



Lakes, Loughs and Lochs (Collins New Naturalist Library, Book 128)

Brian Moss

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Another volume in the popular New Naturalist series, this book gives a comprehensive account of the natural history of Britain and Ireland's inland waters, many of which are popular holiday destinations.

The study of life in British lakes and rivers has been traditionally neglected in natural history publications, and yet the intricacies of plant and animal ecology as a whole can be readily studied in a pond or lake. Not since Macan and Worthington's landmark publication in 1951, *Life in Lakes and Rivers* – volume 15 in the New Naturalist series – has there been a comprehensive overview of British freshwater life. In Brian Moss's much-anticipated new volume, he gives a passionate account of the natural history of our lakes, loughs and lochs.

Our understanding of lakes has changed enormously since the days of Macan and Worthington. From new techniques using stable isotopes and molecular biology to ambitious approaches using whole lakes for experiments; from advances in chemical methods that detect tiny traces of organic substances to the development of new electronic instruments, it is becoming increasingly urgent to make use of these advances to help maintain and conserve some of the most damaged of the Earth's ecosystems.

Freshwaters form the fascinating threads that stitch together the landscapes of our planet with a myriad of exchanges involving an array of organisms, from algae and insects to hippopotami and otters. Healthy lakes and their shores influence our quality of life and they strengthen the economy. They are important ecosystems that can sustain a healthy balance of aquatic life, provide us with much enjoyment, and help support our socio-economic needs. At the same time they suffer the consequences of human abuses of the land – increasing urbanisation, intensive farming, drainage and an increasing invasion of non-native species, to name but a few. Moss explores the richness of their fundamental ecology, emphasizing the need to view these freshwater systems as a whole, and not to manage or assess them in isolation, as well as the importance of ongoing conservation efforts.

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