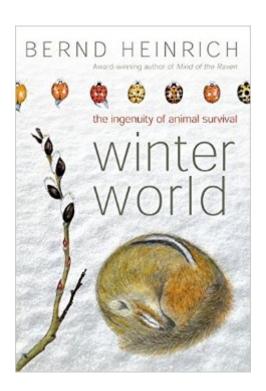
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Winter World: The Ingenuity Of Animal Survival





Synopsis

From flying hot-blooded squirrels and diminutive kinglets to sleeping black bears and torpid turtles to frozen insects and frogs, the animal kingdom relies on staggering evolutionary innovations to survive winter. Unlike their human counterparts, who alter the environment to accommodate physicallimitations, most animals are adapted to an amazing range of conditions. In Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival, biologist, illustrator, and award-winning author Bernd Heinrich explores his local woods, where he delights in the seemingly infinite feats of animal inventiveness he discovers there. Because winter drastically affects the most elemental component of all life -water -- radical changes in a creature's physiology and behavior must take place to match the demands of the environment. Some creatures survive by developing antifreeze; others must remain in constant motion to maintain their high body temperatures. Even if animals can avoid freezing to death, they must still manage to find food in a time of scarcity, or store it from a time of plenty. Beautifully illustrated throughout with the author's delicate drawings and infused by his inexhaustible enchantment with nature, Winter World: The Ingenuity of Animal Survival awakens thewonders and mysteries by which nature sustains herself through winter's harsh, cruel exigencies.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you have enjoyed the nature writing of Farley Mowat or David Attenborough (The Life of Birds, The Private Life of Plants), you'll enjoy this wonderful book. There are bookson nature which are dry and distanced: this is just theopposite. There are also books on nature which are primarilyobservational,

such as Thoreau's Walden Pond and Annie Dillard's Pilgrim at Tinker Creek. Neither Thoreau nor Annie Dillardmeasured the rectal temperature of insects in the winter tohelp determine the mechanics of heat regulation. Most of themammals, birds, insects, and trees looked at by the author arehis neighbors in the winter woods: the love and enjoyment andthe curiosity about his environment is very evident. He wantsto know what these creatures do to cope and survive the severewinters where he lives in Maine and Vermont. Heinrich writes with great warmth and humor throughout the book. You'll follow his thoughts and discoveries about how the tinygolden-crowned kinglet survives the winter, when logic seems tosay that it shouldn't even survive a single below-zero night. On sunny days, even when the temperature is well below freezing, several dozen honeybees may emerge from the hive and just a fewseconds later will all be lying dead on the snow: this is asacrificial testing mechanism by the hive to ensure that whenthe first flowers open up that a head start can be obtained forforaging. There are all kinds of fascinating things that youcould never imagine going on. Most of the nature in the bookcenters on Heinrich's own environment, but he also readily andoften talks at length about other species from around the world.

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