



Return to Warden's Grove: Science, Desire, and the Lives of Sparrows (Sightline Books)

Christopher Norment

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Based on three seasons of field research in the Canadian Arctic, Christopher Norment's exquisitely crafted meditation on science and nature, wildness and civilization, is marked by bottomless prose, reflection on timeless questions, and keen observations of the world and our place in it. In an era increasingly marked by cutting-edge research at the cellular and molecular level, what is the role for scientists of sympathetic observation? What can patient waiting tell us about ourselves and our place in the world?

His family at home in the American Midwest, Norment spends months on end living in isolation in the Northwest Territories, studying the ecology of the Harris's Sparrow. Although the fourteenth-century German mystic Meister Eckhardt wrote, "God is at home, we are in the far country," Norment argues that an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual "far country" can be found in the lives of animals and arctic wilderness. For Norment, "doing science" can lead to an enriched aesthetic and emotional connection to something beyond the self and a way to develop a sacred sense of place in a world that feels increasingly less welcoming, certain, and familiar.

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