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## Review of *Wild Animals and American Environmental Ethics* by Lisa Mighetto

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**Wild Animals and American Environmental Ethics.** Lisa Mighetto. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1991. xiv + 177 pp. Photos and references. \$17.95 paper.

I looked forward to reviewing Mighetto's book so I could set readers straight on the issue of animal rights and environmental ethics. I can quibble with many of her statements. She mentioned that organizations such as Ducks Unlimited were devoted to the protection of a single species. This is clearly false. She, perpetuates the simplified argument of the role of predators in regulating deer numbers in the Kaibab Forest. Most biologists recognize that major policy changes that eliminated grazing on the forest also contributed to, if not explained totally, an eruption of deer on the forest. And in a somewhat maddening fashion, Mighetto uses the term "animal" to exclude humans. To me, this identifies her as a *speciesists*, a very anthropocentric sect, who try so hard not to be anthropocentric. Speciesists (those who value their own species over others, i.e. humans, but I aver all species are speciesists), as Mighetto rightfully explains, are decried by Singer and his supporters. Singer and his ilk represent some of the most fervent animal rightists, yet the animal rightists create the epitome of speciesism in that they want humans to grant other animals rights. Is this not anthropocentrism?

Her intended purpose, however, was to place the ideas expressed in the book in historical context. She included the caveat that all her sources might

not be accepted as scientifically correct. Further, she stated her interest was primarily in the arguments used to protect animals and how new values and ethics regarding animals have emerged.

Within the confines specified above, Mighetto accomplishes her purpose quite nicely. She discusses writings of Muir, Darwin, Roosevelt, Seton, Kellert, Singer, and Leopold as would be expected. However, she also includes lesser known writers (at least to me) and their historical role under chapter titles ranging from "Science and Sentiment" to "The New Humanitarianism" to "New Directions for Protection." As an ecologist, I am perplexed by such statements as, "Not all Americans who value wildlife have embraced the principles of ecology (p.107)." I am further frustrated by those who do not share my view that the core of modern protection, is indeed the integrity of ecosystems (p.109).

This is not a major distraction from the book. Mighetto, as any author, surely should exercise her prerogative as to her perception of right. She does a very good job of presenting arguments for and against certain points of view. Her aspect always remains clear. I am certainly guilty of her statement, "Those who complain of the 'inconsistencies' of animal lovers" (p.121). However, I do appreciate the views of the animal lovers. They have effected great change in how animals are treated and used in recreation, food, and research. Ultimately, if they truly care about animals on this planet, their views must encompass those of ecologists.

The book is well edited. I noted only two errors. Any person concerned about the ethical treatment of wild animals will gain from reading this book. **Ronald M. Case**, *Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Wildlife, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*.