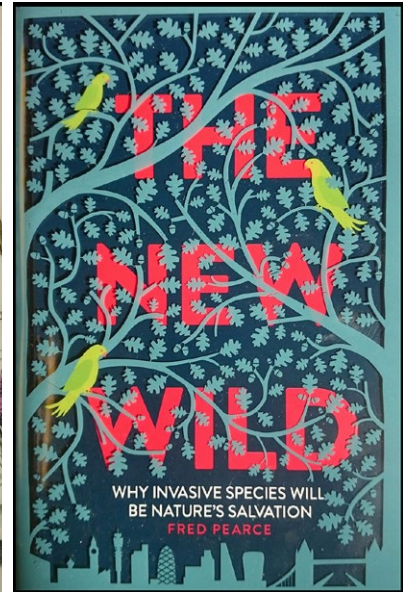
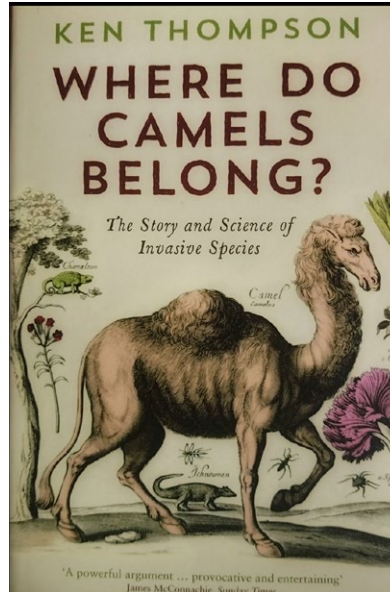
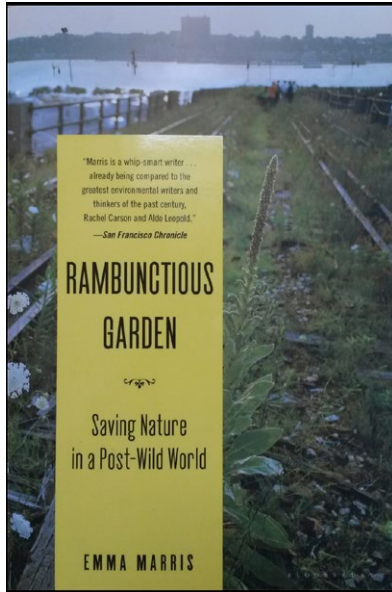


BULLETIN of the PORCUPINE MARINE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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'Native species good', 'non-native species bad'?

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I have what I'd like to refer to as a 'literary triptych' for you. The three books in question weren't written to be appreciated together but, I am suggesting they could be taken that way and that together they provide something more, perhaps, than the sum of their parts.

In any triptych there is a centre piece flanked on either side by works that both expand and support the larger central picture. These side panels could stand in their own right and certainly hold interest features not captured by the middle ground. But if we stand back to observe the ideological panorama of the triptych we might encounter something suggestive of a certain stability or robustness not otherwise so accessible. Any one particular section might walk you part way or even all the way to an epiphany, but the triptych offers to grow and ground you on that new shore and make it home.

Let's deal with the centre-piece first.

Where Do Camels Belong - The story and science of invasive species – Ken Thompson

Profile Books, 2014.

Paperback 272 pp.

ISBN: 978-1781251744

If you like the 'science bit', and I'm assuming you do, this is where to start. In 2011 Ken Thompson was one of the signatories on a paper published in *Nature* called 'Don't judge species on their origins' (Davis *et al.* 2011). 'Where do camels belong' provides a systematic and forensic analysis which essentially says, 'No, really, the origin of the species is not the issue - and here's why'. Over a series of twelve chapters he guides the reader intelligently and persuasively through the current inconsistencies and confused thinking to a more nuanced position based on evidence and logic. I laughed out loud several times as recognition of what he was saying lit up my brain. So put on your anorak, hunker down and be ready to have your thoughts challenged, corroborated and clarified. Enjoy.

Rambunctious Garden - Saving nature in a post-wild world – Emma Marris

Bloomsbury USA, 2011.
Paperback 224 pp.
ISBN 978-1608194544

But Ken Thompson's book was, in chronological terms, not the first to hit the shelves. That honour (I know, showing my colours, as if I haven't already) belongs to the eloquent and poetically titled 'Rambunctious Garden' by Emma Marris (2011). Honestly, I'd probably have been curious to read it on the strength of the title alone, although it was Ken Thompson's book that led me to purchasing it.

I'd describe this book as a piece of engaging and eloquent investigative journalism, primarily interested in, as the subtitle suggests, 'Saving nature in a post-wild world'. Through interviews with scientists and conservationists and the excavation of historical perspectives Emma Marris presents an optimistic analysis of where we are, how we got here and where we might be better off going. Don't get side-tracked by utopic visions of some pristine past instead embrace the noisy, boisterous and wild reality and recognise that change is the common thread that winds through nature and tipping points, if they occur, may be less of a cliff edge and more of a gateway.

The New Wild - Why invasive species will be nature's salvation – Fred Pearce

Icon Books Ltd., 2015.
Hardback 288 pp.
ISBN: 978-1848318342

This is the most recent publication and it's safe to say, there are no pulled punches in Fred Pearce's book 'The New Wild' which is a strongly argued polemic. He takes on the opposition and doesn't shy from naming names. Noting the rise of the phrase 'alien invasive species' he marks it as a 'catch-all for nastiness and a recipe for muddled thinking'. The gloves are well and truly off here and the ride is a bit of

a whirlwind and fact-cascade which at times is somewhat overwhelming. But it's entertaining stuff which bursts many of the bubbles it takes aim at and is essentially arguing much the same thing as the other two. Waving the flag for the new wild Fred Pearce shouts hard that the king is dead, long live the king. Whether you're a convert or not you'd be hard pushed not to agree that, 'Nature never goes back; it always moves on'.

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Would you like to contribute to the next *Porcupine Bulletin*?

- We are always open to offers of book reviews, website reviews and reviews of mobile apps!
- Interesting or topical sightings of marine life, or stories of your fieldwork experiences are always enjoyed;
- Informative line drawings of marine life are great for filling in small spaces at the end of articles;
- Articles on any subject relevant to marine natural history
- or anything else that you feel would be of interest to the readership!

In the first instance, please contact Vicki Howe with what you would like to offer. Guidelines to Authors are printed on the back page of the Bulletin, please take note of these when writing your article and particularly with reference to any images you wish to have printed.

Deadlines for contributions are:

Spring 2017 issue - Friday 9th December 2016

Autumn 2017 issue - Friday 2nd June 2017



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