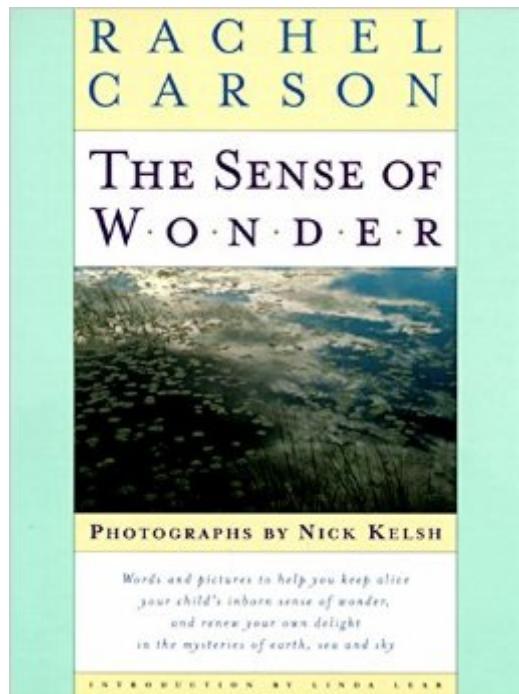


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The Sense Of Wonder



Synopsis

First published more than three decades ago, this reissue of Rachel Carson's award-winning classic brings her unique vision to a new generation of readers. Stunning new photographs by Nick Kelsh beautifully complement Carson's intimate account of adventures with her young nephew, Roger, as they enjoy walks along the rocky coast of Maine and through dense forests and open fields, observing wildlife, strange plants, moonlight and storm clouds, and listening to the "living music" of insects in the underbrush. "If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder." Writes Carson, "he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in." The Sense of Wonder is a refreshing antidote to indifference and a guide to capturing the simple power of discovery that Carson views as essential to life. In her insightful new introduction, Linda Lear remembers Rachel Carson's groundbreaking achievements in the context of the legendary environmentalist's personal commitment to introducing young and old to the miracles of nature. Kelsh's lush photographs inspire sensual, tactile reactions: masses of leaves floating in a puddle are just waiting to be scooped up and examined more closely. An image of a narrow path through the trees evokes the earthy scent of the woods after a summer rain. Close-ups of mosses and miniature lichen fantasy-lands will spark innocent as well as more jaded imaginations. Like a curious child studying things underfoot and within reach, Kelsh's camera is drawn to patterns in nature that too often elude hurried adults; a stand of beech trees in the springtime, patches of melting snow and the ripples from a pebble tossed into a slow-moving stream. The Sense of Wonder is a timeless volume that will be passed on from children to grandchildren, as treasured as the memory of an early-morning walk when the song of a whippoorwill was heard as if for the first time.

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Customer Reviews

This book was recommended to me by a friend some years ago. She told me that she had read this book in her youth and it had changed her life. At the time, the book was still out of print, but I managed to find a well-read copy through inter-library loan. After reading it, I can well understand how this little book can transform a person's way of thinking. In a very personal and lyrical remembrance, Rachel Carson shares her vision of the natural world and the wonder it inspires. "A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood," Rachel Carson writes. And this book, filled with its sage and poetic insight, and illustrated with luscious photographs of the natural world is a first step toward rediscovering that amazing sense of wonder within. I particularly love her thoughts about one starry summer night when she muses, "if this (the starry sky) were a sight that could be seen only once in a century...this little headland would be thronged with spectators. But it can be seen many scores of nights in any year, and so the lights burned in the cottages and the inhabitants probably gave not a thought to the beauty overhead; and because they could see it almost any night, perhaps they will never see it." This wisdom is both a gift to the young and the old alike. I only wish I had read it sooner. When I found the book in print again, I promptly bought it, and have read it over and over. It is a treasure that will be enjoyed for years.

I loved this book. Not only was Carson's essay wonderfully thought-provoking, but it was poetic as well. Her message is simple, if you love nature, share that love with a young person...so that they, too, might one day pass it along. By sharing your love of nature, you help carry hope that we will begin to take a little better care of our mother earth. The book includes photographs which compliment Carson's words. Thank you for reminding us to share our love of the natural world. This would be a wonderful gift for a new parent or new grandparent.

Few people in English speaking countries do not know the name, Rachel Carson, the author of "Silent Spring", which shocked the world and made her a pioneer of environmental protection in the 1960's. You may find her name on the White House official home page, where vice-president

Gore warns of environmental crisis, quoting extracts from Carson, and notes her important contributions in this connection. She already knew of her coming death from cancer while writing the book. "The Sense of Wonder" is an unfinished essay dedicated to her orphaned nephew Roger, and written while struggling with her deadly illness. In contrast to Silent Spring, which has been translated into many languages and is a best seller throughout the world, this essay has been out of print for a long time, even in the United States. I think it is meaningful to publish this essay again at this point in history. More than 35 years have passed since "Silent Spring", however, I wonder if we've listened to her warnings. There has been a massive increase in the effects of garbage, air pollution, global warming, and chemicals which markedly affect our eco-system, including the human beings. This essay is a gift for the future, for the next generation of people who will have to discover their human nature in a world where nature has been diminished and degraded.

I'm a 78 year old grandmother. This book opens doors to nature and humanity in a gently subtle magical, mystical way. It's a book to read, and to EXPERIENCE. If you are fortunate enough to be living with children it is a chance to open new doors of wonder. All of you will be enchanted! What a joy. A great gift book!!!

We live by the sea and I bought this book with my grandsons (eldest 4) in mind. The photos are excellent and the text is inspiring, but written with an adult reader (parents) in mind. The book has inspired us to try and show our grandchildren more of nature's wonders both on the beach and in the woods, fields and our garden. However they will be a little older before they can appreciate the book for themselves.

This is a wonderful book about children and nature, but more deeply, about maintaining for yourself and the others in your life the delight, surprise and awe one feels when seeing things as a child does for the first time - a sense of wonder. It is written in lovely prose that really creates the feeling that you are being made privy to the spontaneous thoughts of the author as she traversed the natural world with her little nephew. The photographs are beautiful renderings of found still lives and landscapes, well-photographed by Nick Kelsh. I did think that the prints of the photographs were a little lurid in spots, but it doesn't distract too much from the beauty of the overall product. This book was written by Rachel Carson before she died, and never truly finished. There is an older version of this book, again, with photographs that "Rachel Carson would have wanted" and it's interesting to

compare the two. I recommend this book highly for anyone who loves children and nature, and values the powers of observation of the world around them.

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