

"Caroline Fraser's Rewilding the World is an exciting and wise exploration of a revolution that's reshaping the conservation movement. She's gone all over the world to bring us news from the front lines, and her account is one of essential hope: though it's no guarantee that we can save nature from collapse, she shows that we have a.

Many of the ambitious early initiatives—Yellowstone to Yukon and the European Green Belt—were biological in design but inspirational in nature, offering a vision of re-creating connectivity across the landscape while promising people a new emotional connection to the land. Activists worked doggedly, steadily, practicing the arts of persuasion, from educational entreaties to compensation schemes to All rewilding projects seek to bring together the same elements: Activists worked doggedly, steadily, practicing the arts of persuasion, from educational entreaties to compensation schemes to soft bribery. They effectively established, beyond dispute, the importance of corridors. Yet some of the most ambitious projects have had only partial success and have been achingly slow to catch on. If there is one defining characteristic of conservation, it is urgency. A great tour of about a dozen conservation and rewilding projects on each of the inhabited continents. Guns, fences, and what has been called fortress conservation: Early attempts to wed them had failed. Yet some projects confounded the stereotypes, proving that under the right conditions, guns, fences, and economic development could secure a peaceable kingdom for people and wildlife. Ian Craig found them, and put them to work at Lewa. The Maasai and Samburu recognized and adopted them. There were simple solutions to conservation problems, ready to hand. Conservancies worked, particularly when they granted legal rights and responsibilities; they functioned best when they included law enforcement. But there were also certain situations—wars, conflicts—when community conservation was not enough. These issues are unresolved. Unfortunately, the conservation community has always been timid about both community relations and law enforcement. Through a fear of alienating their donor base or inciting the wrath of indigenous people, conservation groups have failed to grapple with profound and controversial issues. A refusal to engage honestly with local people about land use and trade treaties sealed the fate of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. After moving rhinos into the center of a war zone, the WWF responded to poaching inconsistently. In Corcovado, the Nature Conservancy helped create the park and sporadically supported rangers. Declaring success, it walked away, for a time, from further responsibilities. That may be why putting even simple solutions to work seems to be the trickiest part of a very tricky business. Not in some hippy sense, but putting an actual price tag on it. The problem with this was summed up by Kim Stanley Robinson, who points out that the price of everything today is drastically low, because we immediately discount the future. Like, all of these projects are either funded by people taking up small quasi- agricultural roles within the system, or from outside funding either NGOs or, with Costa Rica, that fund or whatever that was set up. Would be interesting to see this theme followed up somewhere. Wolves change the landscape: Trout are exquisitely sensitive to changes in temperature; they need cool, well-oxygenated water to reproduce and avoid stress. Warm water contains less oxygen. The return of wolves moved elk away from rivers; trees and shrubs grew over the water, shading it; the water temperature dropped; trout benefited; fly fishermen rejoiced. Studies showed that, in addition to effects on elk, sixteen species of vertebrates were affected by wolf predation. Populations of coyote dropped in density. Grizzly bears, capable of driving wolves off a kill, feasted on carrion. Other scavengers benefited as well, including bald and golden eagles, ravens, and magpies. Songbirds and amphibians also began to return. Fashioned out of the former Iron Curtain, the European Green Belt is a continent-wide experiment in ecological restoration, ecotourism, and environmental tolerance. A test case in transforming former military or industrial installations, so-called brownfields, into recovering ecosystems, the Green Belt is a model for converting war-torn wastelands into wilderness havens.

Chapter 2 : George Monbiot: For more wonder, rewild the world | TED Talk

"Caroline Fraser's Rewilding the World is an exciting and wise exploration of a revolution that's reshaping the conservation movement. She's gone all over the world to bring us news from the front lines, and her account is one of essential hope: though it's no guarantee that we can save nature from collapse, she shows that we have a fighting.

Share via Email Forest elephants were exterminated from Europe 40, years ago when modern humans arrived. In the Americas, alongside mastodons, mammoths, four-tusked and spiral-tusked elephants, there was a beaver the size of a black bear: There were giant bison weighing two tonnes, which carried horns seven feet across. The short-faced bear stood 13ft in its hind socks. One hypothesis maintains that its astonishing size and shocking armoury of teeth and claws are the hallmarks of a specialist scavenger: The Argentine roc *Argentavis magnificens* had a wingspan of 26ft. Sabretooth salmon nine feet long migrated up Pacific coast rivers. During the previous interglacial period, Britain and Europe contained much of the megafauna we now associate with the tropics: The elephants, rhinos and hippos were driven into southern Europe by the ice, then exterminated about 40, years ago when modern humans arrived. Lions and hyenas persisted: The distribution of these animals has little to do with temperature: Most of the deciduous trees in Europe can resprout wherever the trunk is broken. They can survive the extreme punishment "hacking, splitting, trampling" inflicted when a hedge is laid. Understorey trees such as holly, box and yew have much tougher roots and branches than canopy trees, despite carrying less weight. Our trees, in other words, bear strong signs of adaptation to elephants. Blackthorn, which possesses very long spines, seems over-engineered to deter browsing by deer; but not, perhaps, rhinoceros. All this has been forgotten, even by professional ecologists. Yet, during a three-day literature search in the Bodleian library, all I could find on elephant adaptation in Europe was a throwaway sentence in one scientific paper. The elephant in the forest is the elephant in the room: Since then much of Europe, especially Britain, has lost most of its mesofauna as well: These losses, paradoxically, have often been locked in by conservation policy. More often than not this is a state of extreme depletion, the merest scraping of what was once a vibrant and dynamic ecosystem. The ecological disasters we call nature reserves are often kept in this depleted state through intense intervention: Researching my book *Feral*, I came across rewilding programmes in several parts of Europe, including some such as *Trees for Life* in Scotland and the *Wales Wild Land Foundation* in the UK, which are beginning to show how swiftly nature responds when we stop trying to control it. Rewilding, in my view, should involve reintroducing missing animals and plants, taking down the fences, blocking the drainage ditches, culling a few particularly invasive exotic species but otherwise standing back. The only thing preventing a faster rewilding in the EU is public money. Without our help, almost all hill farming would cease immediately. I propose two changes to the subsidy regime. The first is to cap the amount of land for which farmers can claim money at hectares acres. A cap would give small farmers an advantage over large. The second is to remove the agricultural condition rule. The effect of these changes would be to ensure that hill farmers with a powerful attachment to the land and its culture, language and traditions would still farm and continue to reduce their income by keeping loss-making sheep and cattle. Absentee ranchers who are in it only for the subsidies would find that they were better off taking the money and allowing the land to rewild. Despite the best efforts of governments, farmers and conservationists, nature is already starting to return. One estimate suggests that two thirds of the previously forested parts of the US have reforested, as farming and logging have retreated, especially from the eastern half of the country. Another proposes that by farmers on the European continent though not in Britain, where no major shift is expected will vacate around 75m acres, roughly the size of Poland. While the mesofauna is already beginning to spread back across Europe, land areas of this size could perhaps permit the reintroduction of some of our lost megafauna. Why should Europe not have a Serengeti or two? Above all, rewilding offers a positive environmentalism. Environmentalists have long known what they are against; now we can explain what we are for. It introduces hope where hope seemed absent. It offers us a chance to replace our silent spring with a raucous summer. This note was added on 1 September

Chapter 3 : Home - Rewilding the World

In Rewilding the World, Caroline Fraser provides an accessible, engaging introduction to the concept of "rewilding"- of restoring sufficient areas of wilderness that various species of wildlife have enough room to engage in their normal behavior.

Each pixel in height represents years. Right up to the very last pixel, most Homo sapiens on earth made a living by hunting and gathering. The tribal life and no other is the gift of natural selection to humanity. It is to humanity what pack life is to wolves, pod life is to whales, and hive life is to bees. After three or four million years of human evolution, it alone emerged as the social organization that works for people. Daniel Quinn, *Beyond Civilization: The beginning of agriculture brought with it the Neolithic Mortality Crisis, a sudden and catastrophic drop in longevity that agricultural people have really never recovered from. By the standards of WEIRD Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic society, hunter-gatherers count as the poorest people on earth. While some hunter-gatherers do fight and kill, most live with far less violence than the United States. Wars only make sense and only appear in the archaeological record when your survival depends on controlling a specific piece of land, like a garden or a field. For 2., years humans evolved in traditional societies, and though they undoubtedly had as much an impact on the world as wolves or lions, they did not cause mass extinctions. We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. Bioregionalism Political boundaries rarely line up with the ecological zones that really determine our lives. A bioregional focus means becoming aware of things like your local watershed and ecosystem, and focusing on the issues that affect it. Indigenous people did not just live off the land, but made it flourish. Rewilding means taking on that responsibility to tend the wild. The natives were astonished by the claim. Finally one of the elders put what was bothering them in the form of a question. Primitive skills play an important part in rewilding, but few traditional societies would put them in the center. They tend to put emphasis on a more difficult task: Social Technology We may tell ourselves that without governments and laws society could not function, but the archaeological and ethnographic evidence of traditional societies show us that most human societies have flourished without them. However, after millennia of hierarchical interactions, it can take some time to relearn how to live as a free person, and how to cooperate with other free persons. Unfortunately, most people today have lost that inheritance. Rewilding covers some unexpected techniques for regenerating an authentic oral tradition. The genes from the past have come forward to us. I am asking that people change not their genes but their society, in order to harmonize with the inheritance they already have. Rewilding means reversing that process and reclaiming our human birthright. Ancestral Skills The skills needed to find food, create fire, shelter, and clothing, to treat wounds and illnesses, and otherwise make a living from the land provide independence and freedom. From the Paleo diet to barefoot walking, to our sleeping patterns, primal movement, and more, rewilding means reclaiming a standard of health and well-being that can seem like gaining super-powers now.*

Chapter 4 : From feral camels to 'cocaine hippos', large animals are rewilding the world

The original proponents of rewilding were careful to propose it as a "complementary" method to those being implemented by nongovernmental organizations like the World Wildlife Fund.

Rewilding Distilled By John Davis Rewilding, in essence, is giving the land back to wildlife and wildlife back to the land. It is restoring natural processes and species, then stepping back so the land can express its own will. Rewilding often focuses on the apex predators – like wolves, great cats, crocodiles, sharks, and salmon – and other keystone species that tend to need wild space and be lost quickly in domesticated or exploited lands and waters. Rewilding thus aims for restoration at a grand scale, the scale of conservation needed by wide-ranging species. Other leading conservation biologists, including John Terborgh, Jim Estes, Susan Morse, John Laundre, and Cristina Eisenberg, have further elucidated the rewilding concept and added to its scientific rigor, through their books, articles, and classes. As these and other conservation biologists have shown, top carnivores are not just pretty faces or effective icons for endangered species campaigns; they are central players in healthy ecosystems. To give just two from a growing litany of examples: Since the eradication of Pumas and Gray and Red Wolves from the eastern United States, White-tail Deer have become unnaturally abundant and sedentary, and are now browsing Eastern Deciduous forests to the ground. The science clearly shows that restoring the missing predators is essential to restoring the plant communities. Mexican Gray Wolf, Phoenix Zoo c Robin Silver Rewilding, though, is as poetic an idea as it is scientific, and may sometimes be best expounded through art and direct experience on the ground. A painting of a Gray Wolf pack taking an old lame Moose, or better yet the thrill of watching that scene through binoculars in real life, may realize the rewilding concept better than any scientific paper could. Thanks to the good work of conservationists and restorationists the world over, rewilding is happening in many places. Rewilding Europe has succeeded in restoring Beavers to parts of Scotland, Wolves to many parts of mainland Europe, and Lynx to Iberia. River liberators have removed dams and reopened salmon runs from the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers in Maine, the Elwha River in Washington, the Eklutna River in Alaska, and hundreds of other places. Wolves have been famously restored to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and from there have recolonized as far away as northern California – to the redounding benefit of riparian forests and the many creatures who depend upon those lush ecosystems. Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles are now numerous again in much of North America, since successful restoration programs and the banning of DDT many years ago; and even the highly imperiled California Condor is now soaring again over some of its old southwestern strongholds. Cheetah and Lion restoration efforts have succeeded in some parts of southern Africa. Rewilding Iberia is systematically restoring extirpated species to those vast Argentinian wetlands, with Pampas Deer, Tapir, Collared Peccary, Giant Anteater, and Green-winged Macaw already back out there and Jaguars being raised for release. Tallgrass prairie and savanna naturalists have restored many sites in the Midwest US; and the American Prairie Reserve in eastern Montana is being pieced together by wildlands philanthropists and repopulated with Bison. Here, just hours north of Wall Street, in a landscape largely denuded a century ago by timber and railroad companies, state land protection has allowed the return of Beaver, Fisher, River Otter, Moose and other once-extirpated species to forests approaching old-growth stature again. Now the land anxiously awaits the return of Puma and Wolf, to ensure its recovering forests remain healthy and diverse. The forests are hungry for Wolves and Pumas; the grasslands hungry for Bison and Wolves; the rivers hungry for salmon and eel; the seas hungry for whales and sharks. For Rewilding, he serves as a wildways scout, editor, interviewer, and writer. John served as editor of Wild Earth journal from , when he went to work for the Foundation for Deep Ecology, overseeing their Biodiversity and Wildness grants program from . He then joined the Eddy Foundation as a board member and continues to serve as volunteer land steward for that foundation in its work to conserve lands in Split Rock Wildway. John served as conservation director of the Adirondack Council from to . In , John wrote a book about that adventure, Big, Wild, and Connected: John continues to work with many conservation groups to protect and reconnect wild habitats regionally and continentally. John is available to give public talks on rewilding, conservation exploration, and continental

wildways, as well as to write and edit on these subjects. He is also available for contract field work, particularly monitoring conservation easements, documenting threats to wildlands, and marking conservation boundaries. He can be reached at john@rewilding.org. July 21, in [Rewilding Revealed Related News](#).

Chapter 5 : A Manifesto for Rewilding the World – George Monbiot

Rewilding the World, Santa Fe, NM. likes. In the tradition of Rachel Carson and E.O. Wilson, the inspiring story of a new movement to save wildlife.

A Manifesto for Rewilding the World 27th May A mass restoration of ecosystems offers us hope where there was little hope before. By George Monbiot, published in the Guardian 28th May Until modern humans arrived, every continent except Antarctica possessed a megafauna. In the Americas, alongside mastodons, mammoths, four-tusked and spiral-tusked elephants, there was a beaver the size of a black bear: There were giant bison weighing two tonnes, which carried horns seven feet across 2. The short-faced bear stood thirteen feet in its hind socks 3. One hypothesis maintains that its astonishing size and shocking armoury of teeth and claws are the hallmarks of a specialist scavenger: The Argentine roc *Argentavis magnificens* had a wingspan of 26 feet 5. Sabretooth salmon nine feet long migrated up Pacific coast rivers 6. During the previous interglacial period, Britain and Europe contained much of the megafauna we now associate with the tropics: The elephants, rhinos and hippos were driven into southern Europe by the ice, then exterminated around 40,000 years ago when modern humans arrived 7,8,9. Lions and hyaenas persisted: The distribution of these animals has little to do with temperature: Most of the deciduous trees in Europe can resprout wherever the trunk is broken. They can survive the extreme punishment – hacking, splitting, trampling – inflicted when a hedge is laid. Understorey trees such as holly, box and yew have much tougher roots and branches than canopy trees, despite carrying less weight. Our trees, in other words, bear strong signs of adaptation to elephants. Blackthorn, which possesses very long spines, seems over-engineered to deter browsing by deer; but not, perhaps, rhinoceros. All this has been forgotten, even by professional ecologists. Yet, during a three-day literature search in the Bodleian library, all I could find on elephant adaptation in Europe was a throwaway sentence in one scientific paper The elephant in the forest is the elephant in the room: Since then much of Europe – especially Britain – has lost most of its mesofauna as well: These losses, paradoxically, have often been locked in by conservation policy. More often than not this is a state of extreme depletion: The ecological disasters we call nature reserves are often kept in this depleted state through intense intervention: Through rewilding – the mass restoration of ecosystems – I see an opportunity to reverse the destruction of the natural world. Researching my book *Feral*, I came across rewilding programmes in several parts of Europe, including some such as *Trees for Life* in Scotland and the *Wales Wild Land Foundation* in the UK, which are beginning to show how swiftly nature responds when we stop trying to control it 18 , Rewilding, in my view, should involve reintroducing missing animals and plants, taking down the fences, blocking the drainage ditches, culling a few particularly invasive exotic species but otherwise standing back. The only thing preventing a faster rewilding in the European Union is public money. Without our help, almost all hill-farming would cease immediately. I propose two changes to the subsidy regime. The first is to cap the amount of land for which farmers can claim money at hectares acres. A cap would give small farmers an advantage over large. The second is to remove the agricultural condition rule. The effect of these changes would be to ensure that hill farmers with a powerful attachment to the land and its culture, language and traditions would still farm and continue to reduce their income by keeping loss-making sheep and cattle Absentee ranchers who are in it only for the subsidies would find that they were better off taking the money and allowing the land to rewild. Despite the best efforts of governments, farmers and conservationists, nature is already beginning to return. One estimate suggests that two thirds of the previously-forested parts of the US have reforested, as farming and logging have retreated, especially from the eastern half of the country Another proposes that by farmers on the European Continent though not in Britain, where no major shift is expected will vacate around 30 million hectares 75 million acres , roughly the size of Poland While the mesofauna is already beginning to spread back across Europe, land areas of this size could perhaps permit the reintroduction of some of our lost megafauna. Why should Europe not have a Serengeti or two? Above all, rewilding offers a positive environmentalism. Environmentalists have long known what they are against; now we can explain what we are for. It introduces hope where hope seemed absent. It offers us a chance to replace our silent spring with a

raucous summer. Nancy Sisinyak, no date given. The Biggest Bear – Ever. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. San Diego Zoo, April Woolly mammoths and woolly rhinos, which were mostly grass-eaters, living in cold dry steppes without trees, moved in with the cold weather. The presence and extinction of *Elephas antiquus* Falconer and Cautley, , in Europe. Peter Taylor, June Isotopic evidence for dietary ecology of cave lion *Panthera spelaea* in North-Western Europe: Prey choice, competition and implications for extinction. The last record of a lion in the region is a bone from an animal that lived in the Netherlands – then still connected to Britain – 10, years ago. The History of British Mammals. T and AD Poyser, London. How Much Do We Know? Elephant utilization of *Colophospermum mopane*: African Journal of Ecology. University Of California, Berkeley. And in South Africa: Graham Kerley et al, Effects of elephants on ecosystems and biodiversity. A Scientific Assessment of South Africa. Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg. Oliver Rackham, no date given. In Victor R Squires ed. Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems. Ritchie Tassell, pers comm. Official Journal of the European Union, 31st January Farm Outputs – all sizes. Elizabeth Taylor, 16th November Jim Sterba on the fight with wildlife over space in the sprawl. Making Europe a Wilder Place.

Chapter 6 : Rewilding the World: Dispatches from the Conservation Revolution by Caroline Fraser

"Rewilding is less a conservationist's utopian vision than a roadmap for the way we must learn to live on earth. As Caroline Fraser carefully explains, humans will survive only in a world as wild as the one that created us.

Messenger Throughout history, humans have taken plants and animals with them as they travelled the world. Those that survived the journey to establish populations in the diaspora have found new opportunities as they integrate into new ecosystems. But for many species, migration may just be a way to survive the global extinction crisis. Megafauna - plant-eating terrestrial mammals weighing more than kg - have established in new and unexpected places. Around 50, years ago, giant kangaroos , rhino-like diprotodons , and other unimaginable animals were lost from Australia. Giant marsupials once migrated across an Australian Ice Age landscape Later, around 12, years ago, the last of the mammoths , glyptodonts , several species of horses and camels , house-sized ground sloths and other great beasts vanished from North America. In New Zealand, a mere years ago, a riot of giant flightless birds still grazed and browsed the landscape. A wilder world than we think Formal conservation distribution maps show that much of Earth is empty of megafauna. But this is only a part of the picture. Many megafauna are now found outside their historic native ranges. In fact, thanks to introduced populations, regional megafauna species richness is substantially higher today than at any other time during the past 10, years. Megafauna have expanded beyond their historic native range to rewild the world. Remote camera trap footage from our research program shows wild brumbies, wild donkeys and wild camels sharing water sources with Australian dingoes, emus and bustards in the deserts of South Australia. These immigrant megafauna have found critical sanctuary. Wild cattle, for example, are descendants of the extinct aurochs. Meanwhile, the wild camels of Australia have brought back a species extinct in the wild for thousands of years. There have been global calls to rewild the world , but rewilding has already been happening, often with little intention and in unexpected ways. A small population of wild hippopotamuses has recently established in South America. By insisting that only idealised pre-human ecosystems are worth conserving, we overlook the fact that these emerging new forms of wilderness are not only common but critical to the survival of many existing ecosystems. By consuming coarse, fibrous plant matter they drive nutrient cycles that enrich soils, restructure plant communities, and help other species to survive. The wide wanderings of megafauna move nutrients uphill that would otherwise wash downstream and into the oceans. Megafauna also sustain communities of scavengers and predators. At least 31 species use these wells, and in certain conditions they become nurseries for germinating trees. Introduced wild donkeys burros are engineering the Sonoran Desert, United States. The removal of donkeys and other introduced megafauna to protect desert springs in North America and Australia seems to have led to an exuberant growth of wetland vegetation that constricted open water habitat, dried some springs, and ultimately resulted in the extinction of native fish. Ironically, land managers now simulate megafauna by manually removing vegetation. It is likely that introduced megafauna are doing much more that remains unknown because we have yet to accept these organisms as having ecological value. Living in a feral world Like any other species, the presence of megafauna benefits some species while challenging others. Introduced megafauna can put huge pressure on plant communities, but this is also true of native megafauna. Whether we consider the ecological roles of introduced species like burros and brumbies as desirable or not depends primarily on our own values. But one thing is certain: Although megafauna are very large, predators can have significant influence on them. In Australia, dingo packs act cooperatively to hunt wild donkeys , wild horses, wild water buffalo and wild boar. In North America, mountain lions have been shown to limit populations of wild horses in some areas of Nevada. Visions of protected dingoes hunting introduced donkeys and Sambar deer in Australia, or protected wolves hunting introduced Oryx and horses in the American West, can give us a new perspective on conserving both native and introduced species. Dispensing with visions of historic wilderness, and the associated brutal measures usually applied to enforce those ideals , and focusing on the wilderness that exists is both pragmatic and optimistic. After all, in this age of mass extinction, are not all species worth conserving?

Rewilding "which includes reintroducing species into portions of their former ranges" is an important carnivore conservation tool and means for restoring top-down ecological regulation. We conducted a global analysis of potential reintroduction areas.

Andrea Harvey Throughout history, humans have taken plants and animals with them as they travelled the world. Those that survived the journey to establish populations in the diaspora have found new opportunities as they integrate into new ecosystems. These immigrant populations have come to be regarded as "invaders" and "aliens" that threaten pristine nature. But for many species, migration may just be a way to survive the global extinction crisis. Megafauna - plant-eating terrestrial mammals weighing more than kg - have established in new and unexpected places. These "feral" populations are rewilding the world with unique and fascinating ecological functions that had been lost for thousands of years. Around 50, years ago, giant kangaroos, rhino-like diprotodons, and other unimaginable animals were lost from Australia. Later, around 12, years ago, the last of the mammoths, glyptodonts, several species of horses and camels, house-sized ground sloths and other great beasts vanished from North America. In New Zealand, a mere years ago, a riot of giant flightless birds still grazed and browsed the landscape. Megafauna have expanded beyond their historic native range to rewild the world. Modified and reproduced from Lundgren et al. A wilder world than we think Formal conservation distribution maps show that much of Earth is empty of megafauna. But this is only a part of the picture. Many megafauna are now found outside their historic native ranges. In fact, thanks to introduced populations, regional megafauna species richness is substantially higher today than at any other time during the past 10, years. Remote camera trap footage from our research program shows wild brumbies, wild donkeys and wild camels sharing water sources with Australian dingoes, emus and bustards in the deserts of South Australia. These immigrant megafauna have found critical sanctuary. Some megafauna have survived thanks to domestication and subsequent "feralisation", forming a bridge between the wild pre-agricultural landscapes of the early Holocene almost 10, years ago, to the wild post-industrial ecosystems of the Anthropocene today. Wild cattle, for example, are descendants of the extinct aurochs. Meanwhile, the wild camels of Australia have brought back a species extinct in the wild for thousands of years. There have been global calls to rewild the world, but rewilding has already been happening, often with little intention and in unexpected ways. A small population of wild hippopotamuses has recently established in South America. The nicknamed "cocaine hippos" are the offspring of animals who escaped the abandoned hacienda of Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar. By insisting that only idealised pre-human ecosystems are worth conserving, we overlook the fact that these emerging new forms of wilderness are not only common but critical to the survival of many existing ecosystems. By consuming coarse, fibrous plant matter they drive nutrient cycles that enrich soils, restructure plant communities, and help other species to survive. The wide wanderings of megafauna move nutrients uphill that would otherwise wash downstream and into the oceans. These animals can be thought of as "nutrient pumps" that help maintain soil fertility. Megafauna also sustain communities of scavengers and predators. In North America, we have found that introduced wild donkeys, locally known as "burros", dig wells more than a metre deep to reach groundwater. At least 31 species use these wells, and in certain conditions they become nurseries for germinating trees. The removal of donkeys and other introduced megafauna to protect desert springs in North America and Australia seems to have led to an exuberant growth of wetland vegetation that constricted open water habitat, dried some springs, and ultimately resulted in the extinction of native fish. Ironically, land managers now simulate megafauna by manually removing vegetation. It is likely that introduced megafauna are doing much more that remains unknown because we have yet to accept these organisms as having ecological value. Introduced wild donkeys burros are engineering the Sonoran Desert, United States. Living in a feral world Like any other species, the presence of megafauna benefits some species while challenging others. Introduced megafauna can put huge pressure on plant communities, but this is also true of native megafauna. Whether we consider the ecological roles of introduced species like burros and brumbies as desirable or not depends primarily on our own values. But one thing is

certain: Although megafauna are very large, predators can have significant influence on them. In Australia, dingo packs act cooperatively to hunt wild donkeys, wild horses, wild water buffalo and wild boar. In North America, mountain lions have been shown to limit populations of wild horses in some areas of Nevada. Visions of protected dingoes hunting introduced donkeys and Sambar deer in Australia, or protected wolves hunting introduced Oryx and horses in the American West, can give us a new perspective on conserving both native and introduced species. Dispensing with visions of historic wilderness, and the associated brutal measures usually applied to enforce those ideals, and focusing on the wilderness that exists is both pragmatic and optimistic. After all, in this age of mass extinction, are not all species worth conserving?

Chapter 8 : Rewilding the World's Large Carnivores | Forest Ecosystems & Society

Courtesy of www.nxgvision.com For More Wonder, Rewild the World. In this fascinating TED talk, environmental journalist and rewilding campaigner, George Monbiot explores the concept of rewilding and the "trophic cascade".

Chapter 9 : Rewilding Distilled - Rewilding

Rewilding means restoring ancestral ways of living that create greater health and well-being for humans and the ecosystems that we belong to. Many things lead people to rewilding – concern over ecological collapse or economic uncertainty, health problems, a nagging sense of something missing in life, or a desire to "save the world".