



Between Urban and Wild: Reflections from Colorado (Bur Oak Book)

Andrea M. Jones

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In her calm, carefully reasoned perspective on place, Andrea Jones focuses on the familiar details of country life balanced by the larger responsibilities that come with living outside an urban boundary. Neither an environmental manifesto nor a prodevelopment defense, *Between Urban and Wild* operates partly on a practical level, partly on a naturalist's level. Jones reflects on life in two homes in the Colorado Rockies, first in Fourmile Canyon in the foothills west of Boulder, then near Cap Rock Ridge in central Colorado. Whether negotiating territory with a mountain lion, balancing her observations of the predatory nature of pygmy owls against her desire to protect a nest of nuthatches, working to reduce her property's vulnerability to wildfire while staying alert to its inherent risks during fire season, or decoding the distinct personalities of her horses, she advances the tradition of nature writing by acknowledging the effects of sprawl on a beloved landscape.

Although not intended as a manual for landowners, *Between Urban and Wild* nonetheless offers useful and engaging perspectives on the realities of settling and living in a partially wild environment. Throughout her ongoing journey of being home, Jones's close observations of the land and its native inhabitants are paired with the suggestion that even small landholders can act to protect the health of their properties. Her brief meditations capture and honor the subtleties of the natural world while illuminating the importance of working to safeguard it.

Probing the contradictions of a lifestyle that burdens the health of the land that she loves, Jones's writing is permeated by her gentle, earnest conviction that living at the urban-wild interface requires us to set aside self-interest, consider compromise, and adjust our expectations and habits—to accommodate our surroundings rather than force them to accommodate us.

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