader from HOPKINTON read *Flight Behavior* by Barbara Kingsolver: It was a long read. Not one of my favorite books.

A reader from North Andover read *WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING* by Delia Owens: The novel is about the "Marsh Girl" a rumor that haunts Barkley Cove, a quiet town in North Carolina. Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl gets caught up with the notorious Chase Andrews, found dead, the locals suspect her of foul play. Surviving for years alone in the marsh that she calls home with gulls and lessons in the sand and flow of the water, she is perceived as "strange." The references to the exquisite natural world which has sustained and protected her presents the way nature keeps her secrets. A quote from the novel "Within all the worlds of biology, she (Kya) searched for an explanation of why a mother would leave her offspring." This is a story of how she's nurtured by the marsh teaching her to survive.

A reader from Newton read *Once There Were Wolves* by Charlotte McConaghy: This is a thriller set in Scotland, with a scientist and her team reintroducing wolves into wild. I thoroughly enjoyed the mystery and thriller elements. The setting was rich and the character development throughout the book revealed many insights into characters' motives and backstories.

A reader from Uxbridge read *Sisters of the Earth* by Lorraine Anderson: Some fascinating stories and authors - Sarah Jewett's *A White Heron*; Opal Whiteley's *The Joy-Song of Nature*; Meridel Le Sueur's *Annunciation*.

A reader from Amherst read *the invention of nature* by andrea wulf: Very interesting! Although a little too long, in my opinion. She went into great detail about Darwin, Marsh, Muir, and Thoreau who were inspired by Humboldt, I think it was an unnecessary part of Humboldt's biography, and could have been summarized. However, i was amazed at the influence Humboldt has had on environmental science and ecological work. I don't realize some of these theories were so old.

A reader from No. Chelmsford, read *The Last Ride* by Will Grant: For the author to endure weeks/months of travel by horseback in today's environment, culture and society was incredible! His planning ahead in expectation of unknown problems, etc.in order to retrace the original Pony Express Trail, from Missouri to San Francisco was amazing, especially in the world we live today!

A reader from Melrose read *Housekeeping* by Marilynne Robinson: Poetically written story in which nature, especially water, plays a significant role. Interweaves life, death, memory, and meaning in a somewhat sad but also transcendent way.

A reader from Quincy read *Damnation Spring* by Davidson, Ash: A logging family grapples with the consequences on their community of using herbicide.

A reader from Braintree read *Falter* by Bill McKibben: A well written book about the failings of society when it comes to climate change. It also touches on the threat to the human race as it pertains to AI and "designer" babies, although the connection he draws between the two is a little weak. Still a great book that ends on a hopeful note.

A reader from Quincy read *Fuzz* by Mary Roach: Roach writes about "the science of managing conflicts between humans and the natural world-lethal leopards, rampaging elephants, jet-downing birds, even killer trees." Written "tongue in cheek" you'll laugh and learn something at the same time.

A reader from Melrose read *Where You'll Find Me, Risk Decisions, and the Last Climb of Kate Matrosova* by Ty Gagne: This is the second book by this author that I have read in the last 6 months. Both books have opened my eyes to the extreme weather of the Presidential Range in the White Mountains.

A reader from College Park read *The Eyes and the Impossible* by Dave Eggers: This book won the Newbery Medal this past year. The story centers on Johannes, a free dog who lives in a large public park with his animal companions including bison, seagulls, squirrels and raccoons. It was

interesting to read the points of view of these various animals--they were not anthropomorphized as substitutes for humans; rather, Eggers wrote their interactions as realistically as possible to represent the interconnected relationships between different species and how they handle changes to their environment. Johannes was an engaging protagonist and I enjoyed reading his story alongside the themes of friendship and what it means to be free. Highly recommended!

A reader from Franklin read *Selections from the Journals* by Henry David Thoreau: I've read most of Thoreau's major works (he was the topic of my college thesis), but I had not yet studied much from his Journals. To read all of them would be many volumes, so for the month of April, I picked up a book I had been meaning to get to with some of his best of from the Journals. I was not disappointed by the variety of topics and some real gems that preface and reflect the more well-known passages of his best works. As I write this, it feels more timely than ever to study Thoreau for the theme "books about nature and the environment." Thoreau's records, kept in his journals, from the 19th century have given modern scientists a detailed window into the Concord environment at that time, in order to track climate change. Just today, I saw an article that announced Walden has been placed on a list of endangered historical sites due to proposed private jet hangar expansion at neighboring Hanscom airfield (learn more about this at stopprivatejetexpansion.org). Unbelievable as the concept of private jets might have been to Thoreau, I don't think he would be too surprised. He was constantly concerned in his books with the interplay between pristine nature and the humans who live near it. Contrary to the prevalent myth, he had no aims to be a hermit; going into society and interacting with people was actually central to his philosophy. It would be wrong to try to separate his serene nature reflections from his much more urgent, often angry writings (both of which can be found in the Journals) in which he confronts the horrors and injustices of a nation which could uphold slavery. By going into nature, into any type of "wildness" that we can access, Thoreau believed we could attain the serenity and self-reflection needed to observe clear-eyed the injustices around us, thus to go into society again and fight back against them. He did so famously spending a night in jail after refusing to pay a tax that would support the war that he saw as the US expanding slave territory (when they took what is now Texas from Mexico). He was also an Underground Railroad participant, helping fugitives secure passage to Canada and freedom in a time when even in Massachusetts the Fugitive Slave Act meant that enslaved people could be returned to bondage in the South if they were found out. Reading the Journals gives a rare and important insight into Thoreau's more private self and to the miscellaneous thoughts and observations he would go on to publish and to forge into his own action. In my view, he is an underrated figure of great courage and still worthy of study, as we confront the problem in our lives of how to "be not merely good [but] good for something."

A reader from Norwich read *The Bear* by Andrew Krivak: An interesting and different read. Very quick and beautifully crafted language. Coming of age story but I felt it was told from a parents perspective and watching your child fail. Oh, by the way the daughter and father are the last 2 humans on earth due to climate change. Honestly a better version of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*.

A reader from Worcester read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers: I liked how the stories wove together by the end. Trees have so much life in/on/around them that most people overlook or ignore.

A reader from Sharon read *Deep* by James Nestor: Connecting humans to the ocean, this read discusses the similarities between ocean and land with scientific evidence. Thrilling presentation of information.

A reader from Belchertown read *Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: I chose to read *Gathering Moss* as my book for the April prompt of "a book about nature, the environment, or climate change". I have always loved moss but never knew much about it, and after finding this book at a local library book sale I thought it would be a perfect way to learn more! It was fascinating to learn about how essential mosses are for the environment, and how they have been used by indigenous peoples throughout history. Kimmerer's inclusion of her own life stories added another dimension to the book, allowing me to see all of the different kinds of mosses in a new and more relatable light. From the tiny scale of a moss ecosystem to the large one of a rainforest, we are all interconnected and deserving of respect.

A reader from Hull read *Drawdown* by Paul Hawken: I found this book to be an all encompassing view on how we as humans can work together to help solve the climate crisis. Real world solutions to complex problems. I highly recommend you dive in and read it!

A reader from Haverhill read *Of Time and Turtles* by Sy Montgomery: Loved this book.

A reader from West Tisbury read *How To Create A Wildlife Garden* by Christine Lavelle and Mick Lavelle: Approachable and comprehensive look at designing your outdoor space to support wildlife while applying personal aesthetics. This book offers a wide range - from the beginning steps to thinking about your space to raising native plants from seed to the different wildlife species that you might encounter. Highly recommend.

A reader from Dracut read *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle: Audio book -- made me feel more connected to my breath, and in turn nature and life.

A reader from North Attleboro read *This is Climate Change* by David Nelles: Very interesting and encouraging. It explained things in pretty basic terms and I learned about some things I can do to help.

A reader from Florence read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer: Beautifully written. Compelling. Urgent.

A reader from Montague read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: The importance of place...over a period of several hundred years. Beautifully written, fascinating characters, writing style "appropriate" for the century. The author focuses on the forest, the trees, succession of plants, and how it all affects the people who are living there.

A reader from Chelsea read *Teaching When the World is on Fire* by Lisa Delpit: As a high school teacher in a low-income neighborhood of Boston, I picked this book up. I read this book so I could learn how to best support my students who are traumatized by the news of war and

violence impacting our communities and their home countries. It provides the accounts from teachers and people in the educational field who help shed a light on the current status of the world of education. Environment is not always specific to the ground we stand on, but the way we live our lives. Agriculture and industrialism have impacted the environment, which has created the modern education system that I am fortunate to teach in and is the environment that I live and work in. Through the accounts of different perspectives, I am able to relearn the importance of teaching in an environment that is not always clear on its goals.

A reader from Belchertown read *Goblin Mode* by McKayla Coyle: This book was so fun! I started growing houseplants after reading it.

A reader from Lynnfield read *Of Time and Turtles* by Montgomery, Sy: This book is full of interesting facts about turtles and how to help them. What was really fascinating for me was that the organization that helps the turtles is right here in MA!

A reader from Dighton read *Two Old Women* by Verna Wallis: Dighton librarian recommendation! Spot on! The tribe leaves two elders to die in the harsh Alaskan winters as the tribe moves to find food and shelter, this is the common practice. How these women use their knowledge, skills, determination, and friendship to survive in an environment that has meant death for many younger tribe members is amazing!

A reader from Mashpee read *The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness* by Sy Montgomery: Author Sy Montgomery explores the world of octopuses during her interaction with them at the New England Aquarium and while scuba diving. This is a very engaging and informative book about amazing animals.

A reader from Attleboro read *Cool Food: Erasing Your Carbon Footprint One Bite at a Time* by Robert Downy Jr & Thomas Kostigen: I enjoyed this book more than I thought I would. I loved learning that some foods are more sustainable than others, and that the ocean plants store a lot of carbon dioxide. I liked learning about how perennial crops are better than annuals for sustainability, and that there are ways of gardening to keep things diverse where plants grown together in one area that help the ecosystem and don't become a drain on the soil. I need to read this book a few more times because there is so much information I did not know.

A reader from Reading read *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* by Becky Chambers: In this work of "solarpunk," Chambers sketches out a post-crisis world where humanity found its way rather than lapsing into a Mad Max-style dystopia. It's a science fiction book that examines rewilding and humanity's relationship with both nature and artificial intelligence - as well as whether "artificial" is even the right word to use.

A reader from Reading read *Tides* by Jonathan White: More than you ever knew about tides. Part travelog, part science. Not a fast read (especially in the last quarter) but interesting.

A reader from Andover read *Every Living Thing* by Jason Roberts: Well written and fascinating story of the modern view of species and beings (plants and animals); made me choose team Buffon vs Team Linnaeus.

A reader from Shrewsbury read *The Obelisk Gate* by N.K. Jemisin: I decided to read this piece because even though it is science fiction, it uses climate change as the reason why the world is the way it is at that time. The author does a great job of mimicking the very real effects of nature but also exaggerates in order to create the challenges that the characters mainly are subjected to. The author also included a lot of elements where the characters are connected to the earth in a different way that we are but still connected. It attempts to explain how they got to that devastating moment where a season could be the end of an entire population. Such a perfect choice for this month !

A reader from Sherborn read *Ivy and Bean: What's the Big Idea?* by Annie Barrows: I loved how these two quirky, funny, opposite best friends used their love for each other and nature to take a small step towards helping their town want to fight against climate change!

A reader from Worcester read *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* by Amitav Ghosh: A cogent and timely read about the need to better bridge the divide between the arts and the need for climate change action. I found the arguments regarding incorporating notions of equity into climate policy to be particularly powerful.

A reader from Worcester read *How High We Go in the Dark* by Sequoia Nagamatsu: This novel was less directly about the effects of climate change and more about the societal grief that would come from climate devastation. As expected it was a both a very powerful and bleak read. I really enjoyed it and probably would not have found it if not for this challenge.

A reader from Greenfield read *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy: A disturbing view of what the world might become one day.

A reader from Williamstown read *North Woods* by Daniel Mason: A beautiful, poetic, absolutely heartbreaking meditation on nature -- its beauty as well as its penchant for destruction. A single yellow house in the woods of Northwestern MA is the fulcrum upon which this masterful writer has overlaid the history of the land and the flora and fauna that inhabit it.

A reader from Plainville read *Entangled Life* by Merlin Sheldrake: I didn't really enjoy this book. It had a couple of personal stories that were interesting but there was way more scientific information and very specific details about mushrooms, so much so that I could only get through about 1/2 of it.

A reader from Norton read *Once There Were Wolves* by Charlotte McConaghy: A hauntingly beautiful story that questions how we can live in harmony with nature, and with each other.

A reader from Gloucester read *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story* by Susan Freinkel: Even though published in 2011, this is a terrific and informative read. Looking forward to finding out what's new in the plastic world in the past decade.

A reader from Franklin read *Blue Mind: The Surprising Science that Shows how Being near, in, on or under water makes you happier, healthier, more connected and better at what you do* by

Wallace J. Nichols: This book drew me in since I love being near the water. I can relate to the feeling of needing to be near the ocean, in particular. The science was interesting and it is a good read.

A reader from Attleboro read *The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill* by Valerie Bodden: This book has colorful full page pictures, charts and maps that clearly present the story of how things went wrong and caused this environmental disaster. It's very readable and makes the reader think about deep ocean drilling and the risks to wildlife, humans and our seawater and wetlands.

A reader from Arlington read *Waste: One woman's fight against America's dirty secret* by Catherine Coleman Flowers: Coleman Flowers grew up in Lowndes County Alabama, best known for marches and murders of black citizens in the Civil Rights era. This book is more a memoir of her long career as an activist starting with her organizing a successful protest in her high school. She left Alabama, worked as a teacher in DC, met influential environmental activists, and returned to Alabama. The "dirty secret" of the title is the lack of modern waste removal that affects the lives and health of rural poor folks, mostly black in the South. Families are required to install septic systems that cost more than they can afford, are fined when faulty systems fail, and end up living with sewage in their backyards where children play. Coleman Flowers learned that the same injustice affects the rural poor around the country.

A reader from Wareham read *Gifts from Georgia's Garden* by Lisa Robinson: This title goes in depth about Georgia O'Keefe's garden and how it nourished her physically, spiritually, and artistically. Endnotes supply information on how to visit her garden and museum. There is also one of her famous dessert recipes included along with a photo of her handwritten recipe card! Yummy!