



The Remarkable Life of William Beebe: Explorer and Naturalist

Carol Grant Gould

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When William Beebe needed to know what was going on in the depths of the ocean, he had himself lowered a half-mile down in a four-foot steel sphere to see-five times deeper than anyone had ever gone in the 1930s. When he wanted to trace the evolution of pheasants in 1910, he trekked on foot through the mountains and jungles of the Far East to locate every species. To decipher the complex ecology of the tropics, he studied the interactions of every creature and plant in a small area from the top down, setting the emerging field of tropical ecology into dynamic motion.

William Beebe's curiosity about the natural world was insatiable, and he did nothing by halves. As the first biographer to see the letters and private journals Beebe kept from 1887 until his death in 1962, science writer Carol Grant Gould brings the life and times of this groundbreaking scientist and explorer compellingly to light.

From the Galapagos Islands to the jungles of British Guiana, from the Bronx Zoo to the deep seas, Beebe's biography is a riveting adventure. A best-selling author in his own time, Beebe was a fearless explorer and thoughtful scientist who put his life on the line in pursuit of knowledge. The unique glimpses he provided into the complex web of interactions that keeps the earth alive and breathing have inspired generations of conservationists and ecologists. This exciting biography of a great naturalist brings William Beebe at last to the recognition he deserves.

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