

Stop the presses

Books make latest 'green' trends, topics accessible to all

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We live in an age that has become increasingly conscious of and concerned with environmental need and damage, with cartoons, classes, forums, and conferences all dedicated to promoting study and awareness of the environment.

But not everyone is enrolled at a university that offers environmental studies or can afford to attend an ecological convention. So there is another way to learn about and express environmental concerns, one that often is more accessible, inclusive and cheaper.

Books.

With everything from personal essays to short stories or novels, from scientific treatises to picture books, environmental literature is hot. The most popular range from the what-can-I-do? variety to complex studies of environmental philosophies.

50 Simple Things You Can Do To Save The Earth, 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do To Save The Earth, and The Student Environmental Action Guide. The Earth Works Group, \$4.95 - \$6.95.

By far the most pragmatic and comprehensible of the environmental books are those put out by the Earth Works Group.

These books overflow with suggestions on everything from putting an end to wasteful and annoying junk mail — by writing the Mail Preference Service in New York, where many large mailing lists get their addresses — to snipping six-pack rings and collecting aluminium cans at the beach.

For young children and non-students, the two *50 Simple Things* books have particular appeal, with their enlightening and cheerily illustrated pages of activities and ideas. They also highlight the effects, both immediate and long-term, your actions have on the world. In fact, *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do* is a sure-fire way to get a younger generation hooked on creative environmental action.

The Student Environmental Action Guide is targeted specifically to college life and focused on college students' concerns. The book not only spans a wide variety of easy projects and interesting facts, but also gives pertinent examples of schools where students have made a significant difference by getting involved.

The guide puts statistics in forms students can relate to. For example, a single introductory organic chemistry class generates roughly 4,000 gallons of hazardous waste and costs \$13,000 for purchase and disposal of the chemicals. And on the average, nearly 50 percent of all cafeteria waste is edible, and 12 percent of all campus garbage is food waste.

Managing Planet Earth: Readings from Scientific American Magazine. W.H. Freeman & Company, \$12.95.

You want diversity? You've got it. This collection of essays covers a variety of environmental issues — energy, climate, atmosphere, water, habitat destruction, population, waste, global resources, world economics and ecological imperatives.

With photos, which are often quite graphic, charts, and down-to-earth explanations, *Managing Planet Earth* is a book

that can enhance everyone's knowledge of the damage done to our planet and the ways in which we can approach it. While many of the articles are geared to the more scientific-minded, the book is still a comprehensive look at some of the problems plaguing the environment.

For example, in the essay, "The Changing Atmosphere," by Thomas E. Graedel and Paul J. Crutzen, the authors address the causes and perils of atmospheric change. While some change is natural, the writers point out phenomena from the past two centuries that have contributed to swifter change.

The Feng Shui Handbook: A Practical Guide to Chinese Geomancy and Environmental Harmony. By Derek Walters, Harper Collins Publishing, \$14.

Feng Shui refers to the "feel of a place," and sets up guidelines to encourage harmony within a structure, as well as between the building and the earth. And *The Feng Shui Handbook* is an offbeat and fascinating approach to environments, both inside and out.

Walters writes, "The Chinese have long been believers that any interference with the terrain — whether by cutting canals, excavating tunnels, laying railway lines, or erecting huge buildings that distort the original forms of the skyline — can bring about unforeseen calamities."

And it is certainly a mystical approach to environmental issues. Drawing on numerology, the five elements — Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water — and theories of the natural energy flow of one's surroundings, this book offers a look at how to create and maintain a harmonious dwelling that begins on a basic, communal level and moves outward.

Walters' book is geared toward the interior qualities of a structure. It also features intriguing ideas about the relationship of houses to the earth and how each contributes to the other.

The Moon by Whale Light. By Diane Ackerman, Random House, \$20.

The Moon by Whale Light is an expanded version of portraits that were first printed in *The New Yorker*. Ackerman approaches the ecological values of animals and their relations to humans by closely examining bats, alligators and crocodiles, whales and penguins.

Ackerman describes the technique of "echolocation," used by bats to detect prey and sustain equilibrium.

"By shouting at the world, and listening to the echoes, bats can compose a picture of their landscape and the objects in it that includes textures, motion, distance, size, and probably other features, too," Ackerman writes.

By taking the reader on a journey that spans several states and countries, from Texas to Antarctica, Ackerman portrays the natural habitats, habits and ecological significance of animals in an intense, vivid, creative and intimate manner.

She introduces us to reptiles, for instance, by describing the heavy-lidded serene eyes of alligators, which she sees up close while riding one at a reserve in Florida. Later in the book, she recounts her growing fondness for a particular penguin she helped raise and details her fears for his uncertain survival in a potentially hostile world.

You can be soft in the center as long as you're 'crunchy' on the outside

By MICHELLE KELLY

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You recycle trash, conserve energy and water, refuse to take a bag at the store, don't drive a car, never buy over-packaged groceries, select only fresh organic vegetables, and you wouldn't dream of using products that are tested on animals.

But baby, you still don't have what it takes to be an "environmentalist."

In this society if you want to be recognized as an environmentalist, you must have the look. You could be the son or daughter of the president of Exxon, but hey, as long as you have the look, you get the glory. The following guidelines should be followed if you want society to recognize you as a peace, love, and save-the-earth type of person.

First of all, you need to grow your hair. If you are male, leave your hair unkempt. And women shouldn't shave their underarms or legs — it's more natural.

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These are all-important factors because a true "environmentalist" looks crunchy even when naked.

The next important thing that you need to do is be seen occasionally at protests and peace rallies. For those gatherings you have to learn to chant such catch phrases as, "The people united will never be defeated." Study carefully, you don't want to mess up and say

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something like, "The people defeated will never be united." Don't worry what it means, just memorize it.

Once you've established yourself with the "crunchy" crowd, you should build up your wardrobe so you fit in even more.

Wear a lot of exotic clothing made in Third World nations. These clothes usually are 100 percent cotton with bright colorful patterns or flowery prints and are direct imports from India... so they say.

For shoes you have several options. The most important and basic shoe wear is a pair of hiking boots, which indicates love of outdoor activities.

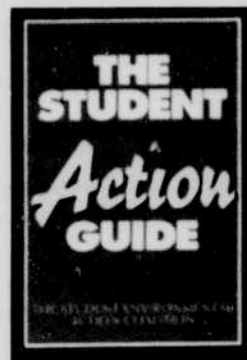
Other shoe styles include Teva sandals and Birkenstocks. And you might as well pick up several pairs of wool socks, since you'll be sporting those Birkenstocks year 'round.

Another essential item is a carabineer. Rock climbers use carabineers to hook ropes to a harness, but crunchies use them to attach reusable cups to their knapsacks.

Jewelry is also needed to enhance the "environmentalist" look. Accessorize with lots of sterling silver (don't buy gold, it makes you appear wealthy). Wear at least one beaded leather necklace, a woven bracelet, a couple of large silver rings and a power crystal.

Transportation, to get you to Dead Shows, should consist of either a Volvo, Volkswagen or another compatible foreign car. The car must be old, rusty, held together with tape and wire, and have bumper stickers with sayings such as, "Love your mother."

Following these guidelines will give you the "environmental look." Why should you waste your time actually acting in an ecologically sound manner when you can simply look the part?



Judging a book by its cover: Some of the best-selling titles at bookstores are about the environment.

