



# **Ecology and the Environment: The Mechanisms, Marrings, and Maintenance of Nature (Templeton Science and Religion Series)**

*R. J. Berry*

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*Ecology and the Environment: The Mechanisms, Marring, and Maintenance of Nature* is the ninth title published in the Templeton Science and Religion Series, in which scientists from a wide range of fields distill their experience and knowledge into brief tours of their respective specialties. In this volume, R. J. Berry, a well-known leader in the field of ecology, describes the basic concepts in ecology and seeks to put them into a general context for a reader who lacks any scientific background.

Berry explores the implications of these basic concepts and how they affect human life and the decisions we have to make, both as individuals and as members of a species which has colonized and influenced every part of the globe. He points out that we are a part of the animal world, but at the same time we are apart from it, and he makes it clear that how we relate to our environment affects the quality of our life—indeed it may affect our very survival. Going well beyond a simple introduction of concepts, the book goes on to explore wider questions about the nature of humanity and how human ecology relates to humanness. Berry proposes that we are more than machines or even advanced apes—we are *Homo divinus*, transformed from an organism descended from the same stock as the apes but qualitatively different and able to relate to a creator God. The book argues that those who conclude otherwise are neglecting relevant data.

Berry offers the perfect introduction to these philosophical and theological issues, but his work never loses sight of the practical issues either—the kind that are increasingly being addressed by national and international environmental agencies. In order to grasp the full scope of these issues and to more fully understand the ubiquitous news headlines concerning environmental matters, a reader would do well to start with *Ecology and the Environment*.



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