

## **Colloquy Downeast: Nature Writing in the Anthropocene - Kim Ridley**

Nov. 2, 2022 *The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature*, David George Haskell

### **Suggested Chapters**

Preface

January 21st—The Experiment

April 2nd—Chainsaw

August 8th—Earthstar

October 5th—Alarm Waves

November 15th—Sharp-shinned Hawk

December 3rd—Litter

December 26th—Treetops

December 31st—Watching

Epilogue

### **Sample Discussion Questions**

1. How does Haskell's writing about nature, for example his subjects and tone, contrast with the ways nature is typically depicted in the media? What do you think about his approach? Is it effective and if so, how?
2. How does Haskell treat controversial issues such as climate change and logging? What can be learned from this?
3. A theme in Haskell's essays is deepening empathy with other-than-human organisms. "If we accept the evolutionary continuity of life, we can no longer close the door to empathy with other animals," he writes. How does he open the door to empathy as observer, and for readers? As a reader, do you think he succeeds, and why or why not?
4. In the essay "Earth Star," Haskell writes, "[t]o love nature and hate humanity is illogical." Do you agree or disagree, and why? Would you have done the same thing Haskell did with the golf ball or another human-made object? Why or why not?
5. What was one of the biggest surprises or discoveries for you in reading this book?
6. Do you have a favorite quote or brief passage that you'd like to share from this book, wisdom or fresh way of thinking?
7. Has reading *The Forest Unseen* changed or opened your mind about your own relationship, or our human relationship, with the rest of nature? If so, how?