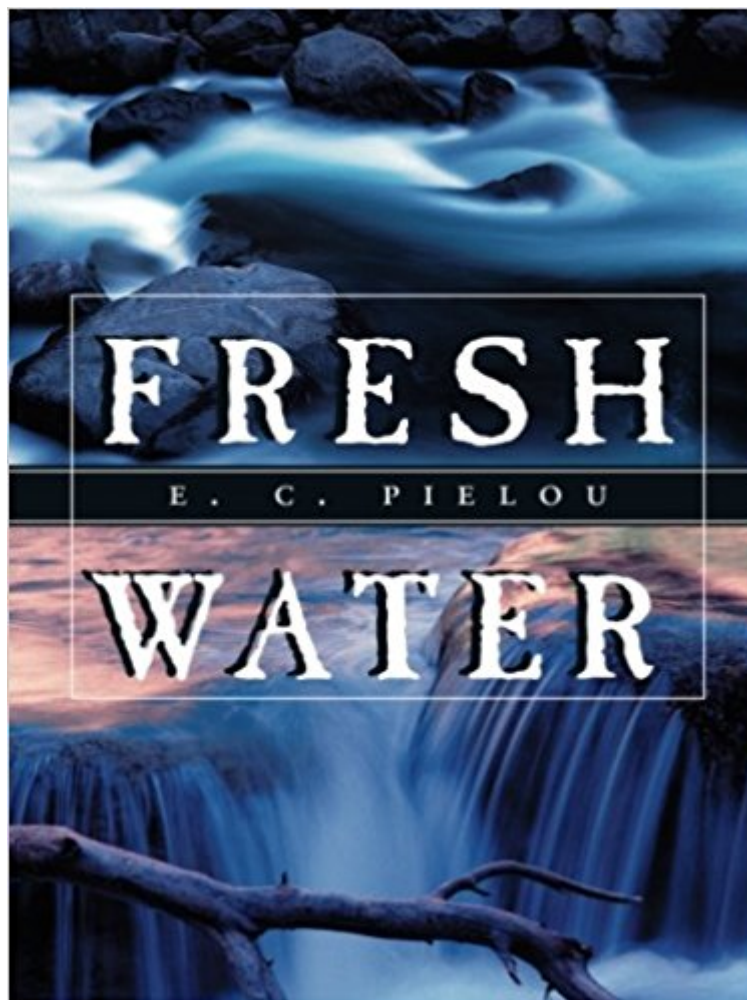


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# Fresh Water



## Synopsis

With the eye of a professional scientist and the passion of a dedicated amateur, E. C. Pielou conducts a guided tour of fresh water on its course through the natural world. As the world's supply of clean, fresh water continues to dwindle, it becomes increasingly important to understand the close connection between water and all forms of life. Pielou's fascination with fresh water gives us a "natural history" that is remarkable and surprising."[A] keen and detailed look at the life and history of fresh water. . . . Dip into Fresh Water. It will both stimulate and satisfy as only good natural history can."—*Toronto Globe and Mail*"Pielou's ease with her subject and her no-nonsense style of writing will satisfy and inspire the poet as well as the naturalist."—*Denize Springer, Express Books*"[Pielou's] writing is didactic and definitive, in places even charming, and is buttressed by clear illustrations. . . . A welcome addition to the genre of literature designed to bridge the gap between scientists . . . and the intelligent and concerned lay public."—*Daniel Hillel, Nature*"A wonderful natural history of one of life's necessities, a refreshing break from the grand theory and special pleading of many a science book. . . . Read it."—*Fred Pearce, New Scientist*

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## Customer Reviews

It's a strange paradox: the earth's water supply is constantly growing, yet humankind--or so scientists now warn us--is facing a potentially catastrophic shortage of potable water in the next century. "Fresh water," writes Canadian scientist Pielou, "will turn out to be the factor that limits population growth," largely because so much of that growing supply is locked up in arctic ice or lies

deep beneath the surface of the earth. In her thoughtful survey of the physics and chemistry of water, Pielou introduces readers to such concepts as the water cycle, in which rainwater becomes groundwater and eventually returns to the sky from whence it came; examines the economics of water surpluses and deficits in the natural world; and studies the formation and behavior of rivers and lakes, among many other topics. Building more dams, she warns, is no solution to the impending water crisis: "Channelization and diversion both have the effect of increasing a river's rate of discharge (equivalently, speeding its flow), which may be as undesirable as decreasing the discharge (slowing the flow)." Her thoroughly interesting natural history of fresh water in all its forms makes for a fine introduction to hydrology and for a solid contribution to environmental literacy.

--Gregory McNamee --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Our planet is composed primarily of water, much of which is the ocean and not the subject of this book. Naturalist Pielou (*A Naturalist's Guide to the Arctic*, LJ 11/1/94) concentrates on fresh water (usable by humans), which is a much smaller resource. Pielou describes the natural history of fresh water?where it comes from, where it goes, and how it moves under and over the earth and into the atmosphere. Even though scientists now believe that water is being added to our environment by "snowball" comets entering our atmosphere, the world's supply of fresh water is dwindling?and a shortage of usable fresh water ultimately limits population growth. Pielou's book would make an excellent textbook for any college class studying water. However, while the text is highly informative, it will not appeal to the average reader because of its technical nature. Recommended for academic libraries only.?Gloria Maxwell, Kansas City P.L., KS

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This is an amazing book. I am trained as an economist and lawyer, but I am actually reading and understanding the material covered. This is because the author is a great writer. It is a pleasure to follow her logic as she explains the basics, in easy language, then goes deep, incorporating the language of her field. My interest in water is as one who drinks, bathes, kayaks, and fishes in it. But the author has opened my mind to myriad other interests I have heretofore taken for granted. If only all writers had the grasp of their topic and the skill to transmit a part of it to others ... Everyone should read this book both for its subject matter and as an example of excellent technical/instructional writing!

Best simple water book ever written. If you want to understand earth's freshwater system and the

ecosystem that contains all of us, this book is the place to start.

Book was shipped on time, in good shape, and it is an excellent book that is not immediately available to the public at large at general book stores.

Fresh water is becoming more and more scarce as we continue polluting it. This book is so interesting and informative I had difficulty putting it down. E.C. Pielou has enlightened and entertained me all at once and has succeeded in writing one of the most fascinating books I've read.

If you enjoy reading college textbooks, then you'll love this one. Although it's well-written with many illustrations/diagrams, facts and definitions, I didn't find any pleasure reading it. Fresh Water lacked anecdotes, humor, interesting point-of-views etc....just a DRY, BLAND and extremely objective view of the cycles, forms and uses of water. However, Fresh Water would be excellent reference material.

This is a good introduction to limnology. It isn't boring and not too technical. It is just an explanation of how freshwater behaves on earth. It explains groundwater, rivers, lakes, water cycle, and the functioning of aquifers. The focus of the book was on North America and in particular Canada and the North of the United States, that's okay but she spends several pages about bogs and fens and one small paragraph about the forested wetlands and mangrove wetlands. I think the lady is Canadian, so she writes about what is around her. That is fine, I liked that book and would recommend it to somebody who has an interest in the science of things around us. Many people think that water comes from the faucet and that is all. She provides an excellent explanation of where it goes from and where it goes.

Tristan Gooley's How to Read Water is good as a quite different book, but this is a highly readable and usefully illustrated account of the water cycle.

The author gives us a rare combination of the technical terms with thoroughly understandable explanations of water and what it does and what it means for us. The book seems complete in its explanations of how water works wherever it occurs, which is all over our world. I thought, for example, I knew how water worked underground; now I really know, and that is important to efficient agriculture which will also preserve adjacent flora and fauna. Pielou tells both the good and the bad

of human intervention with water no matter whether it is flowing in rivers and lakes or bound in permafrost or geological configurations. Even if you think you don't really care, this book will let you understand more about the arguments about dams and rivers and reservoirs and all that contentious stuff.

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