



Silent Fields: The long decline of a nation's wildlife

Roger Lovegrove

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Since time immemorial mankind has taken it upon himself to wage war against nature — against those species of birds and mammals which he believes conflict with his livelihood. This remarkable book is about that war of attrition against the native mammals and birds of England and Wales from the middle ages to the present day. There is widespread knowledge about the huge declines in popular species such as song birds, farmland birds, otters, and pine martens, however, there is less understanding about the deep-rooted causes of these losses, or about the complex relationship between mankind and these species.

Roger Lovegrove has undertaken years of unique research: by searching through parish records of 'vermin' trapped, hunted, and killed over the generations, he has revealed an unprecedentedly accurate and detailed picture of the history of a nation's wildlife, and of the often devastating impact and extinction that we have forced on our ecology. Consisting of species-by-species accounts, accompanied by beautiful, specially-commissioned illustrations, this book outlines the history - and often the future too - of a wealth of wildlife species, from badgers, bears and beavers, to wolves, kingfishers, the golden eagle and the humble house sparrow.

The geographical scope is British, but the subject will be of interest to conservationists around the world because of the unique historical material that will be included. The topic has enormous relevance today, as public concern about the environment rises, and controversies rage about hunting, wildlife management and reintroduction of ancient species.

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