

Conservation ethics



Why should anyone care about biodiversity anyway?

What do you value?

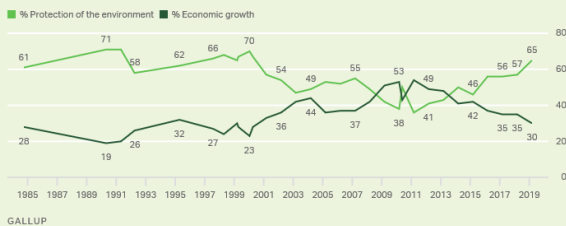
- Write down a few things you value
 - Whatever comes into your brain
 - They don't have to relate to this class

Humans vs. everything else

- Any discussion of conservation ethics must address this central dichotomy

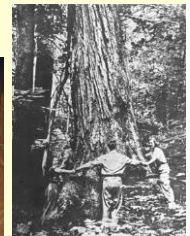
Environmental Protection vs. Economic Growth

With which one of these statements do you most agree -- protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of curbing economic growth (or) economic growth should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent?



Categories of values

- **Instrumental or Utilitarian (Anthropocentric)**
 - vs.
- **Intrinsic or Inherent (Biocentric or Ecocentric)**



Instrumental values

Category	Examples
Goods	Food, fuel, fiber, medicine
Services	Pollination, decomposition, nutrient cycling
Information	Genetic engineering, biotechnology, 'pure' science
Psycho-spiritual	Aesthetic beauty, religion

Table 4.1

Callicott (1997)

Ways that people value wildlife (1)

Table 1. Basic wildlife values.

Term	Definition
Naturalistic:	Primary focus an interest and affection for wildlife and the outdoors.
Ecological:	Primary concern for the environment as a system, and for interrelationships between wildlife species and natural habitats.
Humanistic:	Primary interest in and strong affection for individual animals such as pets or large wild animals with strong anthropomorphic associations.
Moralistic:	Primary concern for the right and wrong treatment of animals, with strong ethical opposition to presumed overexploitation or cruelty toward animals.
Scientific:	Primary interest in the physical attributes and biological functioning of animals.

- Kellert (1991)

Ways that people value wildlife (2)

Table 1. Basic wildlife values.

Term	Definition
Aesthetic:	Primary interest in the physical attractiveness and symbolic characteristics of animals.
Utilitarian-consumption:	Primary interest in the practical value of animals.
Utilitarian-habitat:	Primary interest in the practical value of habitat associated with wild animals.
Dominionistic:	Primary interest in the mastery and control of animals, typically in sporting situations.
Negativistic:	Primary orientation an active avoidance of animals due to dislike or fear.
Neutralistic:	Primary concern a passive avoidance of animals due to lack of interest.
Theistic:	Primary orientation a fatalistic belief in wildlife as controlled by external deities or nonnatural forces.

Source: Kellert and Clark 1991.

● Kellert (1991) continued

Name that value!

Incidence of Intentional Vehicle-Reptile Collisions

E. PAUL ASHLEY,¹ AMANDA KOSLOSKI,² AND SCOTT A. PETRIE³

2007

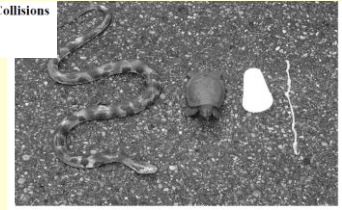


Figure 1. Picture of decoy snake, decoy turtle, Styrofoam cup, and genuine control line that were individually placed on the center line of the road to determine incidence of intentional vehicle strikes.

Male drivers ($n = 803$) hit reptile decoys more often ($n = 50$) than female drivers ($n = 197$, 3). Drivers were 2.4 times more likely to hit the snake than the control and 1.9 times more likely to hit the snake than the cup. Similarly, drivers were 1.7 and 1.4 times more likely to hit the turtle than the control or cup, respectively. This resulted in 5.3% of observed drivers hitting reptile decoys whereas 2.6% inadvertently ran over the control. Mean minutes per strike for each treatment were: 10.5 (SD 11.4) snake; 16.1 (SD 18.8) turtle; 18.3 cup (SD 12.4); and, 21.6 (SD 28.9) control. Thirty-three drivers stopped to rescue reptile decoys from the road with male and female drivers stopping at a similar rate (3.4% and 3.0%, respectively).

Ways that people value wildlife (3)

- Some variation across the globe
- Japanese vs. American views
- Similarities?
- Differences?

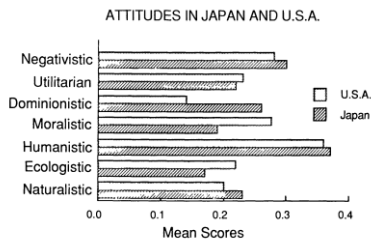
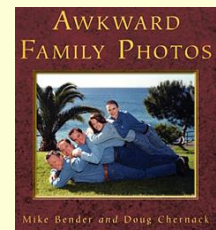
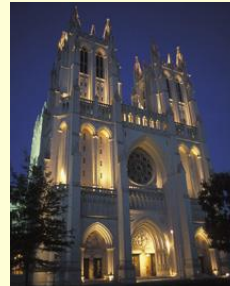


Figure 1. Mean scores of general publics in Japan ($N = 450$) and the United States ($N = 2455$) on basic attitudes toward wildlife scales.

Kellert (1991)

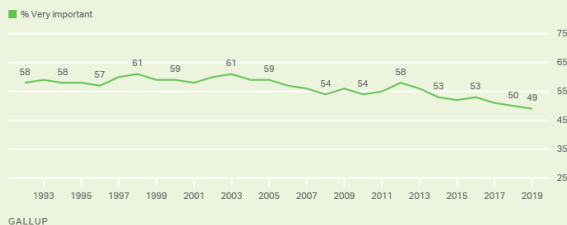
So where do our values come from?

- Religion?
- Family?
- School?



US religious views

How important would you say religion is in your own life -- very important, fairly important or not very important?



Judeo-Christian Stewardship Conservation Ethic (1)

- And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
- Genesis 1:27-28

Judeo-Christian Stewardship Conservation Ethic (2)

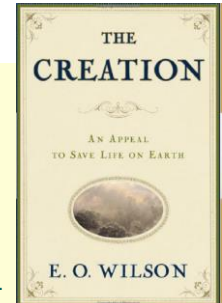
- And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.
- Genesis 1:20-22

Some recent appeals to religion

Viewpoint

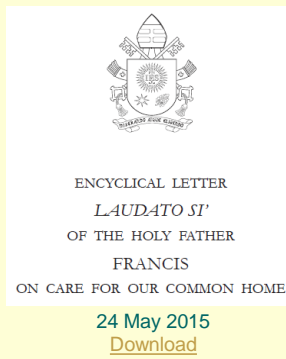
Converting the Religious: Putting Amphibian Conservation in Context

DOUGLAS C. WOODHAMS
2009; *BioScience*



Also see...

And the reverse...a religious appeal



Non-western religions: conservation ethics

	India				China	
	Islam	Hinduism	Jainism	Buddhism	Taoism	Confucianism
Source of value in nature	External (Allah)	Internal (Atman-Brahman)	Internal (soul - jiva)	Internal (Buddha-nature)	Emergent the Tao	Emergent relational
Human attitude toward nature	respect for creation is respect for the creator	self realization	Ahimsa (noninjury)	loving-kindness	Harmony; cooperation	Interrelated; interdependent
Conservation practice	conserve for future generations	conserve beings that manifest Atman-Brahman	low consumption, low on food chain	still desires; reduce consumption; contemplate nature	adapt human economy to nature's economy	conserve nature to preserve human society

Table 4.3

Deep Ecology

Callicott (1997)

Deep Ecology

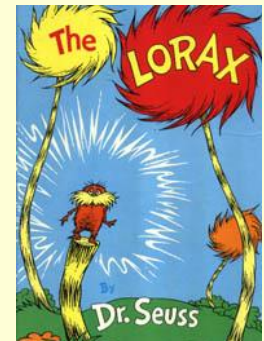
Dominant worldview	Deep ecology
Humans dominate nature	Humans live in harmony with nature
Natural environment and species are resources for humans	All nature has intrinsic worth, regardless of human needs
A growing human population with a rising standard of living	A stable human population living simply
Earth's resources are unlimited	Earth's resources are limited and must be used carefully
Ever-higher technology brings progress and solutions	Appropriate technology must be used with respect for the Earth
Emphasizes material progress	Emphasizes spiritual and ethical progress
Strong central government	Local control, organized according to ecosystems or bioregions



Arne Naess (1912 - 2009)

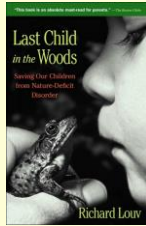
Children's conservation ethics

- "I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees. I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues."
- "UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."



Nature deficit disorder

- Richard Louv, author of "Last Child in the Woods"
- Louv has argued that indoor kids are more prone to a range of childhood problems, including obesity, depression and attention disorders. He contends that they miss out on the spiritual, emotional and psychological benefits of exposure to the wonders of nature, including reduced stress and improved cognitive development, creativity and cooperative play.
- "I'm not saying that a child who grows up without nature is going to have terrible problems," Louv said, "but if you look at the studies that show what nature does give kids, it's unfortunate that so many children are missing out on that."
- With this generation of children, he said, "I think we're going to pay a price if we don't turn this around."



Washington Post, June 19, 2007

An ethical test: Conservation 'triage'

- Bottrill et al. (2008) say "Continuous threats to biodiversity and inadequate funding make it inevitable that conservation managers apply triage..."
- Noss (1996) argues that triage in conservation "offer[s] an easy way out, a convenient escape from our moral duties to other creatures."
- Jachowski & Kesler (2009) say "If conservationists sanction extinction in the name of efficiency, what would stop others from justifying extinctions..."
- What do you think?

More fun with ethics

- Common vs. rare: does it matter? Why?



Leopold's Land Ethic

