

Resurrection of the Wild: Meditations on Ohio's Natural Landscape

Deborah Fleming

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Deborah Fleming's *Resurrection of the Wild* celebrates and explore's Ohio's ecology and resources.

The book's perspective is personal—Fleming is an Ohio native. She traces her relationship with the state and its natural beauty, at the same time pointing to its “unparalleled exploitation” by people seeking profit, first from its forests and soil and then from its minerals for fuel. Suggesting that industrial development, along with strip mining, logging, and hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” have damaged Ohio's water quality and threatened its wildlife populations, the book contrasts such mistreatment with Fleming's experiences of Ohio's lands.

In stylish and eloquent prose, Fleming describes pleasures like a walk in the woods: “In winter the trees seemed all upright trunks, and snow turned the bushes to lace; in spring the dogwood flowered white, and birdsong surrounded me.” She writes about farming and horses in Ashland County, where “we reuse or recycle all we can.” She talks about working a garden by hand: “pulling weeds can be a chore or an exercise in natural history.” Her closeness to and love of the land and its creatures permeate the book. Reflections on the work of key environmental figures including Henry David Thoreau and Johnny Appleseed also arise.

Through the book's fascinating glimpses of Ohio's history, natural richness, and diversity, the audience becomes acquainted with its forests and parks, wildlife, farmers, and hunters. An especially interesting chapter highlights the state's “plain people,” the Amish.

Fleming notes that “for all our wanderings, home is the place that forges our character.” *Resurrection of the Wild* is a literary journey home that is well worth following.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (March/April 2019)

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