

Melanie Challenger

NATURE, HISTORY & US

On Extinction

How We Became Estranged from Nature

“A beautifully written, moving and important book.”

— PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

In response to the difficulties our societies face in our use and exploitation of the environment and other species, Melanie Challenger set out to investigate the subject of extinction and its varied association with human progress. Her journeys included an exploration of an abandoned mine in England to an Antarctic sea voyage to South Georgia’s old whaling stations, from a sojourn in South America to a stay among an Inuit community in Canada.

Drawing on the words of anthropologists, biologists, and philosophers as well as firsthand witness and ancestral memory, Challenger attempts to trace the mindset that led to our destructiveness and proposes a path of redemption rooted in our emotional responses.

On Extinction was a young person’s individual journey to overview the strange, complex idea of extinction and the many ways in which we have become the animal at the heart of the Anthropocene.

The book doesn’t offer definitive answers or arguments but was an effort to show the subtleties and complications that beset our relationship with the rest of nature.

*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.*

Visit <https://www.melaniechallenger.com/>

