

Booklist

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Stranded: Finding Nature in Uncertain Times.

By Maddalena Bearzi

Apr. 2023. 224p. Heyday, \$25 (9781597146043); e-book (9781597146135). 591.756

Cetologist and cofounder of the Ocean Conservation Society, Bearzi shares her musings at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when mandatory quarantines keep her from being out on the water observing marine life in the Pacific Ocean. Being trapped at home forces Bearzi to turn her focus to life surrounding her Southern California home, from her own garden, which she decides to fill with succulents, to her dog Genghis to the local wildlife population. Many of the animals and insects she observes are generally considered pests. There are the coyotes that roam the streets of her neighborhood, menacing smaller animals; the opossum that eats messily in her backyard; the squirrels running rampant in the trees; and even the wasps that have taken up residence in her lawn chair. Many humans dismiss such creatures as ordinary and uninteresting, but Bearzi takes note of their importance to the larger ecosystem as well as the complexities of their very existences. Bearzi's thoughtful and meditative essays will appeal to naturalists, conservationists, and anyone who appreciates all the other animals with whom we share this planet.

— *Kristine Huntley*