



RELIGIOUS NATURALIST ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

created by religious naturalists for religious naturalists

July 2023

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News and Events

The Ecospiritual Hub

Jack Greene has just launched a new website, the Ecospiritual Hub (TESH) with links to 25 ecospiritual organizations, including RNA, that foster nature-embedded eco-spiritual orientations and environmental activism. Some focus on particular spiritual practices, such as meditation or pagan ritual, and some lift up connections with traditional religions. Also offered are links to Ecospiritual Resources such as websites and TED talks.

RNA members are encouraged to explore TESH <https://www.ecospiritualhub.org/> and sign up as members and/or to receive newsletters from organizations with which they resonate.

JD Stillwater Events

July 22-23, 11:00 AM
Charleston, SC - in person [and online](#)
UU service: One Song—The Science of Unity

July 30, 10:30 AM
St. Petersburg, FL - in person [and online](#)
UU Service: Defiant Love—Interrogating Our Heritage, at the church led by Rev. Ben Atherton-Zeman, a friend since 1983.

Aug 6, PM 10:30 AM
Pottstown, PA - in person [and on Zoom](#)
UU Service: Defiant Love—Interrogating Our Heritage



Article of the Month - July 2023

Dipping Our Toes in the Reddit Sea by Terry Findlay



I am self-professed dinosaur when it comes to social media. I have a Facebook account and belong to a few Facebook groups. I suspect I am not alone within my age group. When the RNA leadership began talking about raising awareness of the religious naturalist orientation it was obvious that we would be looking into ways of leveraging the connectivity of the various social media platforms. I expressed my position quite clearly. I was in full support of exploring and using any and all forms of social media but I had zero interest in being the one to do it.

Fortunately, there were braver souls willing to dive in and take a stab at mounting an RNA social media campaign. Since most were familiar with Facebook that would be where we would start. Valiant efforts were made and there were some successes but after awhile things just kind of petered out.

However, all was not in vain. Partly as a result of the Facebook groups' efforts a number of new members came onboard and within these members were a few younger people who, on their applications, stated interests in internet related activities. I am delighted to say that we now have a manager for our RNA Forum (Rachel Krishnaswami), a manager of Search Engine Optimization (Angie Wilson), and a manager of Traffic and Social Media (Jack Green).

Recently Jack organized an event using a social media platform called Reddit. Reddit allows subscribers to create events called Ask me Anything (AmAs). The idea is that an expert in a field is asked to set aside time to answer questions related to her or his field of expertise. The Q&A takes the form of a live online chat. Ursula Goodenough

(continued on next page)



News and Events (continued)



Trees Are Earth's Endless Effort to Speak to the Heavens

July 26, 2023 9 -10am on Zoom - sign up at <https://gnoicc.org/2023/07/10/trees-endless/>

Trees! We love them. We need them. How can we be better friends? Please join us for this special interactive educational event with our panel of local folks working with and for trees, facilitated by Bart Everson of Crescent City Gaian Guild.



A Conversation With Robin Wall Kimmerer and Ursula Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, will join Ursula Goodenough on August 31 at 4p at the Featherstone Center for the Arts, West Tisbury MA, for a conversation on the spiritual and ecological.

There will be a link to this event in the August newsletter.

Dipping Our Toes in the Reddit Sea (continued)

gamerly agreed to answer questions from whomever might turn up.

A lot of people turned up, each of whom are presumably connected through various social media accounts to a number of other people who are similarly connected and so on. This internet-enabled connectivity is what social media is all about. Connections and ideas can spread like wildfire or fizzle like a tiny spark. It all depends on the extent to which connections spread.

So did it work? Did the “Ask me Anything” event help spread awareness of the religious naturalist orientation? It’s difficult to say for sure but hits on the RNA website went through the roof. That and the fact that the event itself was well attended certainly give the impression that a lot of people who may never have heard of religious naturalism now know it exists. And that was the goal.

Thanks Jack and Ursula for making it happen and making it a success!



Forum Topic of the Month Family Connections

Some of our deepest connections are with our own families. Who is a family member that you feel deeply connected to? What does this relationship mean to you?

To join the discussion go to <https://religious-naturalist-association.org/forums/topic/connections-with-family/>



Song of the Month If A Tree Falls

by Bruce Cockburn

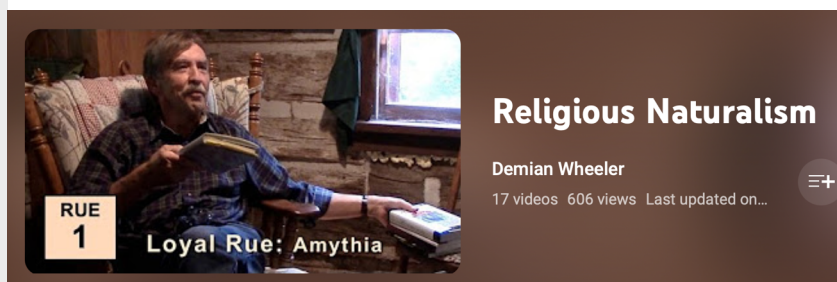
Nature Image of the Month

The ili pika was photographed for the first time in more than 20 years on July 9, 2014 by Weidong Li, the conservationist who first discovered the species. Photo courtesy of Weidong Li



Ili pika (*Ochontana iliensis*) is a small mammal (only 7-8 inches long) that's native to the Tianshan mountain range of the [remote Xinjiang region of China](#). Living on sloping bare rock faces and feeding on grasses at high elevations, this little creature is very rare — there are less than 1,000 left. The species was only discovered in 1983, but its [numbers have declined by almost 70% since then](#).

Video of the Month Loyal Rue Interviews



This video collection includes a 5 part series of interviews of Loyal Rue by Connie Barlow and Michael Dowd

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8p5SazNe4px434ik4IXw-GVXNI5FX8TY>

Book of the Month

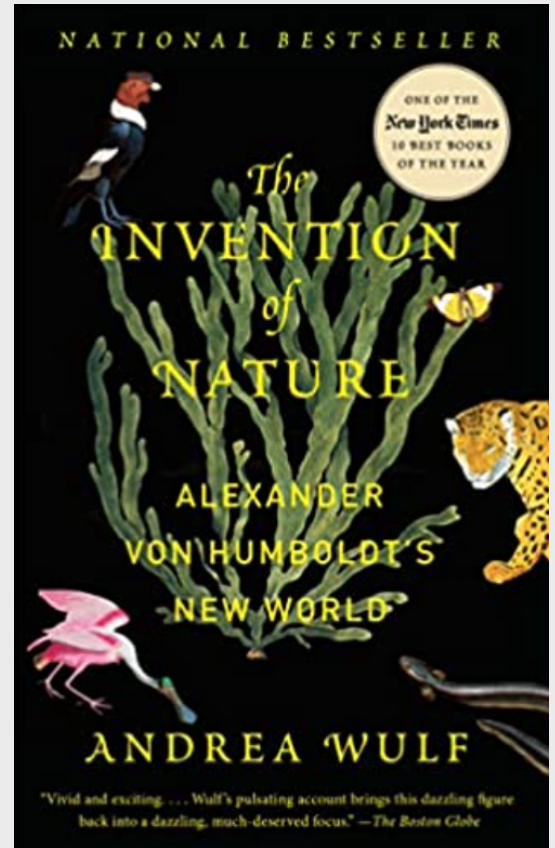
The Invention of Nature by Andrea Wulf

In this illuminating biography, Andrea Wulf brings Humboldt's extraordinary life back into focus: his prediction of human-induced climate change; his daring expeditions to the highest peaks of South America and to the anthrax-infected steppes of Siberia; his relationships with iconic figures, including Simón Bolívar and Thomas Jefferson; and the lasting influence of his writings on Darwin, Wordsworth, Goethe, Muir, Thoreau, and many others. Brilliantly researched and stunningly written, *The Invention of Nature* reveals the myriad ways in which Humboldt's ideas form the foundation of modern environmentalism—and reminds us why they are as prescient and vital as ever.

https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Andrea+Wulf&crd=3P3H0KOI9ECJP&srefix=andrea+wulf%2Caps%2C153&ref=nb_sb_noss_1

Members' Projects

The RNA website has a section called [Members' Projects](#). This page provides links to projects of RNA members. If you have a project related to RN that you would like included on this webpage please email a description to projects@religious-naturalist-association.org.



Taking
Nature to
Heart