

## Country philosopher

# Nature Boy

by Amos Arthur Holmes

I have been enthralled most of my life with the glorious things we find in nature.

I have been soothed by a gentle summer's breeze and warmed by friendly sun.

When I was a child I would lie out in my back yard and count the stars until I fell asleep on my mother's lap.

I was fascinated with the tadpole and especially with the frog that I knew would someday turn into a prince.

I saw a waterfall in New Guinea that crashed and splashed from a

great height until it ended its journey in thunderous spray.

I have hunted Virginia forests where the oak trees stood majestic in their age and strength.

The butterfly painted by God in an array of vivid, exciting color. The peacock strutting in manly arrogance and whose beauty is almost supernatural.

Yes, I have gained immeasurably from the bountiful blessing of nature. My heart has raced at the sight of geese in flight or a baby chick emerging from its shell. The nighttime sounds of noisy cricket or

mating frog. The spectacular display of lightning that awes you with its splendor. A mountain whose still mass makes you feel small and insignificant.

Each tiny miracle of nature, each bewildering mystery, creates for us an unending spirit of adventure and appreciation.

But not all things of nature are good. I have seen floods that have devastated entire communities. I have seen forest fires that have left a thousand acres barren and ugly.

There is even evil and discomfort found in many plants growing upon



this earth. We are not compatible with the innocent-looking poison ivy, nor are we immune to the intolerable misery of coming in contact with itch weed. And, of course, many of us suffer from ragweed.

There is a great diversity found in  
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the insect world. Some insects are so beneficial to man. The praying mantis and the lady bug are welcome in any garden. Where would we be if it weren't for the bee and his gift of pollinating?

But some insects are obnoxious slobs whose sole purpose in life is to drive us all into mental institutions. The mosquitoes, ticks, and flies all are dedicated to the proposition that all men are created tasty. There is nothing quite as bad as finding ants in your picnic basket unless it would be finding a gnat in your soup.

Some of us find certain insects a

source of great fear. My father always had a dread of centipedes and my mother would become hysterical if she even SAW a Granddaddy Long Legs.

I had a neighbor who would actually faint if a moth landed near her, a brother who was deathly afraid of spiders, and a friend who screamed her lungs out if she encountered a wasp or hornet.

I have also found that certain undesirable insects take a liking to certain people. Fleas are fantastically taken with my wife. They come from all over Southern Maryland to get into my wife's brassiere or pantyhose. I

have seen fleas jump off a dog's leg onto my wife's leg. I bought my wife a flea collar. I have spent every Saturday night dusting her, and still she spends a good part of her life scratching and itching.

The insect that likes me is the termite. ~~And~~ I have no idea why this should be. Each morning, I pick a dozen termites from my anatomy and I have spent my entire life wondering why I was constantly contaminated by these lovers of wood. I finally decided that termites like me because I am as strong as an oak and as graceful as a willow.

My wife has a different theory. She says it's my wooden head.

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