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"Care"

van Dooren, Thom

van Dooren, Thom. "Care." *Environmental Humanities* 5, no. 1 (2014): 291-94. doi:10.1215/22011919-3615541.

I have often felt over the past seven years or so like I am on an extended journey along the edge of extinction. I have spent time sitting among albatrosses engaged in courtship and nesting; I have dressed up like a whooping crane to interact with young birds learning a lost migratory route; I have helped to provide enrichment for captive Hawaiian crows, hiding dead mice inside green rubber balls in their aviaries to challenge and stimulate them. All of these birds are members, more accurately *participants*, of species that are in decline or in serious trouble. Spending time in these spaces has prompted me to think about ethics through concepts like witness, hope and inheritance (much of this work is a collaboration with Deborah Bird Rose). Through these experiences—and an ongoing engagement with, in particular, the work of Maria Puig de la Bellacasa and Donna Haraway—I have also begun to appreciate an important role for *care*, in all of its ambiguity and complexity. What does it mean to care for others at the edge of extinction? What forms might careful scholarship take at this time? (Text from author)

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Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/8088
Print date: 17 November 2026 13:08:54