

Melanie Challenger

NATURE, HISTORY & US

Long bio

Melanie writes, researches and broadcasts on environment, nature and philosophy. She's the author of **On Extinction: How we became estranged from nature**, first published in 2011 and re-released with a new foreword in 2021. She's also the author of **How to Be Animal: What it means to be human** (2021), released in 14 territories to date. She has written for a range of publications including The Guardian, the Scientist, Globe & Mail, Aeon, Inque, Emergence, BBC Science Focus, and the New Scientist. Melanie frequently deliver talks on a wide range of topics across nature, environment and ethics. She hosts the podcast **Enter the Psychosphere** on intelligence in nature, which has featured a string of guests, including Peter Godfrey-Smith, Daniel Dennett, Sy Montgomery, Anil Seth, and Frans de Waal.

She is increasingly involved in TV and film broadcasts. Recent highlights include the BBC series **Nature and Us**, hosted by James Fox. She presented a WIRED/Blue Sky film on de-extinction, and scripted and presented an award-winning short film on the pandemic called **We Are Nature**, featuring Jane Goodall.

Outside of writing, Melanie is active in ethics. Since 2021, she's been the Deputy Chair of the UK's **Nuffield Council on Bioethics**. She's also chair of the steering group for **Animals in the Room**, an international project to devise a new political mechanism to represent nonhuman animals in situations critical to their lives. She's a member of the Consortium of Environmental Philosophers. She's the editor of the first volume on the concept of Animal Dignity for Bloomsbury philosophy. She also

Melanie started life in the creative arts. She has published two award-winning collections of poems, **Galatea** and **Tender Map**. She was shortlisted for the Forward Prize for best first collection, and won an Eric Gregory Award from the Society of Authors. She collaborates frequently as a librettist with composer Mark Simpson, including the chamber opera **Pleasure**, for Royal Opera, Opera North and Aldburgh Music, and the oratorio **The Immortal**, which won of the South Bank/Sky Arts award for classical music. She adapted the diaries of Anne Frank for the Grammy award-winning oratorio, **Annelies**, by James Whitbourn.

Short bio

Melanie Challenger works as a researcher and broadcaster on the history of humanity and the natural world, and on environmental philosophy. She is the author of **On Extinction: How We Became Estranged from Nature** and **How to Be Animal: What it means to be human**. She received a Darwin Now Award for her research in the Canadian Arctic and the Arts Council International Fellowship with the British Antarctic Survey for her work on the history of whaling. Challenger is the host of the "Enter the Psychosphere" podcast, on intelligence in nature. She regularly works in bioethics and is the Deputy Co-Chair of the Nuffield Council. She lives with her family in England.