

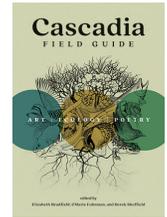
Cascadia Field Guide: Art, Ecology, Poetry

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ISBN: 978-1-68051-622-7

[Mountaineers Books](#), 2023

www.cascadiaguide.com



Make Your Own Field Guide/ “Feel Guide”

This project could be done in a week, a month, or a semester

Drew Lanham calls *Cascadia Field Guide* a “feel guide.” Why? Because it honors sensory/tactile engagement, artistic/poetic imagination, and the wonders of science.

Anyone can make a “feel guide” if they research, look, listen, and wonder.

Where are you? What beings are important to where you are (whether they are iconic, endemic, rare, commonplace, or simply beloved)? Research and come up with ten (10) beings for your guide that span taxonomic boundaries (don’t let it be all mammals!). Everyone will have a different list.

Now: go out and hang out. Spend time (10 minutes a day for a week? 60 minutes a week for a month or more?) and observe the space/place you are engaging. Ground yourself. Discover what you need to ask and learn. Revise your list, if need be.

What writers and artists have spoken from, through, and for the place where you are? What new voices are exciting and thrilling in your region? How can the people whose voices you honor also honor the diversity of your place? You might need to ask for recommendations from folks in the region—that’s ok. In fact, it’s beautiful.

Make sure the writers and artists include long-time, venerable residents; newly-arrived wonderers; deep time witnesses. We all belong and we all offer valuable ways of seeing and connecting.

Grounding questions:

- What voices speak from/for this place?
- What beings are iconic, unique, significant?
- What relationships have people had with these beings over time? (Look to practical “uses” and also spiritual ones, past and present, and the many cultures within your region—both long-standing and newly-arrived).
- How can you visually represent or communicate these beings? Photos? Collage? Drawings? Graffiti? Comics?

Create your mini-guide:

- Think about how you might blend science, TEK, and immediate sensory experience in introducing your beings and write those stories of introduction.
- Write the poems/prose that don’t exist.
- Find or create art that speaks to the essence of these beings.
- Write an introduction that speaks your process in creating this guide.
- Include, in an afterward, the biographies of those whose work you use and the sources and resources that were foundational for your work.