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978-0-521-65173-8 - Nature and the English Diaspora: Environment and History in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand

Thomas R. Dunlap

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STUDIES IN ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORY

## Nature and the English Diaspora

This book offers a comparative history of ideas about nature, particularly native nature as a part of the culture, in the Anglo settler countries – the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It begins with the rise of natural history in the late eighteenth century and examines its development in the great nineteenth-century expansion of settlement. It explores settlers' adaptations to the end of expansion and scientists' shift from natural history to ecology as a way of understanding visible nature, processes that were largely complete by the 1940s. Finally, it analyzes the diffusion of ecology through the Anglo world and to the general population, as well as the rise of environmentalism. Addressing not only scientific knowledge but also popular issues such as hunting, common names for plants and animals, landscape painting, and nature stories, this book explores the ways in which English-speaking settlers looked at nature in their new lands and the place they gave it in their societies.

Thomas Dunlap is Professor of History at Texas A&M University, where he has taught since 1991. He is the author of two previous books, *DDT: Scientists, Citizens, and Public Policy* and *Saving America's Wildlife*, and of about two dozen articles and book chapters. He has won the Theodore Blegen Award, given by the Forest History Society for the best article on forest and conservation history, three times. He has delivered papers before a variety of professional organizations, including the Agricultural History Society, American Historical Association, American Society for Environmental History, American Society for Mammology, International Theriological Congress, International Canadian Studies Conference, North American Wildlife and National Resources Conference, Organization of American Historians, Social Science History Association, and the Western History Association. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Forest History Society.

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*Texas A&M University*



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521651738](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521651738)

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First published 1999

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Nature and the English diaspora : environment and history in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand / Thomas R. Dunlap.

p. cm. – (Studies in environment and history)

ISBN 0-521-65173-5 (hb). – ISBN 0-521-65700-8 (pb)

1. Natural history – History. 2. Ecology – History.

3. Environmentalism – History. 4. Nature. I. Series.

QH15.N26 1999

508¢.09 – dc21

98-43736

CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-65173-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-65700-6 Paperback

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*To my daughter,  
Margaret Miller Dunlap,  
with love*

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book continues the exploration of a subject I began with my master's thesis on the history of DDT – the impact of science on ideas about nature in modern industrial society. The part that led to this book began, insofar as it had a definite beginning, in my research at the Canadian National Archives in the early 1980s. This work, much of which went into my book *Saving America's Wildlife*, suggested that a comparative view might be useful, though it was not clear to me then just what was to be compared. I considered a study of American and Canadian wildlife policy; some thought and investigation led me to add Australia and New Zealand (in the process ruling out several other countries for reasons I discuss in the Introduction). Preliminary research in Australia and New Zealand caused me to look more broadly at the ways in which the Anglo settlers of these lands came to understand the natural worlds they found and shaped. They had a common British and European culture, which they continued to see as a model for their own societies, but they confronted very different lands, and so they developed distinctive societies and reshaped their lands in their own ways.

That story is in my text, but before we come to that I have to thank the people and institutions that helped me over the years. Among them are the staffs of various libraries and archives. These include the national collections in the Canadian National Archives in Ottawa, the Turnbull Library and the New Zealand Archives in Wellington and the National Library of Australia in Canberra, the state libraries of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and Queensland, and the Queensland State Archives in Brisbane. Several agencies opened their libraries or archives: New Zealand's Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Lower Hutt, New Zealand; the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Canberra; and the Tasmanian Department of Lands, Parks, and Wildlife. People in the Australian Conserva-

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tion Agency and Landcare New Zealand sent me documents. To all the staff members who helped me, and to those behind the scenes who made and kept these collections, I extend my thanks.

Several institutions provided financial support. A grant from the National Science Foundation (DIR-8921746) allowed me to make an extensive initial trip to New Zealand and Australia; a summer stipend from the National Endowment for the Humanities (FT-36290) financed another. Jane Marceau, Professor of Public Policy, Research School of the Social Sciences, Australian National University, invited me to speak at a conference on science and technology policy and technological change in December 1992, giving me another chance, and Texas A&M University paid my way to the Sixth International Theriological Congress in Sydney in 1993, where I presented a paper and stayed to look at some records.

A variety of people offered information and advice, saved me time and gave me insights. Some offered home-cooked meals, oases in the desert of restaurant food, and Ross Galbreath, his wife, Susan Grant, and their son, Grant Galbreath, put me up for a night in their home in Naike, New Zealand, and gave me a tour of their local bush. I owe thanks well as to John and Meg Flux, also of New Zealand. In Australia a number of historians helped me: Linden Gillbank, Tom Griffiths, Rod Home, Roy MacLeod, Joseph Powell, Libby Robin, and Boris Schedvin. Tom and Libby deserve special thanks. Geoff Law of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society provided some insight into that group's activities. Among the scientists, I owe the most intellectual stimulation to Graeme Caughley (now, sadly, deceased) of CSIRO. For guidance, introductions, tours of the countryside around Canberra, ecological observations, and hospitality, I offer special thanks to Dan Walton of the Australian Conservation Agency. There was also Joan Dixon of the Victoria Museum, Patricia Mather of the Queensland Museum, and – at CSIRO's Division of Wildlife and Ecology – Robin Barker, John Calaby, Alan Newsome, and Mike Young. Various people at bed-and-breakfast places, on buses and trains, and in parks told me the names they gave various birds or trees, and in general let me probe their knowledge of nature.

All academics rely on the schools that employ them, and I am no exception. The students in my environmental history class at Virginia Tech (1988–1991) and Texas A&M University (since 1991) listened to earlier versions of my ideas with the patience they extend to any professor with an enthusiasm. They have my thanks. Larry Hill and Julia Blackwelder, heads of the History Department at Texas A & M during my years here, have with my colleagues made the university a good place to live and work. Among them Harold Livesay and Cynthia Bouton have been not only colleagues but treasured friends.

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My wife, Susan Miller, has continued to support my work, listen to my ideas, and in general make life wonderful. After I dedicated *Saving America's Wildlife* to her, I promised our daughter, Margaret Miller Dunlap, that the next one would be hers. So it is, and here it is. With much love, Dad.