



Cultures of Natural History

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This lavishly illustrated volume is the first systematic general work to do justice to the fruits of recent scholarship in the history of natural history. Public interest in this lively field has been stimulated by environmental concerns and through links with the histories of art, collecting and gardening. Twenty-four essays, written at an accessible level, cover the period from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. The book includes suggestions for further reading, and highlights the relevance of history for current debates on museum practice, ecological diversity, and the environment.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The 26 papers in this remarkable collection study, without jargon and very little special pleading, some of the principal liaisons contracted by natural history during the past five centuries....contains fresh, vigorous essays on the tried and true topics..." American Scientist

"...an authoritative new book which reviews the progress of European natural history from the 16th century...to the late 19th century...represents much of the recent research and scholarship in the field of natural history...abundantly illustrated with relevant diagrams, engravings and drawings from many classical sources." The Times Higher Education Supplement

"...this book provides an excellent basis for new explorations of natural history as overlapping and changing cultures." Joy Harvey, Journal of the History of Biology

From the Back Cover

This copiously illustrated volume is the first systematic general work to do justice to the fruits of recent scholarship in the history of natural history. Public interest in this lively field has been stimulated by environmental concerns and through links with the histories of art, collecting and gardening. The centrality of the development of natural history for other branches of history - medical, colonial, gender, economic, ecological - is increasingly recognized. Twenty-four specially commissioned essays cover the period from the sixteenth century, when the first institutions of natural history were created, to its late nineteenth-century transformation by practitioners of the new biological sciences. An introduction discusses novel approaches that have made this a major focus for research in cultural history. The essays, which include suggestions for further reading, offer a coherent and accessible overview of a fascinating subject. An epilogue highlights the relevance of this wide-ranging survey for current debates on museum practice, the display of ecological diversity and concerns about the environment.

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