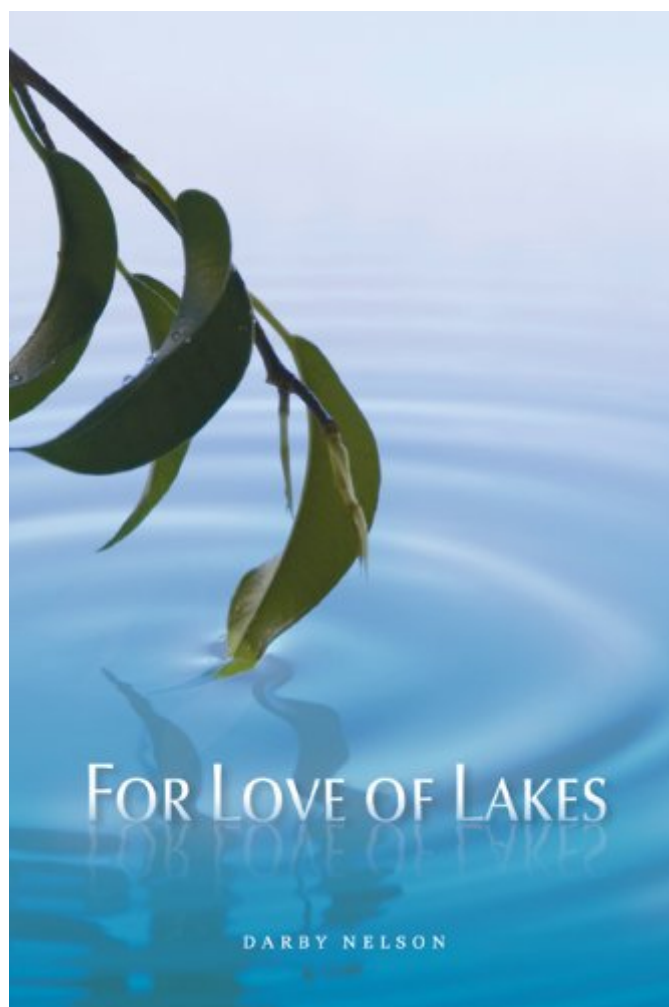


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# For Love Of Lakes (Dave Dempsey Environmental)



## Synopsis

America has more than 130,000 lakes of significant size. Ninety percent of all Americans live within fifty miles of a lake, and our 1.8 billion trips to watery places make them our top vacation choice. Yet despite this striking popularity, more than 45 percent of surveyed lakes and 80 percent of urban lakes do not meet water quality standards. For Love of Lakes weaves a delightful tapestry of history, science, emotion, and poetry for all who love lakes or enjoy nature writing. For Love of Lakes is an affectionate account documenting our species's long relationship with lakes—their glacial origins, Thoreau and his environmental message, and the major perceptual shifts and advances in our understanding of lake ecology. This is a necessary and thoughtful book that addresses the stewardship void while providing improved understanding of our most treasured natural feature.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I should admit that I do know the author personally, so when I read this book I heard his voice in my head and could imagine his passionate expressions regarding lakes. I'm not a biologist or an ecologist. I'm not particularly interested in science, but I found this book not only very readable, but also very enjoyable. This book is a mixture of travelogue, memoir, story-telling, biography, and a bit

of biology class. And I think it was this mixture that made the book so compelling for me. I learned so much from this book. Blue green algae isn't really algae. Waterfleas are the workers in a lake. And seasonal temperature/oxygen fluctuations in water can lead to massive fish kills. Nelson wrote this book to discover why if humans love lakes so much, do we continually destroy them by our actions. He takes the reader with him on a variety of canoe trips and hikes to explore the differences among lakes. Why is one lake particularly murky while another one just a short distance away is remarkably clear? What plant and animal life is thriving or absent? I felt like I was right there beside him the whole time. I even felt the tension during the chapter, entitled Thinking Like a Tullibee, as the water column the tullibees found themselves in was shrinking much like that garbage disposal scene in Star Wars. Unfortunately, for the tullibee there wasn't an R2D2 plugged into the cosmos to stop the expansion of the bottom and top levels. I learned a lot from this book, and I have a new-found respect for a variety of "pests" found in and around lakes. By the time Nelson reaches his conclusions, he has built a solid foundation based on his experiences so that readers can find themselves nodding their heads in agreement.

Darby Nelson's book "For Love of Lakes" is outstanding....with one caveat. You probably will not appreciate it as much unless you are a 'lake person'. What do I mean by that? Well, if you are someone who is drawn to lakes or who vacations on lakes (like in rural Wisconsin, which is where my in-laws live), then you will love this book. It's just fantastic through and through. The book is an interesting mix of scientific information about lakes and the animals that inhabit them; beautiful descriptions of the conditions of lakes; historical examinations of the plight of lakes (including Thoreau's Walden Pond); and personal opinions by the author about the lakes he has visited and the future of those lakes. Nelson provides crystal clear descriptions of things you would never imagine, such as an insect hovering around a lake and different species of fish swimming in a lake. He examines many types of animals and their relationship to lakes, including how the current state of some lakes may actually be harming those animals. He provides a nice overview from a limnological (science of lakes) perspective, and manages to give just enough information without overwhelming the reader with too high of a level of lake science. In some ways, the book reads like a novel, and in others it reads like a modern version of Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring', with a focus on lakes. The book is short, easy to read, but yet very comprehensive in the material it covers. It will make you think about lakes in a totally different way. If you are a 'lake person' like me, then I would urge you to buy this book and read it. And when you are done, put it on your shelf, because you will be reading it again sometime (I know I will).

Nelson's story is one of his personal discovery. Each chapter unwraps the "onion" of understanding about the complex system we call a "lake". It is a gentle read, the literary equivalent of a canoe paddle through each dimension of a study of a lake. I have already passed the book on to another reader and will continue circulating it around the community here that is struggling to preserve our lake. If you own or influence lake shore property, you must read this book.

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