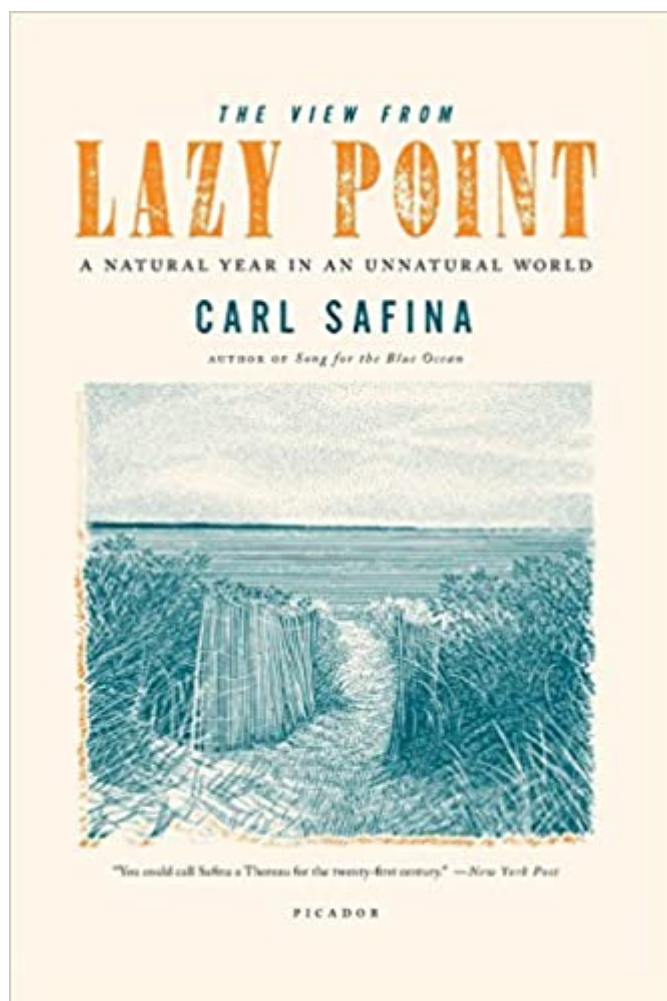


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# The View From Lazy Point: A Natural Year In An Unnatural World



## Synopsis

THE VIEW FROM LAZY POINT named winner of the 2012 Orion Book Award! THE VIEW FROM LAZY POINT; A Natural Year in an Unnatural World (Picador, January 2012) has been named winner of the 2012 Orion Book Award. View the announcement here.

[orionmagazine.org/index.php/article/6197/](http://orionmagazine.org/index.php/article/6197/) Hailed MacArthur Fellow Carl Safina takes us on a tour of the natural world in the course of a year spent divided between his home on the shore of eastern Long Island and on his travels to the four points of the compass. As he witnesses a natural year in an unnatural world he shows how the problems of the environment are linked to questions of social justice and the politics of greed, and in asking difficult questions about our finite world, his answers provide hope. Ã

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The environment's glass is half-full for lyrical conservationist Safina (Song for the Blue Ocean)--even though coral reefs are suffocating under seaweed as parrotfish, which normally consume it, are netted to near extinction; penguins are finding less food to forage for as the Antarctic Ocean's winter sea ice melts earlier and freezes later, reducing the krill they can feed on; and migrating shorebirds are starving because horseshoe crabs have been overhunted and there aren't enough eggs to fuel the birds' annual 20,000-mile roundtrip. These are a few of many cause-and-effect calamities addressed in Safina's compassionate account of both a year of four seasons around his eastern Long Island beachfront home, and his travels that same year to the

Arctic, the Antarctic, the Caribbean, and the islands of the Pacific. He leavens the gloom, however, with this perception: "I'm continually struck by how much beauty and vitality the world still holds--an optimism that suffuses this sensible and sensitive book. Safina reserves his real anger for capitalists, whose predatory practices, he writes at some length, "continually privatize profits and socialize costs, brazenly fouling the environment. (Jan.) (c) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** Lazy Point is a "flat peninsula of scrubby pines between the Sound and the bay, a "place of real power" on a wild swath of Long Island, where ecologist and ocean advocate Safina lives, avidly observing terns, sea ducks, and other shorebirds, as well as bluefish and horseshoe crabs. From his home base, this celebrated scientist and activist travels to places where the impact of climate change and environmental abuse is starkly evident. With the spiral of a year as his structure and with what Einstein termed the "circle of compassion" as his moral compass, MacArthur and Guggenheim fellow Safina illuminates the wondrous intricacy and interconnectedness of life in a book of beautifully modulated patterns and gracefully stated imperatives. Safina's exacting descriptions of coral reefs and polar bears, the acidification of the oceans and melting glaciers are matched by bold observations regarding the consequences of our failure to incorporate knowledge of how nature, the original network, actually works into our now dangerously inadequate economic systems and social institutions. Emphasizing the fact that where nature is most abused, so, too, are human rights, Safina argues that we must renew the social contract, free ourselves from the politics of greed, and embrace the facts about the still thriving yet endangered, immeasurably precious living world. --Donna Seaman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I would have to say that this is one of the new classics of natural history writing, in line with "A Sand County Almanac", "Silent Spring", and even that most hallowed of texts, "Walden". Carl Safina is probably my very favorite natural history writer, so I will admit a touch of bias, but this book merits all the praise I am about to bestow upon it. Part meditation on time, tides, and the cycles of nature at a small beach house on Long Island known as "Lazy Point", part travelogue to various locations around the planet, from coral reefs in Belize to a discussion of the intricate ecological web of grizzly bears, salmon, and forests in Southern Alaska and the precarious struggle for survival in an ever warming world of polar bears in Svalbard, Safina imparts to all these a grace, beauty, and just

simply outstanding natural history reporting and writing. Another component of the book consists of what almost could be termed as an environmental and human manifesto on how we could and should be living in and with our natural world. Many truly thought provoking and inspiring ideas, concepts, and pearls or wisdom come through in these particular sections of the text and were often my favorite parts of the entire book. "The View From Lazy Point" can and should be read more than once and absorbed as deeply as possible and offers many deep thoughts and ideas to ponder about our relationship to nature and how the natural world, while assaulted at every turn by the greed and avarice of man, can still be resilient, sustaining, and truly healing and inspiration for those willing to do the right things for all life and creatures we share this small blue planet with. A very remarkable and wonderful read, I would give it my highest recommendation.

Our good friend Bob Murray recommended this book, and his review above says much of what I would have to say. But let me add that I am not a scientist, even though I have an avid interest in most every branch of science and engineering. I need all the help I can get to enjoy learning more. Dr. Safina's book has held me spellbound from start to finish. His writing is not simply accessible, it is also beautifully crafted, a gift that many of us aspire to and rarely achieve. His words paint pictures of the world seen through his eyes and experienced through his close interaction both with its enthralling beauty and its "red in tooth and claw" realities. Sadly, the human species is undoubtedly more rapacious than any other, to the point of threatening its own survival without, seemingly, a long term care in the world; except, of course, by those whose lives are threatened in the here and now. The book is a wake-up call. Everybody should read it. I hope they do.

Carl Safina's years of deep ecological study, and homo sapien's effect on ecosystems, have resulted in a penetrating analysis of where we are now, and how we got here. Incisive, clear and without restraint, alternately delightful and excruciating, Safina brings his lens to bear on the current state of ecology, from micro to macro. With deft insight, he clearly has asked himself "why?" over and over to the bottom, and arrived at some basic observations about human philosophy and how we approach life, developed in the middle ages and no longer appropriate for the world we live in today. While he pull's no punches and call's it as he sees it; and some of his observations are body blows, neither does he rub your nose in it, as is often the case when ecologists connect cause and effect. Not only do I highly recommend this book (I think it should be required reading in schools and households everywhere), I have bought and given away many copies to friends and family. With so many books and so little time, I rarely read books twice, but this one will be in the re-read stack. After

watching a few short interviews of him on Youtube, I think an audio book version, read by the author, would be very popular, I would buy it.

I received this book as a gift, and what a truly wonderful gift! Mr. Safina's acute observatory skills of his world near the tip of Long Island really made me stop and become more one with my little world. Every word of this book made me feel as though I were right alongside him, through the seasons, watching the flora and fauna unfold and move through the cycle unique to each. But then Mr. Safina does something really amazing; he takes the microcosm of his backyard and grows it to encompass the world and what he is really illustrating is how everything is really connected, in a truly profound way. A simply beautiful book, with a message for all. Regardless of your view of our planet's plight, read it at least for the beautiful imagery Mr. Safina paints. I look forward to reading more of Mr. Safina's work! And thank you for showing me how easy it is to observe the little things around me!

This is a very good book, reminiscent of the Sand County Almanac. He explains in full detail the impacts of global climatechange on wildlife Dr. Safina encounters on his trips around the world, including plants, fish, birds, and mammals. Hewarns us about our glutinous use of fossil fuels and how in the last 50 years we have seriously damaged our environment.

I enjoyed it very much. Carl, being from Long Island, wrote of things that were very familiar to me. It was easy relate to his experiences. I enjoy reading his books. I find his writing style and his humor an easy and enjoyable experience.

Anyone who still denies that our planet is rapidly changing should read the "polar" chapters. Mr. Safina makes some excellent points regarding economic growth and the finite resources available on this Earth. Alas, few people will listen.

This is a modern day "Sand County Almanac" by Aldo Leopold. Wonderfully done. Safina is a wonderful naturalist.

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