

**WIN-WIN ECOLOGY: HOW THE EARTH'S  
SPECIES CAN SURVIVE IN THE MIDST OF  
HUMAN ENTERPRISE BY MICHAEL L.  
ROSENZWEIG**

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**Win-Win Ecology:  
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## Review

"In thoughtful and elegant prose, peppered with humor and bits of philosophy, Rosenzweig presents...a hopeful, fresh vision.... The book is a wonderful source of motivation and inspiration, entertaining and thought-provoking for lay and professional audiences alike. Even the most skeptical readers will likely be convinced of the need to rethink conservation strategy."--Science

"Rosenzweig is marvelous! With vast erudition he has brought to life a novel sub-field of ecology. *Win-Win Ecology* focuses on saving species just as all hope seems gone! He demonstrates, with many fascinating examples, how humans can at least sometimes construct new ecological niches to replace those that human activity has destroyed. It doesn't always work but it works often enough to supply some hope for the world's future biodiversity. It is not a rosy pipe dream future but a realistic lantern of hope presented in lovely prose. It is necessary reading." --Lawrence Slobodkin, Founding Chair of the Department of Ecology and Evolution, SUNY-Stony Brook, and author of *A Citizen's Guide to Ecology*

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#### About the Author

Michael L. Rosenzweig is Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona and a Fellow of the Morris K. Udall Center for Public Policy.

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As humanity presses down inexorably on the natural world, people debate the extent to which we can save the Earth's millions of different species without sacrificing human economic welfare. But is this argument wise? Must the human and natural worlds be adversaries?

In this book, ecologist Michael Rosenzweig finds that ecological science actually rejects such polarization. Instead it suggests that, to be successful, conservation must discover how we can blend a rich natural world into the world of economic activity. This revolutionary, common ground between development and conservation is called reconciliation ecology: creating and maintaining species-friendly habitats in the very places where people live, work, or play.

The book offers many inspiring examples of the good results already achieved. The Nature Conservancy, for instance, has a cooperative agreement with the Department of Defense, with more than 200 conservation projects taking place on more than 170 bases in 41 states. In places such as Elgin Air Force Base, the human uses--testing munitions, profitable timbering and recreation--continue, but populations of several threatened species on the base, such as the long-leaf pine and the red-cockaded woodpecker, have been greatly improved. The Safe Harbor strategy of the Fish & Wildlife Service encourages private landowners to improve their property for endangered species, thus overcoming the unintended negative aspects of the Endangered Species Act. And Golden Gate Park, which began as a system of sand dunes, has become, through human effort, a world of ponds and shrubs, waterfowl and trees.

Rosenzweig shows that reconciliation ecology is the missing tool of conservation, the practical, scientifically based approach that, when added to the rest, will solve the problem of preserving Earth's species.

- Sales Rank: #574906 in Books
- Published on: 2003-04-24
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.40" h x .85" w x 9.50" l, 1.07 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 224 pages

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Michael L. Rosenzweig is Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Arizona and a Fellow of the Morris K. Udall Center for Public Policy.

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##### Critique

By MJ Sun

The book *Win-Win Ecology: How the Earth's Species Can Survive in the Midst Of Human Enterprise* (Michael L. Rosenzweig, 2003) introduced the unique and new idea of ecology that will benefit both human and animals: reconciliation ecology. In other words, by practicing reconciliation ecology we human will not have to give up on our economy in order to save our natural resources. It sounds ideal and wonderful as the author of this book, Michael L. Rosenzweig, the professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology in University of Arizona, proudly describes the different cases and inspiring examples of success in reconciliation ecology. One example he gave was about the underground restraint in the city of Eilat, Israel called the Red Sea Star Restaurant where there was fantastic collaboration of nature in undersea world of coral reef and human economy world of service. According to the author, reconciliation ecology fits in between development and conservation. Moreover, the author claims that reconciliation is more effective than reservation or restoration in the way that by sharing works in one ground and spending less money on recovery in ecology. From this book, if there were governmental support, this new idea will be perfect in trying out for this ecology because it benefits not only human economy but also ecology at the same time.

Michael L. Rosenzweig has shown throughout the book that he is very passionate about reconciliation ecology. However, I would like to point out that ecology is a complex process and hence him not having a firm understanding of how to conduct this ecology specifically or not actually knowing how much it will

benefit the Earth globally, means that his argument is very weak and raises fears of “what if’s.”

In order to break down some of the opponent’s ideas, there are a number of things that I would like to address. First, is the question of whether or not this type of ecology can be successful or not. His points are very clear in the beginning and he have shown us how pocket mice, red cocked woodpeckers, bufo calamita (frogs) and other animals have or have not been successful parts of reconciliation ecology. It sounded as if he has conducted a lot of research and I am confident that he has been looking at more different species. However, regardless of how much he focuses on the specific species in order to state how reconciliation ecology can protect those rare animals (endangered species), it is hard to say if this ecology can promote the biodiversity as he has mentioned only by looking at the species from a similar area and the creatures that are minor. From my understanding of ecology and taking a class in physical geography, everything on the Earth is connected. Biodiversity in ecology is an essential part that needs to be looked at when talking about ecology. Biodiversity is simply diversity of different species and according to Michael L. Rosenzweig, there is a flourishing biodiversity called a hot spot in the Torrid Zone. Because of this he seems to have focused his research more in the tropics than other places in the book. However, as we can see from the positive feedback loop in the climate change, where there is damage from that change is not necessary the place where industry is common. Therefore, I would ask for more research in the other parts of the area and bigger group species so that there is more evidence that this will work globally.

Second, there are some odd points he had mentioned in the book. He also emphasized the Chinese saying of “careful foot can walk anywhere”, meaning that if we humans handle everything correctly we can accomplish our dreams. However, as we can see from the positive feedback loop in the climate change, the changes that industry makes most damages the places that do not follow the industry act. In other words, it is important to look at the places that it flourishes but more importantly looking at the other place is as important. Moreover, although how he have pointed out that Red Sea Star Restaurant as a reconciliation ecology was clear, his opinion about ecotourism did not have a clear distinction of why he does not consider it to be reconciliation ecology. I feel it is the wonderful example of conserving environment. Because this is still an ongoing process and because he needs power from the government in order to conduct this ecology worldwide, it makes sense that he does not know.

However, for me, it was a little disappointing because I was very interested in this new idea and was ready to take an action to be a part of it. At the same time, I also think if this is not approved by the majority it will be hard to do because it is takes some risk in finding out what is right for each species without leaving others out. Also, coming to the agreement in the world takes a long time and a lot of effort to sustain it. One example is Practical for global warming. Therefore, my fear will be if it is possible to continue committing to the reconciliation ecology as a whole.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

A Clarion Call For A New, Most Unique, Approach to Saving Earth's Biodiversity

By John Kwok

One of our most brilliant, thoughtful, and persuasive, ecologists, Michael Rosenzweig has looked at virtually every major facet of ecology over an illustrative career spanning more than four decades, focusing primarily on evolutionary, population and community ecology. This tremendous range, from studying continent-wide species diversity patterns to understanding community ecology in the surrounding Sonoran (Arizona) desert, and finally, to interpreting major aspects of the fossil record from an ecological perspective, has led to the development of important, often novel, insights not only in ecology, but indeed, for much of evolutionary biology. For example, in the early 1970s, independently of evolutionary biologist Leigh Van Valen (who would coin the term), Rosenzweig stumbled upon the Red Queen's Hypothesis. In his latest book, "Win-Win Ecology", Rosenzweig is a most infectious optimist, arguing persuasively for a new kind of conservation ecology, reconciliation ecology, that, by striving to strike a balance between humanity's demographic and economic pressures and the desire to save as much of Earth's biodiversity as possible, may become ultimately, the best - if not the sole - means of saving this biodiversity.



Rosenzweig passionately believes it is possible for humanity to live in harmony with nature. Moreover, he offers elegant proof that it is being done now, beginning with a most memorable vignette; discovering an "undersea" restaurant at the Israeli Red Sea port of Eilat, whose adjacent reef has been constructed, offering a new refuge to the port's exceedingly rich coral reef biodiversity. Other memorable tales include the inadvertent construction of sanctuaries for native frogs in southern Arizona courtesy of cattle ranchers, for crocodiles at a Florida power plant, and for a pine forest at a United States Air Force weapons testing range. For Rosenzweig, these, and other notable examples he cites, demonstrate how the science of reconciliation ecology would work; a new form of conservation ecology in which mankind would construct new, artificial habitats to preserve some, if not all, an area's existing biodiversity. Most conservation biology efforts, Rosenzweig notes, fall under reservation ecology: "save the Earth's habitats", with increasing attention also drawn to restoration ecology: restoring some territory back to a more natural status. But he believes both are ultimately doomed to fail if they are the only means of preserving Earth's biodiversity. For both purely esthetic and selfish economic reasons like ecotourism, Rosenzweig believes that reconciliation ecology may prove to be more effective than reservation ecology and restoration ecology (But he also recognizes that we shouldn't throw out the baby with the bath water; that both reservation ecology and restoration ecology will still have ample importance in preserving our planet's still rich biodiversity.).

Most of the latter half of "Win-Win Ecology" is devoted to the science behind the species-area relationship, which, ecologically astute readers may recognize, led eventually to the development of the theory of equilibrium island biogeography back in the mid 1960s by Rosenzweig's doctoral dissertation advisor, ecologist Robert MacArthur and systematist and biogeographer Edward O. Wilson. Here Rosenzweig offers persuasive mathematical reasoning demonstrating as to why reservation ecology is insufficient towards preserving our planet's biodiversity. The mathematics he employs is simple, quite lucid, and should be easily understandable to anyone with a good foundation in arithmetic. He also reminds us that extinction is the ultimate fate of all species; a point stated with utmost eloquence by his late colleague, eminent vertebrate paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson, who noted that our planet is a "charnel house of species". And he stresses this point by referring to some of the great mass extinctions known in the past five hundred fifty-odd million years of Earth's biological history, most notably the terminal Permian mass extinction from approximately two hundred forty million years ago, where upwards of 97% of known species became extinct.

Rosenzweig hasn't offered us the golden elixir of truth that will solve our ongoing crisis in protecting and preserving much of Earth's biodiversity. But he has offered a most fascinating solution to our problem, and one that's well-reasoned, and well-stated in clear, extremely lucid, prose. Without question, "Win - Win Ecology" demands a wider readership, especially amongst the scientifically literate audience - and the general public - for whom this book ought to be required reading.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

This should be required reading for anyone involved in conservation

By J. Schaeffer

This is a brilliant book. Rosenzweig points out that there are only two major tools in use for conservation: Preservation and restoration. Both work, but preservation requires relatively pristine habitats, and restoration requires at least some of the original components of the ecosystem. Unfortunately this leaves out much of the landscape, especially in urban, suburban, and agricultural lands. The epiphany is that we have a third way of saving nature, reconciliation, that is the alteration of the human landscape to make it once again usable by native species. The book presents compelling evidence that reconciliation is a powerful and worthwhile tool that can eliminate or reduce conflicts between humans and nature as well as preserve imperiled species. The concept is particularly well illustrated through success stories.

One of the greatest mysteries in conservation is why this book is not owned by every natural resources agency and every NGO conservation group on the planet.

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