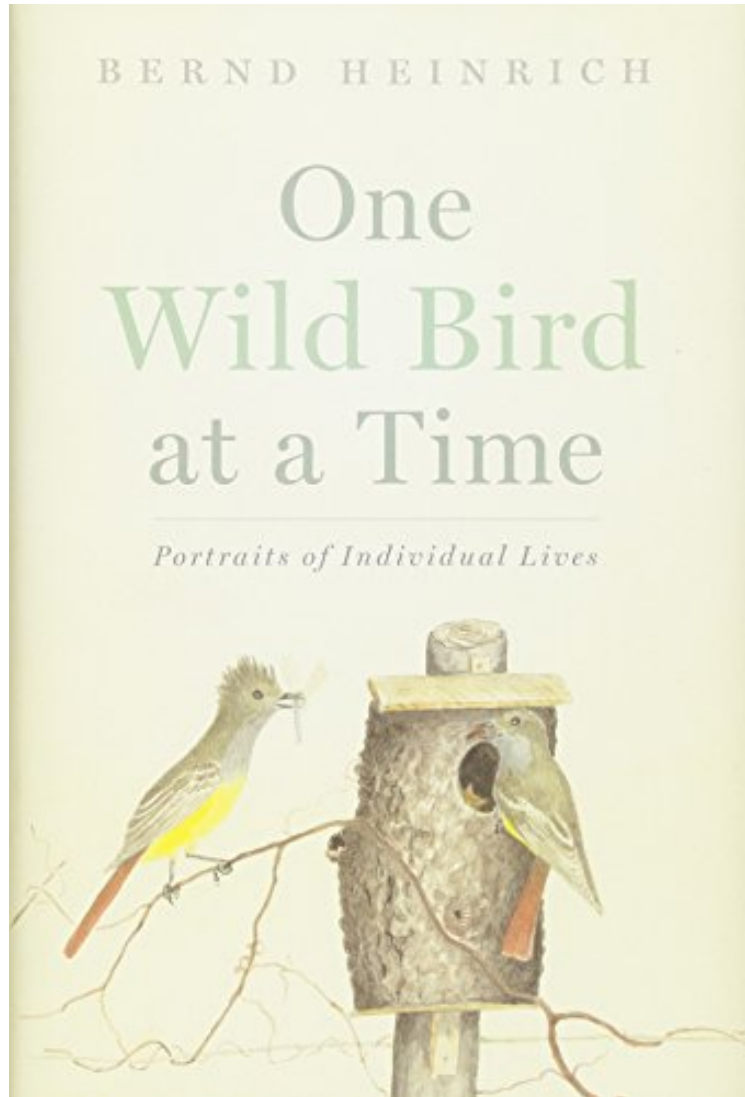


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One Wild Bird at a Time: Portraits of Individual Lives

Bernd Heinrich

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Bernd Heinrich : One Wild Bird at a Time: Portraits of Individual Lives before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised One Wild Bird at a Time: Portraits of Individual Lives:

98 of 103 people found the following review helpful. Love love love By Amy E. Henry This book was a delight. For numerous reasons, as I'll explain. First, it's not a bird guide ala Sibley or Peterson. And it has none of the (probably necessary) savagery of Audubon's early research methods. It's simply about the lives of common birds, yard birds. Not ones that people travel to other continents to add to their list. Nope, these could be seen out the kitchen window. My first attraction to it was out of curiosity, as my favorite memoir of all time is called "Bird by Bird" by Anne Lamott.

That's what caught my eye, and it took only seconds to find out that was not even close. Rather, Bernd tells a different life story. Equally fascinating and full of complex theory and some belly laughs. So, I live out in the sticks and birds are a big part of what we've created for our home area on a few acres. We have hummingbirds with names (Zip and Harley), and we've also named the red-tail hawks that breed across the valley (Spark, Cinder, and Shorty). The reason is, we've wanted to cultivate a love for nature for our sons. Our eight-year-old is now at that age of curiosity and feelings, and so he's interested in justice and safety even for the birds. When I couldn't save a baby hummingbird we found on the ground, he was devastated. (I simply had no idea what to do). But when we took a hawk to the Wildlife Center for a broken wing, he was delighted. So I want him to continue that love because other kids in his age group are discovering that charming habit of shooting at birds with BBs. I actually pulled over and yelled at some boys shooting at mourning doves. So part of Bernd's anthropomorphic descriptions is to continue his interest and realize that birds do have a part in our world. Not just the raven on Youtube that skies on a lid, and not just the mockingbird in the yard that does the perfect car alarm. Another reason is that I've read some ghastly nonfiction for work, necessary stuff, but heartbreaking. I work with troubled kids. And this is a pretty peaceful way to spend an evening when you've left work with your skin crawling. Education, peacefulness, meditation.....given how much we've seen in the last few years of animal intelligence, I think they will be our next teachers. 11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Scrapes and scats By DW Roubik señor "The Homing Instinct" and "The Nesting Season", recent books from Dr. Bernd Heinrich, consider certain birds as they migrate and reproduce, and this book is about the scrapes, field nesting observation (in which excrement pellets play a large part), and challenges that buy birds their homes, through incredible labor and ingenuity. When reading Heinrich's notes from his world—a preserve in the Maine woodlands, I know I am going home to nature. One by one, the populations of each study bird species, from woodcocks to flickers and chickadees, are given in summary form along with data on their nesting biology and behavior. Sometimes the birds have surprising performances, such as gentle cooings intended to be shared only with their mate, or by following a lone human in the woods, then taking food from them. Food, glorious food! Make a birdfeeder available in the woods, and presto, you can watch the persistence in owls waiting to spot shrews that emerge from the snow to eat a few fallen seeds. Mated bird couples return from southern lands to find the same nest and feeder as the previous year, or begin their search for something as good. We can marvel over the sagacity of birds which avoid being frozen in their burrows when wet snow freezes, but nonetheless burrow in the insulating snow to escape the death that awaits them in subfreezing ambient temperature. Without the engaging sketches drawn by Heinrich, and those offered in prose that is always to the point, we would miss the animal drama and see only woodland in the spring, summer, winter or fall. What goes on in those times, and in this northern habitat, includes truly unforgettable vignettes of the avian fauna that Heinrich knows and loves. Read and enjoy—a special gift went into showing you the world, one wild species at a time. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderfully entertaining heartwarming bird stories By Kira Nyres What a book! Heinrich once again writes a book that will resonate with all nature lovers. He definitely speaks my language, that common language only known to those who truly see nature and her bounty! This book is broken down into sections each dedicated to a particular timeline of interaction between the author and a bird species. I both laughed and cried in the first chapter. I'm guessing everyone else did too. You'll find yourself attached to the birds Mr Heinrich has had in his life. If this is your first book by this author, I can guarantee it won't be your last.

The acclaimed scientist's encounters with individual wild birds, yielding "marvelous, mind-altering" (Los Angeles Times) insights and discoveries In his modern classics *One Man's Owl* and *Mind of the Raven*, Bernd Heinrich has written memorably about his relationships with wild ravens and a great horned owl. In *One Wild Bird at a Time*, Heinrich returns to his great love: close, day-to-day observations of individual wild birds. There are countless books on bird behavior, but Heinrich argues that some of the most amazing bird behaviors fall below the radar of what most birds do in aggregate. Heinrich's "passionate observations [that] superbly mix memoir and science" (New York Times Book Review) lead to fascinating questions — and sometimes startling discoveries. A great crested flycatcher, while bringing food to the young in their nest, is attacked by the other flycatcher nearby. Why? A pair of Northern flickers hammering their nest-hole into the side of Heinrich's cabin deliver the opportunity to observe the feeding competition between siblings, and to make a related discovery about nest-cleaning. One of a clutch of redstart warbler babies fledges out of the nest from twenty feet above the ground, and lands on the grass below. It can't fly. What will happen next? Heinrich "looks closely, with his trademark 'hands-and-knees science' at its most engaging, [delivering] what can only be called psychological marvels of knowing" (Boston Globe). An eminent biologist shares the joys of bird-watching and how observing the anomalous behaviors of individual birds has guided his research. Heinrich (Emeritus, Biology/Univ. of Vermont; *The Homing Instinct: Meaning and Mystery in Animal Migration*, 2014, etc.) smoothly describes how studying the daily lives of birds in their natural environments allows him to experience their world vicariously. Now retired and living in a cabin in the Maine woods, he devotes himself to closely observing "his avian neighbors, visitors, and vagrants, and keep[ing] daily records throughout spring, summer, fall, and winter." Every year, he welcomes a pair of broad-wing hawks who feast at a vernal pond populated by frogs, spring peepers, and salamanders while refurbishing their old nest. Unusually, they provide a fern cover on the nest, which they update on a

daily basis after their chicks hatch. Heinrich also includes anecdotes from an earlier time when he still lived in Vermont. Awakened one morning by the loud drumming of a male woodpecker on a nearby apple tree, the author wondered if perhaps he was seeking to attract a female. Surprisingly, when a female was drawn to the sound, he stopped drumming and flew away. The same behavior was repeated the following day. The author's observations led him to conclude that the bird's drumming was not part of a mating ritual but rather a noisy advertisement of his nest-building skills. Vireos nesting near his cabin allowed him to observe how they deliberately reduced the number of eggs they were hatching to accommodate the reduced food supply after an unseasonal freeze. Heinrich explains that bird-watching has been an important part of his life since he was a boy on his family's farm. When he was 6, they moved from Germany to Maine. Finding familiar birds nesting "immediately made this place our home," he writes. An engaging memoir of the opportunities for doing scientific research without leaving one's own backyard. (Kirkus)