



Ecomysticism: The Profound Experience of Nature as Spiritual Guide

Carl, M.D. von Essen

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Explores the philosophy, science, and spirituality of nature mysticism and its Green calling

- Offers a solid bridge between spiritual practice and environmental activism
- Reveals how we can heal the environment by renewing our connection to it
- Shows how spiritual encounters in nature are healing the Nature Deficit Disorder of our psyches and bodies

Many have been struck by a majestic moment in nature--a sole illuminated flower in a shady grove, an owl swooping silently across a wooded path, or an infinitely starry sky--and found themselves in a state of expanded awareness so profound they can feel the interconnectedness of all life. These trance-like moments of clarity, unity, and wonder often incite a call to protect and preserve the earth--to support Nature as she supports us. Termed "nature mysticism," people from all cultures have described such experiences. However, the ever-increasing urbanization of the world's population is threatening this ancient connection as well as the earth itself.

In *Ecomysticism*, Carl von Essen explores nature mysticism through the recorded experiences of outdoor enthusiasts as well as scientific studies in biology, psychology, and neuroscience. Citing consciousness scholar William James and a variety of well-known nature lovers such as Ansel Adams, Henry David Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, von Essen shows how the spiritual transcendence from an encounter in nature--like other mystical experiences--is healing the Nature Deficit Disorder of our psyches and bodies, leading to an expansion of our worldview and a clearer understanding of our self and of our natural world. Offering a solid bridge between spiritual practice and environmental activism, von Essen's spiritual ecology reveals how only through a renewal of humanity's spiritual connection to nature can we effect true environmental healing.

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