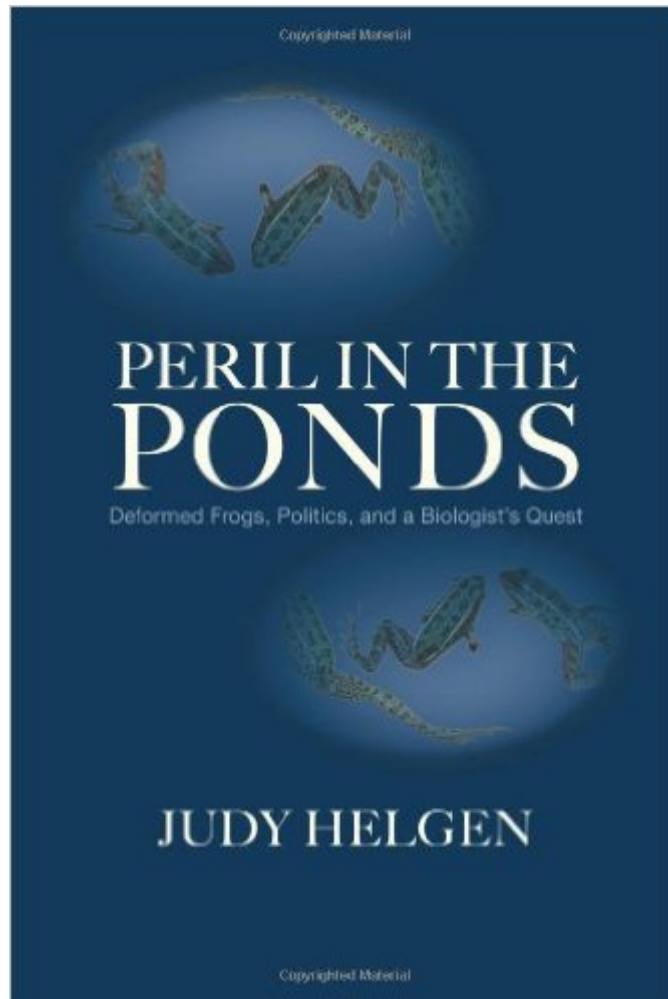


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Peril In The Ponds: Deformed Frogs, Politics, And A Biologist's Quest



Synopsis

Peril in the Ponds tells the story of a government biologist's investigation into the mystery of deformed frogs, an epidemic that grew during the 1990s and continues today. It provides an inside view of a highly charged environmental issue that aroused the attention of the public and the media and sparked controversies among scientists, politicians, and government agencies. By the 1990s, wetlands across the United States were endangered from pollution and decades of drainage to convert them into farmland and urban developments. But when deformed frogs—many with missing legs or eyes, footless stumps, or misshapen jaws—began to emerge from Minnesota wetlands, alarm bells went off. What caused such deformities? Pollution? Ultraviolet rays? Biological agents? And could the mysterious cause also pose a threat to humans? Judy Helgen writes with passionate concern about vulnerable frogs and wetlands as she navigates through a maze of inquisitive media and a reluctant government agency. She reports on the complexity of a growing catastrophe for frogs and broadens the issue as she researches and meets with scientists from around the world. She affirms the importance of examining aquatic life to understand pollution and the need to rescue our remaining wetlands. She also shares the fears expressed by the teachers, students, and other citizens who found these creatures, sensed a problem, and looked to her for answers. Ultimately, this is a story about the biological beauty of wetlands and our need to pay attention to the environment around us.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I chose 4/5 stars for this book because it was a very emotional, interesting and well written and read. Judy Helgen's *Peril in the Ponds* is an autobiography of her life and the work she did on wetlands and the research on deformed frogs while working for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). This book is filled with emotion, which is understandable since it is an autobiography, but also packed with scientific data, research and collaborations with other agencies about her work that can be backed up by outside sources. The emotion in this book could be taken in a positive or negative way. In the positive way, it shows that she really cares about her work and genuinely cares about the issue and it helps also get the readers attention and to also care about the issue. However, on the opposite side, it could be taken as a negative attribute because people could say that the emotion clouds people judgment and goes along with what she thinks is the issue based on faith rather than facts. But I don't think that her emotion in the book is negative what so ever. The reason I feel this way is because she does back up all her accusations and assumptions with cold hard data. What I really think is amazing is that she was there at the beginning. I don't mean to say the beginning of when the problem first occurred, because when it was first brought to her attention by the school teacher in Henderson County, Minnesota, that's not when the problem first occurred. I mean say that she was the first one to start to ask questions, do research and raise awareness about what was going on in peoples back yards. She was a "ground zero" for this problem.

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