



The Natural History of Selborne

Gilbert White, Anne Secord

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Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selborne* (1789) reveals a world of wonders in nature. Over a period of twenty years White describes in minute detail the behaviour of animals through the changing seasons in the rural Hampshire parish of Selborne. He notes everything from the habits of an eccentric tortoise to the mysteries of bird migration and animal reproduction, with the purpose of inspiring others to observe their own surroundings with the same pleasure and attention.

Written as a series of letters, White's book has all the immediacy and freshness of an exchange with friends, yet it is none the less crafted with compelling literary skill. His gossipy correspondence has delighted readers from Charles Darwin to Virginia Woolf, and it has been read as a nostalgic evocation of a pastoral vision, a model for local studies of plants and animals, and a precursor to modern ecology. This new edition includes contemporary illustrations and an introduction setting the work in its eighteenth-century context, as well as an appendix tracking the remarkable range of responses to the work over the last two hundred years.

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