



Four-Fifths a Grizzly: A New Perspective on Nature that Just Might Save Us All

Douglas Chadwick

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Everything is connected, says wildlife journalist Douglas Chadwick in *Four-Fifths a Grizzly*. From the minuscule to the large scale, the book explores how knowledge of these connections can help us to reverse the land degradation and species decline that result from human interventions in the wild.

95% of Earth's biomass is comprised of humans and their livestock, and Chadwick says that paying attention is a good way to begin when it comes to redressing the species imbalance. As a child, he was fascinated by microscopy. Now, in his spare time, he watches grizzlies. Learning that humans share 80–90% of their genes with the bears, which only thrive in wilderness, convinced him of the interdependence of creatures and habitats. He highlights such symbiotic bonds with examples, as of bacterial species, who populate the human gut and aid in digestion.

Any realistic look at the state of the planet must be depressing, right? Wrong. Chadwick lightens the tone by focusing on conservation success stories, such as island populations that were restored by eradicating invasive species, and the joined-up landscape achieved by the Yukon to Yellowstone project. "Being one with nature sounds like an aspiration. It really isn't, because we already are," Chadwick concludes. Drawing on memories, stories, and rich visuals, *Four-Fifths a Grizzly* reinforces humanity's fundamental relationship with, and reliance on, nature.

REBECCA FOSTER (July / August 2021)

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