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## Review of *Women and Nature: Saving the "Wild" West* by Glenda Riley

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**Women and Nature: Saving the “Wild” West.** Glenda Riley. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999. xx+304 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$60.00 cloth (ISBN 0-8032-3932-7), \$24.95 paper (ISBN 0-8032-8975-8).

*Women and Nature* begins with the statement that generations of women have revered nature and explored their relationships with it. Why have they been overlooked? The book is not so much the story of nature and the women in it, but a listing of particular women and their efforts in writing, drawing, and promoting environmental awareness, preservation, and activism.

Many have been aware of the strong ties among women, animals, and nature. As one pamphlet states: "Nature is no mere mechanism, inanimate and insensible. But nature is more like women, whose real law is sympathy." Thus, the book sets out to rectify the omissions with name after name of women who have been active in this terrain.

Glenda Riley takes a historical view of the women and their problems establishing themselves as serious participants and scholars in the environmental field, problems have been male dominance and the mistrust of women's professional abilities. In 1889, for instance, male members of photographic societies and camera clubs threatened to resign if female members were admitted. One photographer, Catharine Weed Barnes, responded in print to a man who styled himself "perplexed" that clubs might be better off without such members.

Further contributions of these women pioneers were gardening, landscape architecture, illustrating, and instructing in the natural sciences. Regarding women's attire, one of the book's engrossing subjects, Carter notes that "Wearing floor-length skirts, corsets, and long-sleeved shirtwaists," these women set out to mountaintops and seashores and the recesses of nature. In "Tigers I Have Shot," Kate Martelli recommended "a green cotton dress and a hat covered with the same material for hunting tigers and riding elephants in India." Later, of course, clothing styles relaxed. In 1914, as "Texas botanist Dr. Mary Sophie Young urged her team of burros through the trans-Pecos district of West Texas, she wore high-laced leather boots, an ankle-length skirt topped by a long-sleeve blouse, and a broad-brimmed straw hat." "Alice Eastwood often wore high boots, a calf-length dress with long sleeves, and a crushed-denim hat with flowers for decoration." Later, such women as "Ellen Schulz Quillin and Annie Alexander wore leggings and breeches, or trousers."

If numerous white American women supported environmentalism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, why are they not included in history books and other accounts? Indeed. Well, now they are, which is the achievement of Carter's book: a compendium of names, occupations, and accomplishments.

"The intersections between women's clubs, feminism, and the American conservation movement," Carter informs us, "offer a rich and seemingly unlimited area of scholarship exploration."

This book is a big step in that direction. **Diane Glancy**, *Department of English, Macalester College*.