

VERMILION

FLY CATCHER

May–June 2009 | Volume 54, Number 3

Birds and Water

**Water Rights for
Our Environment 3**

**A Dow Jones
Index for Birds 12**

**Flowing Water and
Bird Diversity 14**

**What's in a Name?
Lucifer Hummingbird 10**

Where to Go, Birds to See 16

The Owl and the Woodpecker: Encounters With North America's Most Iconic Birds

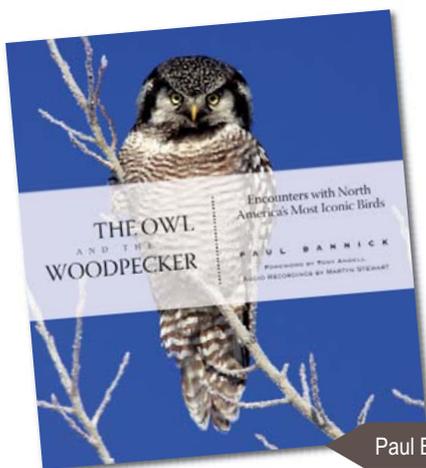
Paul Bannick. Foreword by Tony Angell. 2008
Mountaineers Books, Seattle, WA
ISBN 978-1594850950
200 pages. \$24.95

Every wild place and urban area in North America hosts an owl or a woodpecker species, while healthy natural places often boast representatives of both. The diversity of these two families of birds, and the ways in which they define and enrich the ecosystems they inhabit, are the subject of this vivid new book by photographer and naturalist Paul Bannick.

The Owl and the Woodpecker showcases a sense of these birds' natural rhythms, as well as the integral spirit of our wild places. Based on thousands of hours in the field photographing these fascinating and wily birds, Bannick evokes all 41 North American species of owls and woodpeckers, across 11 key habitats. By revealing the impact of two of our most iconic birds, Bannick has created a wholly unique approach to birding and conservation. This book is:

- A perfect holiday book for all bird-watchers
- An in-depth look at two of our most iconic—and important—bird species
- Great for photography lovers, conservationists, and backyard enthusiasts alike
- Includes a foreword by award-winning artist and writer Tony Angell and an audio recording by Martyn Stewart

About the author: Award-winning photographer Paul Bannick specializes in the natural history of North America, with a focus on his beloved Pacific Northwest. Paul has coupled his love of the outdoors with his skill as a photographer to create images intended to foster intimacy between the viewer and subject in order to inspire education and conservation. (www.paulbannick.com)

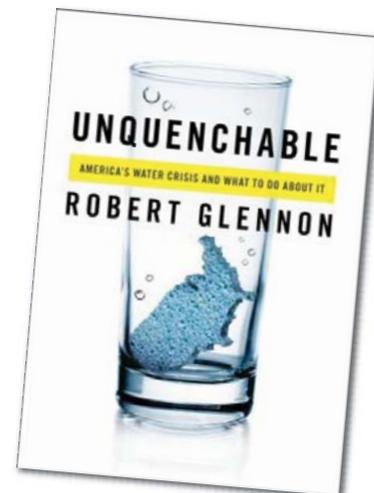


Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What To Do About It

Robert Glennon. 2009
Island Press, Washington D.C.
ISBN 978-1597264365
432 pages. Hardcover \$27.95

In 2002, Robert Glennon, Morris K. Udall Professor of Law and Public Policy at the Rogers College of Law at The University of Arizona, gave us *Water Follies*, a book that detailed how we are sucking our aquifers dry and putting our civilization at risk. Now Glennon develops his argument, explaining how much of our use and management of water is absurd and unsustainable, and providing us with some seeds of hope in his new book, *Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What to Do About It*. Glennon has collated a wealth of detailed information, rich with personal experience, to support his thesis that a prosperous society depends on a secure and reliable water supply, something we do not have and must work to achieve. Glennon is clear that the way to ensuring adequate water for all, including our natural environment, will be a rocky one and will need creative and assertive leadership from citizens, industry, and government at all levels, especially at the federal level. One challenge: how do we persuade those in government to think creatively around some of the ideas presented here, and to have the courage to implement them?

The book has three sections. The first, consisting of five chapters, frames the crisis with examples of the outcomes of overpumping groundwater, extraordinary stories of consumption and waste, and links between energy and water use. The middle section addresses problems of getting water of appropriate quality in the place where people need it, when they need it. Our demand is increasing just as supplies are increasingly threatened, and the section ends with optimistic chapters on water conservation and water harvesting. The final section of the book, "A New Approach", offers a wealth of examples of creative solutions to the crisis. As Glennon says, a crisis is a time when action might avert future catastrophe. The future depends on our ability to respond appropriately today. The section includes a chapter on providing water to serve our natural environment, and his final chapter, "Conclusion, a Blueprint for Reform", ends the book on an optimistic if challenging note. Glennon has a commanding grasp of the legal minefield that is part of making the necessary progress on water reform.



By bringing together examples from around the country, Glennon usefully gets us thinking beyond our own backyard, and commonalities emerge. His assertion that the roots of the future water crisis ultimately lay in our failure to value water as a resource and our failure to plan in a broad and integrated manner for its future use are borne out by his many examples. Choices our society makes on land use, population and immigration, and farm and energy policy all affect water supply. For example, land-use reform needs to couple zoning decisions with available water supply so that we avoid the "tragedy-of-the-commons" unrestricted access to a public resource, which typically results in its overuse and depletion. His detailed example of development in the Santa Fe region of New Mexico gives us room to hope. One commonality that Glennon supports with examples is the failure of states and local governments to bring about reform, and the assertion that federal government needs to step up to the plate to integrate the development of water policy. The *laissez-faire* attitude to water use by some states means that we do not have a sense of how much water we are extracting from aquifers, nor how much water many are using. It is clear that there is no silver bullet to resolving the complex and varied issues around providing water. What is crystal clear is the need for better integration and more controls.

One of the messages of the book is to take personal responsibility for your own water use, and become a citizen steward and insist that government and industry does the same.

Buy this book, read it, and you will be referring to it on an almost daily basis if you have a conscience about the water that you use.

Paul Green

Paul Bannick will be the speaker at Tucson Audubon's Living With Nature lecture series on May 4 (see page 8 for details).