The Best AMERICAN SCIENCE & NATURE WRITING 2022

Edited and with an Introduction
by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson
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Contributors' Notes Other Notable Science and Nature Writing of 2021

JULIAN AGUON is an Indigenous human rights lawyer and writer from Guam. He is the author of *No Country for Eight-Spot Butterflies*, based on his widely acclaimed debut, *The Properties of Perpetual Light*. His essay "To Hell with Drowning" was a finalist for the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary.

MANUELA ANDREONI is a writer for the Climate Forward newsletter. Before joining the climate desk, she was a fellow at the Rainforest Investigation Network, covering the Brazilian Amazon. She studied at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and received a master's degree from Columbia University, where she was a fellow at the Toni Stabile Center for Investigative Journalism. She is a native of Rio and started writing for the *Times* in 2018 working out of the Brazil bureau.

MARK ARAX is a two-time winner of the California Book Award and the William Saroyan International Writing Prize from Stanford University. He is the author of several books, including his most recent national bestseller *The Dreamt Land: Chasing Water and Dust Across California.*

EMILY ATKIN is the founder of Heated, a newsletter dedicated to accountability reporting and analysis on the climate crisis. She is also a contributing essayist to the climate solutions anthology *All We Can Save* and an enthusiastic but deeply amateur drummer.

JUSTINE CALMA has reported on climate change across four continents since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015. Now she covers energy and the environment as a science reporter at Vox Media's the Verge. Calma moved from the Philippines to California as a kid and is now based in New York City.

CATRIN EINHORN is a journalist who covers biodiversity, climate, and the environment for the *New York Times*. She was part of a team of reporters that received the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service in 2018 for exposing sexual harassment and misconduct in the American workplace. Throughout her career, Einhorn has focused on narrative-driven work in print, film, and audio. Her documentary *Father Soldier Son*, directed and produced with Leslye Davis, won an Emmy Award.

YESSENIA FUNES is an environmental journalist covering the climate crisis through an intersectional lens. She's the climate director for *Atmos*, a nonprofit magazine dedicated to covering climate and culture. She's been published in the *Guardian*, HuffPost, *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, Gizmodo, Grist, and more.

CLAUDIA GEIB is a science journalist based on Cape Cod in Massachusetts, covering marine science, wildlife, and the environment. She is the producer of the podcast *Gastropod* as well as the author of a forthcoming book on elephants. When not writing, you can often find her near, on, or under the water.

JEFF GOODELL's most recent book, *The Water Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and the Remaking of the Civilized World,* was a *New York Times* Critics Top Book of 2017. He is the author of five previous books, including *Big Coal: The Dirty Secret Behind America's Energy Future,* and a contributing editor at *Rolling Stone,* where he has covered climate change for more than a decade. He is a Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council and a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

CYNTHIA R. GREENLEE, PH.D., is a North Carolina—based historian, writer, and editor. Her work has appeared in publications as diverse as *The Atlantic, The Best American Food Writing, Essence*, Longreads, *The Nation*, the *New York Times, Smithsonian*, and Vox. She is also a winner of a James Beard Award for excellence in food writing. Check out her work at cynthia greenlee.com.

MIKKI K. HARRIS is a multimedia journalist whose work over the past twenty years has focused on community-based power as examined through the tools of journalism and cultural studies. She uses oral history, documentary photojournalism, and video, as well as writing, to document and shape stories of impact. Harris became a certified drone pilot and founded the Atlanta Drone Lab in 2019. In addition to drone technology, she produces stories in virtual reality while designing and teaching digital media and visual innovation courses at Morehouse College.

'CÚAGILÁKV (JESS HÁUSTI) is a mother, writer, and community organizer from the Heiltsuk Nation in Bella Bella, British Columbia. She is a poet, plant worker, and nonprofit leader helping Heiltsuk youth and families learn and thrive on the land. She lives in her unceded ancestral homelands with her extended family and nonhuman kin.

KASHMIR HILL is a tech reporter at the *New York Times*. She writes about the unexpected and sometimes ominous ways technology is changing our lives, particularly when it comes to our privacy. She is currently working on a book about facial-recognition technology.

BOB HOLMES trained as an evolutionary biologist and has had a long career as a science writer, first for *New Scientist* magazine and more recently for Knowable Magazine. He lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

JANE C. HU is an independent journalist living in Seattle.

SABRINA IMBLER is a writer living in Brooklyn, New York. Their writing has appeared in the *New York Times, The Atlantic,* and *Sierra*. Their first book, *How Far the Light Reaches,* will be published in December 2022.

COREY G. JOHNSON was an investigative reporter at the *Tampa Bay Times* from January 2017 to May 2022. His work on "Poisoned" with Rebecca Woolington and Eli Murray won the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting, the George Polk Award, the IRE Gold Medal, and several other national honors. Years prior, his work for the Center for Investigative Reporting exposed hundreds of illegal and coerced sterilization surgeries of women prisoners. He prompted sweeping reforms in California, including a statewide ban and the first-ever reparations program for victims and families. His investigation of public schools uncovered shocking statewide failures in the construction of earthquake protections. He was born and raised in Atlanta and is a proud graduate of Florida A&M University in Tallahassee. He works for ProPublica, a nonprofit news organization based in New York City.

LACY M. JOHNSON is a Houston-based professor, curator, and activist, and the author of the essay collection *The Reckonings*, the widely acclaimed memoir *The Other Side*, and *Trespasses*. She is also the editor, along with graphic designer Cheryl Beckett, of *More City Than Water: A Houston Flood Atlas*. She teaches creative nonfiction at Rice University and is a founding director of the Houston Flood Museum.

SARAH KAPLAN is a *Washington Post* reporter covering the unequal impacts of climate change and humanity's response to a warming world.

ARIANNA S. LONG, PH.D., is a NASA Hubble postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas, Austin, and former Ford fellow at the University of California, Irvine. Long uses state-of-the-art telescopes to understand how massive galaxies form, grow, and die in the early cosmos.

CHRIS MALLOY is a writer from the American Northeast now based in the Southwest. For stories, he has gone foraging in the Rockies and Sonoran Desert, trailed a quest to brew ale overnight in a forest, roamed a lost mountain orchard with cider-making scientists, and gone hunting for *gloscho* with Apaches. He covers mostly food, culture, agriculture, the environment, and innovation.

ELI MURRAY is an investigative reporter who specializes in data work at the *Tampa Bay Times*. He's a self-taught programmer who uses code to create graphics and crunch numbers on statewide and national investigations. He recently worked as part of a reporting team with Corey G. Johnson and Rebecca Woolington that exposed dangerous working conditions at a Florida lead factory. The series was the recipient of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting, a George Polk Award, and several other national awards. Murray grew up in rural Illinois and received an associate's degree from Sauk Valley Community College before pursuing journalism at the University of Illinois. He joined the *Tampa Bay Times* in 2015.

KENDRA PIERRE-LOUIS is a senior climate reporter with the Gimlet/Spotify climate solutions podcast *How to Save a Planet*. Previously she was a climate reporter with the *New York Times* and a staff writer for Popular Science, where she wrote about science, the environment, and, occasionally, mayonnaise. In addition, her writing has appeared in *The Atlantic*, the *Washington Post*, and Slate. She is based in Queens, New York.

JESSICA PLUMB is an award-winning filmmaker and writer, known for exploring the relationship between people and place. She is the producer, codirector, and writer of the feature documentary *Return of the River*, chronicling the world's largest dam removal to date on the Elwha River. Her essays can be seen in *Orion*, the *Seattle Times*, and *Mountaineer*, among others, and her writing for film has been recognized as the "best writing in science media" by the Jackson Hole Science Media Awards. Plumb is based on the Olympic Peninsula, near the wilderness and waters she loves.

RACHEL RAMIREZ is a writer at CNN, covering all things climate change and environmental justice. She is currently based in New York City but was

born and raised on the Pacific island of Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. territory just north of Guam. You can find her previous work in Vox, HuffPost, Grist, and other publications.

RUTH ROBERTSON (formerly Hopkins) is a Dakota/Lakota Sioux writer and enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe. She is also a biologist and the chief judge of her tribe. She was born on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation and resides on ancestral treaty lands.

JULIA ROSEN is an independent journalist covering science and the environment. She writes about how the world works and how humans are changing it. Her work has appeared in the *New York Times, The Atlantic, Scientific American,* and *High Country News,* among other publications, and she is a former science reporter for the *Los Angeles Times.* She lives in Portland, Oregon, with her family.

SHIRA RUBIN is a correspondent for the *Washington Post* based in Tel Aviv, Israel, where she covers conflict, climate, technology, and health care in the Middle East and Europe. She's on Twitter at @shira_rubin.

SOMINI SENGUPTA is an international climate correspondent, the lead writer of the *New York Times*' Climate Forward newsletter, and the author of *The End of Karma: Hope and Fury Among India's Young* and has covered the Middle East, West Africa, and South Asia for the *Times*. She received a George Polk Award for international reporting and awards from the Overseas Press Club, the Newswomen's Club of New York, and the National Association of Black Journalists.

SONIA SHAH is a science journalist and prize-winning author of critically acclaimed books on science, politics, and human rights. Her latest book, *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Life on the Move*, explores our centuries-long assumptions about migration through science, history, and reporting, predicting its lifesaving power in the face of climate change. A finalist for the 2021 PEN/E. O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award, it was selected as a best nonfiction book of 2020 by *Publishers Weekly*, a best science book of 2020 by *Amazon*, a best science and technology book of 2020 by *Library Journal*, and a Tata Literature Live! finalist for the best book of the year.

LUCY SHERRIFF is a British multimedia journalist based in Los Angeles. She focuses on climate and social justice, culture, and the environment, and is working on a podcast about Indigenous communities and their

relationship with the land. Her most recent work is directing a documentary on women who bring up their children in prison.

LISA SONG is a reporter at ProPublica who covers climate change and the environment. She previously worked at Inside Climate News, where she helped reveal Exxon's shift from conducting early global warming research to supporting climate denial.

MEERA SUBRAMANIAN is an award-winning independent journalist, author of *A River Runs Again: India's Natural World in Crisis*, and a contributing editor of *Orion* magazine. Based on a glacial moraine on the edge of the Atlantic, she's a perpetual wanderer who can't stop planting perennials. You can find her at meerasub.org.

JAMES TEMPLE is the senior climate and energy editor at *MIT Technology Review*, where he covers technologies and policies designed to cut emissions, draw down carbon, or otherwise address rising climate risks. He was previously a senior director at the Verge, deputy managing editor at Recode, and columnist at the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

LISA WELLS is the author, most recently, of *Believers: Making a Life at the End of the World*, a finalist for the 2022 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award. Her writing has appeared in *Harper's*, *Granta*, *n*+1, and the *New York Times*, and she writes a regular column for *Orion* called Abundant Noise. She lives in Seattle.

REBECCA WOOLINGTON is the investigative editor at the *Tampa Bay Times*. She was previously an investigative and criminal justice reporter at the *Oregonian*, where she began her career. At the *Times*, her work has chronicled the rise and fall of a troubled small-town mayor, discrepancies in the state's counting of coronavirus deaths, and dangerous working conditions inside a Tampa lead factory. The latter earned her and her reporting partners, Corey G. Johnson and Eli Murray, the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting, a George Polk Award, and several other national honors. Woolington grew up in Portland and attended Portland Community College before graduating from the University of Oregon. She joined the *Times* in 2018.

KATHERINE J. WU is a staff writer for *The Atlantic*, where she covers science. She's also a senior producer of The Story Collider and a senior editor at the Open Notebook. She previously served as a science reporter for the *New York Times*, where she reported on the COVID-19 pandemic. She

won a Science in Society journalism award in 2021 and the Evert Clark/ Seth Payne Award for Young Science Journalists in 2020. She holds a Ph.D. in microbiology from Harvard University.

RAE WYNN-GRANT, PH.D., is a wildlife ecologist, author, storyteller, media host, and advocate. She has focused on the ecology and conservation of large carnivores across the world and is currently a research faculty member at the Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She has a passion for storytelling and has recently become fascinated with environmental history, especially as it pertains to the Black experience.

Other Notable Science and Nature Writing of 2021

Anil Ananthaswamy

The Artificial Physicist. *Scientific American*, October 1, 2021.

Ross Andersen

The Search for America's Atlantis. *The Atlantic*, September 7, 2021.

Robin George Andrews

NASA Just Broke the "Venus Curse": Here's What It Took. *Scientific* American, June 2, 2021.

Rachel Aviv

Past Imperfect. *The New Yorker*, April 5, 2021.

Aryn Baker

How Industrial Fishing Creates More CO₂ Emissions than Air Travel. *Time*, March 17, 2021.

Adam Becker

One Lab's Quest to Build Space-Time Out of Quantum Particles. Quanta magazine, September 7, 2021.

Kayla Begay

Wung Whikyung Na'way (My Mind Goes Over It). Pipe Wrench, August 17, 2021.

Paul Bogard

A New Golden Age of Observation

Is Revealing the Wonders of Night Migration. *Audubon*, April 1, 2021.

Eric Boodman

How Medicine Erased Black Women from a "White Man's Disease." STAT, December 21, 2021.

Bethany Brookshire

I Spent 5 Months Trying to Coax a Cat from My Ceiling. *The Atlantic*, August 19, 2021.

H. Claire Brown

Attack of the Superweeds. *The New York Times Magazine*, August 18, 2021.

Jennifer Case

A Cost Accounting of Birth. *Ecotone*, Spring 2021.

Eleanor Cummins

What We Don't Know About OCD. Vox, December 10, 2021.

Nadia Drake

Why the Loss of an Iconic Radio Telescope Is Painfully Personal. *National Geographic*, January 11, 2021.

Kat Eschner

The Years We've Lost to COVID. *New York Times*, April 21, 2021.

Other Notable Science and Nature Writing of 2021

Claire L. Evans

The Word for the Web Is Forest. New_Public, September 23, 2021.

Douglas Fox

Antarctica's Upside-Down World. bioGraphic, May 12, 2021.

Rivka Galchen

Green Dream. *The New Yorker*, October 11, 2021.

Katharine Gammon

A Group of Orca Outcasts Is Now Dominating an Entire Sea. *The Atlantic*, January 29, 2021.

Jon Gertner

A DNA Sequencing Revolution Helped Us Fight COVID. What Else Can It Do? *The New York Times Magazine*, March 25, 2021. You Should Be Afraid of the Next "Lab Leak." *The New York Times Magazine*, November 23, 2021.

David Geselbracht

For Some Evangelical Christians, Climate Action Is a God-Given Mandate. Grist, June 23, 2021.

Sarah Gilman

Keeping Watch over Seabirds at the World's Edge. Hakai Magazine, January 5, 2021.

Ryan Goldberg

This Historic Brooklyn Cemetery Shows Us a Future Without Lawns. Popular Science, November 17, 2021.

Kate Golembiewski

How the Heart Became the Symbol of Love, Lust, and the Soul. *Discover*, February 6, 2021.

Alice Gregory

Final Say. *The New Yorker*, April 19, 2021.

Rachel Gutman

A Crumpled, Dried-Out Relic of the Pandemic. *The Atlantic*, June 9, 2021.

Erika Hayasaki

How to Remember a Disaster

Without Being Shattered by It. *Wired*, February 23, 2021.

Brooke Jarvis

The Forgotten Sense. *The New York Times Magazine*, January 28, 2021.

Jennifer Kahn

Learning to Love GMOs. *The New York Times Magazine*, July 20, 2021.

Christine Kenneally

Mind Machines. *The New Yorker*, April 26, 2021.

Matthew King

The Vertical Wasteland. Majuscule, March 2, 2021.

Brendan I. Koerner

One Man's Amazing Journey to the Center of the Bowling Ball. *Wired*, May 27, 2021.

Elizabeth Kolbert

A New Leaf. *The New Yorker*, December 13, 2021.

Kai Kupferschmidt

Death Detective. *Science*, January 28, 2021.

Drew Lanham

What Do We Do About John James Audubon? *Audubon*, Spring 2021.

Yiren Lu

The Gene-Synthesis Revolution. *The New York Times Magazine*, November 24, 2021.

Evan Malmgren

The Intelligence of Swine. *Noema*, November 24, 2021.

Adam Mann

Is Mars Ours? *The New Yorker*, May 11, 2021.

Lucas Mann

An Essay About Tiny, Spectacular Futures Written a Week or So After a Very Damning IPCC Climate Report. Literary Hub, October 14, 2021.

Lauren Markham

Can We Move Our Forests in Time to Save Them? *Mother Jones*, November–December 2021.

Other Notable Science and Nature Writing of 2021

The Crow Whisperer. *Harper's*, April 1, 2021.

Rachel May

Mycelium. Guernica, July 22, 2021.

Kat McGowan

Has the Fountain of Youth Been in Our Blood All Along? Popular Science, September 28, 2021.

Megan Molteni

Fatal Flaw. Wired, May 13, 2021.

Kate Morgan

The Demise and Potential Revival of the American Chestnut (or, Once Upon a Tree). *Sierra*, February 25, 2021.

Helen Ouyang

The City Losing Its Children to HIV. *The New York Times Magazine*, August 31, 2021.

David Owen

Promised Land. *The New Yorker*, February 1, 2021.

Mukta Patil

Living with Fire. *Bay Nature*, June 23, 2021.

Daniel Pauley

What Netflix's *Seaspiracy* Gets Wrong About Fishing, Explained by a Marine Biologist. Vox, April 13, 2021.

Chanda Prescod-Weinstein

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Marion Renault

A Truly Revolting Treatment Is Having a Renaissance. *The Atlantic*, June 2, 2021.

Tim Requarth

Our Worst Idea About Safety. Slate, November 7, 2021.

Adam Rogers

All in Your Head. Wired, December

Joshua Rothman

Missing a Beat. *The New Yorker*, March 8, 2021.

Thinking It Through. *The New Yorker*, August 23, 2021.

Elizabeth Royte

Will This Court Case End the Mining Industry's 150-Year Dominance of the West? *Mother Jones*, August 2, 2021.

Scott Sayare

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Jenna Scatena

Climate Change Is Going to Be Gross. *The Atlantic*, December 18, 2021.

Zoë Schlanger

What to Save? Climate Change Forces Brutal Choices at National Parks. *New York Times*, May 18, 2021.

Sarah Scoles

The Broken Shield. Scientific American, June 2021.

Gary Shteyngart

My Gentile Region. *The New Yorker*, October 11, 2021.

Jordan Michael Smith

Can a Radical Treatment for Pedophilia Work Outside of Germany? Undark magazine, June 7, 2021.

James Somers

Head Space. *The New Yorker*, December 6, 2021.

Zach St. George

As Climate Warms a Rearrangement of Plant Life Looms. Yale Environment 360, June 7, 2021.

Sarah Stillman

The Migrant Workers Who Follow Climate Disasters. *The New Yorker*; November 1, 2021.

Jennifer Tsai

Jordan Crowley Would Be in Line for a Kidney—If He Were Deemed White Enough. Slate, June 27, 2021.

Debbie Urbanski

Inheritance. Sun, June 1, 2021.

Aliya Uteuova

After Slavery, Oystering Offered

Other Notable Science and Nature Writing of 2021

a Lifeline. Now Sewage Spills Threaten to End It All. *Guardian*, September 1, 2021.

Debbie Weingarten

A Garden in the Desert. Guernica, September 20, 2021.

Isobel Whitcomb

My Doctor Told Me My Pain Was All in My Head. It Ended Up Saving Me. Slate, February 10, 2021.

Wyatt Williams

How Your Cup of Coffee Is Clearing the Jungle. *The New York Times Magazine*, August 12, 2021.

Natalie Wolchover

The Webb Space Telescope Will Rewrite Cosmic History. If It Works.

Quanta Magazine, December 3, 2021.

Ed Yong

The Enormous Hole That Whaling Left Behind. *The Atlantic*, November 3, 2021.

Why Healthcare Workers Are Quitting in Droves. *The Atlantic*, November 21, 2021.

Joe Zadeh

The Tyranny of Time. *Noema*, June 3, 2021.

Katarina Zimmer

Many Mangrove Restorations Fail. Is There a Better Way? Knowable Magazine, July 22, 2021.