

denied, the importance of the text for the field of ethnobiology is limited. Yet for those individuals whose focus is specific to understanding the relationship between humans and the insect world, I suspect this text will be thoroughly enjoyed.

Darron A. Collins  
World Wildlife Fund  
1250 24th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20037

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**On Biocultural Diversity: Linking Language, Knowledge, and the Environment.**  
Luisa Maffi (ed.). Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington D.C. 2001. Pp. 560. \$65.00 (cloth); \$34.95 (paper). ISBN: 1-56098-905-X.

The origins of this book lie in a conference organized by Luisa Maffi in 1996 at the University of California, Berkeley entitled "Endangered Languages, Endangered Knowledge, Endangered Environments." While the linkages between biological diversity and cultural diversity were well explored prior to this meeting, researchers had, according to Maffi, neglected to include linguistic diversity as part of the "inextricable" link. The success of that meeting is readily apparent in this volume. As editor of *On Biocultural Diversity*, Maffi does a superb job of bringing together a wide range of scholars to address the relationship between language, knowledge, and environment.

The introduction by Maffi does more than simply set the stage for the rest of the book. It provides a detailed argument for the relationship between biological diversity and linguistic diversity and suggests some reasons for it. As she notes in the introduction, the "chapters in this book go a long way in telling us why diversity matters. Together—in a way that no individual scholar could accomplish—the authors begin to assemble the pieces of the giant puzzle that is the diversity of life in its various manifestations and complex interrelationships."

The book is divided into four sections. The first, "Language, Knowledge, and the Environment," presents a variety of papers that make a case for how these three domains interact and how they are interdependent. The explanations for why biological diversity and linguistic diversity are connected are not always as complete as they could be. However, there are many fine papers in this section by ethnobiologists and other researchers that present theoretical innovations and compelling reasons for future study.

The second section, "Biocultural Diversity, Persistence, and Loss," builds on much of the theory developed in the first section. As one might expect, most papers deal more with the question of loss than persistence. Whereas clear evidence is provided for language loss and biodiversity loss, the concomitant loss of ethnobiological knowledge loss is left implicit. This apparent omission may be

explained in part by the difficulties inherent in measuring knowledge lost over time. This suggests important goals of future research: developing a methodology to determine rates of knowledge loss (and its persistence), and then setting priorities for studying the most endangered knowledge systems.

The third section, "Perpetuating the World's Biocultural Diversity: Agenda for Action," provides a method of applying the research presented in the earlier sections. This section does not present just a simple view of indigenous and traditional peoples' interactions with their biophysical environment, but also challenges popular notions and reveals the complexity involved in understanding these issues.

The final section, "A Vision for the Future and a Plea," provides some glimmer of hope for an otherwise gloomy situation. Richard Norgaard notes that, despite the language losses that have occurred, we may be entering a period of reculturalization. This is a seeming paradox whereby global processes are leading to greater concentrations of power beyond the nation state, while ethnic and regional expressions lead to greater autonomy. If Norgaard and others (e.g., Ronald Cohen) are right, the dire situation documented in this volume could improve. The inclusion of the code of ethics of the International Society of Ethnobiology as an appendix complements this final section through its encouragement that researchers become active participants in promoting the well being of indigenous and traditional peoples.

Researchers such as Darrell Posey and Michael Warren (to whom the volume is dedicated) stressed the importance of people and culture in the conservation equation. Much of the research presented in this volume will also help solve this complex problem. The premise that cultural diversity can not be separated from biological diversity is convincingly argued by some of the top researchers in the world. Contributions from ethnobiologists are many, representing well over half of the volume. As in most edited volumes, there are a few papers that do not fit as well as they could. Overall, however, the volume makes an important contribution to our understanding of biocultural diversity and will certainly be well read and frequently cited in years to come.

John R. Stepp  
Department of Anthropology  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, FL 32611-7305

**First Fish, First People: Salmon Tales of the North Pacific Rim.** Judith Roche and Meg McHutchison (eds.). University of Washington Press, Seattle. 1998. Pp. 199. Map, photos, illustrations. \$24.95 (paper). ISBN: 0-295-97739-6.

Among all of the organisms that provide the basis for human subsistence, few have loomed as large within particular aboriginal societies as the salmon of the north Pacific Rim. The indigenous peoples who depended on salmon and their yearly return rightly held these fish in awe. Salmon were a staple food source and played a key role in deeply held beliefs, rituals, and oral traditions. Today,