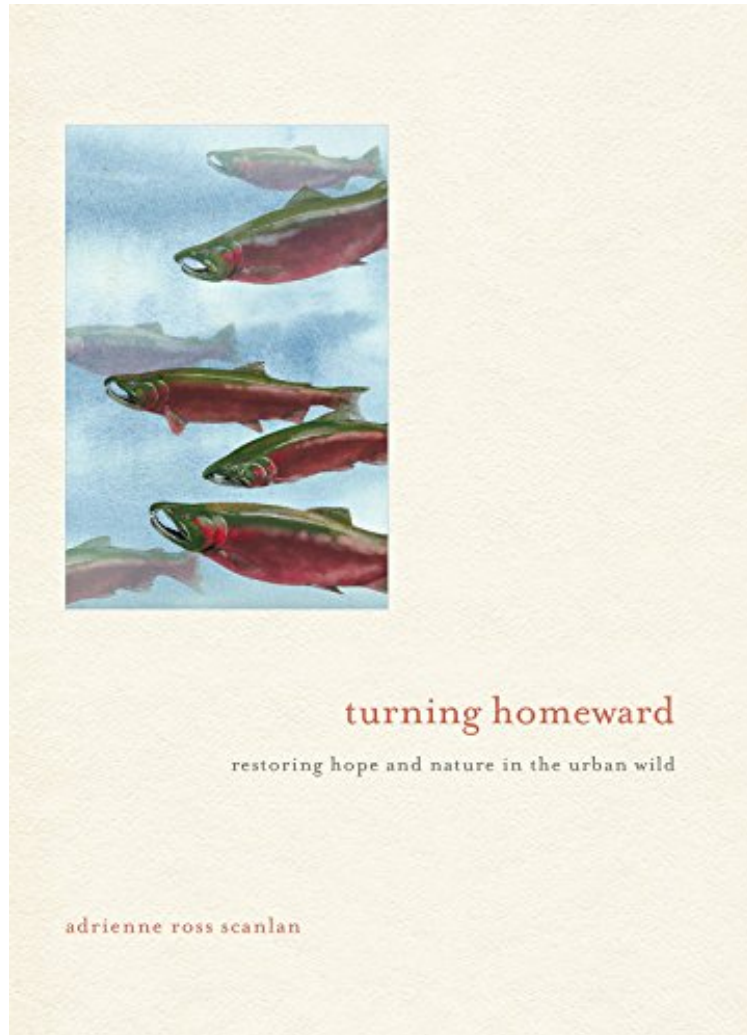


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Turning Homeward: Restoring Hope and Nature in the Urban Wild

Adrienne Ross Scanlan

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Adrienne Ross Scanlan : Turning Homeward: Restoring Hope and Nature in the Urban Wild before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Turning Homeward: Restoring Hope and Nature in the Urban Wild:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Call to Arms, a Note of Hope By Neil Mathison Adrienne Ross Scanlon elegantly weaves several narrative strands together in Turning Homeward: her relocation from New York to Seattle, her Jewish faith and what it has come to mean to her, and above all, her commitment to the natural world, especially to the lakes, streams, and backwaters of the place she now calls home. Her description of salmon returning to their native streams in metropolitan Seattle, so attentive to the smallest details, yet also so attuned to the larger cycles of life, is some of the finest nature writing you're likely to read. Scanlon sounds not just a call to arms for the

salmon but also a note of hope. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Repairing the World and Ourselves By Story Circle Book Reviews As a girl growing up in the suburbs of New York City, Adrienne Ross Scanlan watched her father with the other men at Temple Zion, white prayer shawls over dark suits, "swaying and chanting their prayers." At home, she watched a different kind of movement as the tremors and other neuro-motor impacts of Parkinson's disease robbed her father of the ability to "rise from his Naugahyde recliner, walk into a room, hug his daughters, talk and laugh with friends..." After her father died, Scanlan, by then an adult, sold her belongings, quit her job and moved West for a new start. She wound up in Seattle and began searching for her own form of healing in volunteer work to help restore the region's iconic salmon runs. She understood it as a way to practice the Jewish tradition of tikkum olam, a term that translates as "repair of the world." Turning Homeward chronicles what Scanlan learns about the complexities of both mending the world and living as a thoughtful and conscious human being. Her meditations on the meaning of tikkum olam, and the meaning of restoration in nature and in daily life apply to all of us. How can we as fallible human beings live with our flaws and the hurts we intentionally or not inflict on each other and the world? How do we live with the knowledge that even at our best, we cause pain and suffering, simply by being? We all eat, for example, and in the doing, we consume other lives. Even if we eat a purely plant-based diet, we eat plant embryos as we consume grain and beans, and plant flesh in roots like carrots or leaves like spinach. How do we atone for those impacts, unwitting or not? For Scanlan, the answer is in practicing tikkum olam, consciously working to repair the world in whatever form we are called to: "The call to repair is genuine, arising from our best selves, I like to think, the part of all of us capable of acknowledging the harms we've created without shrinking away in guilt or fear. There's no end to the damage we caused, just as there's no end to our curiosity, our capacity for good work, our intelligence, and our compassion. The reasons for despair are everywhere and profound. What's lost does matter. So does what's still here and what's still possible. ... Tikkun, I've come to learn, isn't identified by intentions but by the impact of what we hope are reparative actions." Turning Homeward is a work of thoughtful atonement. Scanlan writes honestly and tenderly about what has not worked in mending her life, and the lives of salmon and urban streams, as well as what has. And out of despair at the havoc we have wreaked on this earth and each other, a quiet sense of hope grows in her words, the kind of active expectation of the results of conscious work that can in fact, lead to mending the wounds of the world and we humans. by Susan J. Tweit for Story Circle Book Reviews reviewing books by, for, and about women 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful nature writing that deserves a wide readership By Peter D. Mark Adrienne Ross Scanlan's `Turning Homeward: Restoring Hope and Nature in the Urban Wild weaves together several stories: personal memoir, the celebration of Jewish holidays and the values they instill, the natural history of Western Washington, and the relationship between human settlement and wildlife habitat. The narrative is organized as a sequence of chapters primarily on specific creeks, rivers, and watersheds. Finding a sense of home is a unifying theme running through the book, paralleling the salmon's return to the spawning grounds of their birth. Ross Scanlan recounts her experiences as a newcomer to Seattle. She relates how her priorities evolved as protest marches, letter writing campaigns, and political lobbying yielded to quieter direct actions that, while lower profile, produced results more immediate and tangible: participating in salmon restoration projects, salvaging native plants from soon-to-be-paved-over natural habitat, and removing ecosystem-damaging invasive plants, especially Himalayan blackberry, that crowd out native species. Exploring and caring for pockets of wild spaces in greater Seattle, learning the local flora and fauna, and especially observing and protecting the salmon spawning grounds in the fragile creeks and rivers that flow into Puget Sound contribute to her search for rootedness and give meaning to the Jewish concept of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world). The writing is elegant, earnest, and erudite. Ross Scanlan muses about the wild and human worlds she encounters, and peppers her narrative with references to the writings of other naturalists, historians, social scientists, and Jewish philosophers. Every page reveals the author's attentive eye, careful research, and patient determination to make the world a better place. She touches on wide-ranging topics such as kingfishers, herons and other waterfowl, the biology of backyard bumblebees, the effect of fish canning in the 1800s on salmon runs, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the nature and meaning of weeds, homelessness in Seattle, the effects of suburban sprawl, storm-water runoff, and, on a more personal level, the challenges of pregnancy and of raising an infant with special needs, and the challenges of feeling by turns like an uprooted weed or part of a newly planted family and community. Ross Scanlan's powers of perception and attention to detail attest to Yogi Berra's adage that you can see a lot just by looking. Turning Homeward: Restoring Hope and Nature in the Urban Wild is proof that one individual with an inquisitive and generous spirit can make a positive impact on the world. If salmon runs are restored to Seattle's local rivers, it will be thanks to efforts of Ross Scanlan, those who inspired her, and those she in turn inspires. This beautifully written, engaging, and important book deserves a wide readership.

A beautifully rendered natural history of the Puget Sound region Turning Homeward: Restoring Hope and Nature in the Urban Wild is the journey of a newcomer to the Pacific Northwest who learns that home isn't simply where you live, but where you create belonging. Set in Seattle and Western Washington's urban and suburban altered landscapes, Turning Homeward creates an accessible narrative of the complicated joys of rolling up one's sleeves to help repair our beautiful, broken world. Adrienne Scanlan's personal story blends into the natural history of Puget Sound and the

tangled issues around urban renewal and river restoration. In the process, readers move with her into a meaningful, hope-filled engagement with place and another understanding of the idea of home. Adrienne explores how seasons spent restoring the city's salmon runs help her make peace with her father's death and build a new marriage. *Turning Homeward* speaks to a simple truth spreading through our society: The nature we cherish lives alongside us, and by restoring it we heal both home and heart.

"In her delightful and thought-provoking narrative, Adrienne Ross Scanlan takes readers into small nooks of the natural world where she explores the big and often-neglected questions of what it means to call a place home. *Turning Homeward* will inspire newcomers and long-time residents anywhere to follow Scanlan's example as she surveys, rescues, tosses, uproots, worries, digs, and restores her way into her community." --Maria Mudd Ruth, author of *Rare Bird*"Adrienne Ross Scanlan writes beautifully about salmon restoration and citizen science, as well as about how 'to stay alert for beauty in overlooked places.' Bittersweet and yet inspiring, her book asks the important questions: how can we share our home with wildlife and wild places in an increasingly urbanized metropolis?" --Barbara Sjöholm, author of *The Palace of the Snow Queen*"In this beautiful book Adrienne Ross Scanlan seamlessly interweaves themes of life, place, science, and spirit. Feeling uprooted after moving to the west, she discovers the surest path to home: participation in the natural world. Bees, wrens, herons, turtles, and salmon become her guides. The stories she shares will inspire all readers to look more deeply at the wild in our midst, and in so doing, feel more connected to the places we live. But Scanlan doesn't simply rest in the peace of nature. This book gently invites us all to delight in the natural world, yes, but also to participate fully in its repair and its wholeness." --Lyanda Lynn Haupt, author of *Crow Planet* and *The Urban Beastiary*About the AuthorFor over twenty years, Adrienne Ross Scanlan has immersed herself as a volunteer in all things nature: as a citizen scientist monitoring salmon runs for county and local agencies, a restoration volunteer salvaging native plants and removing invasive weeds, and as a docent at Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle and Wolf Haven in Tenino, Washington. Adrienne's writing has appeared in a variety of literary publications, including *City Creatures*, *Pilgrimage*, *The Fourth River*, *Tikkun*, and *Tiny Lights*. She has received a Seattle Arts Commission award and an Artist Trust State Literature Fellowship. Learn more at adrienne-ross-scanlan.com