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## **The Enigma of Wild Things**

by Dr. Jim Butler

Our lure to wild nature is a deep clandestine love affair involving much more than meets the eye. Jim Butler, Professor Emeritus, the University of Alberta, has spent forty years studying and exploring the mosaic of the human-nature bond.

This slide presentation explores the human ecology of our attraction to nature and draws from his findings, including birdwatchers, seal and whale watchers, other ecotourists, eco-spiritual retreats; travellers on cruise ships in the South Pacific in search of Bali Hai.

Our need for hope, escape, centering, and simplicity, in a world seemingly devoid of magic, passion, exuberance, and harmony, draws us more to parks and wilderness with a fresh twist for a new century.





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## **Biography**

### **Dr. Jim Butler**

Jim Butler is an internationally celebrated naturalist and conservation biologist who has worked on every continent of the world. He is currently Professor Emeritus at the University of Alberta where he lectured and conducted research in the areas of conservation biology, parks and protected areas management, wildlife identification and ecology, environmental interpretation and environmental advocacy.

During his career he inspired and mentored many students who are now currently active professors, biologists and interpreters. His undergraduate studies were at West Virginia University and Ohio State University. He received his M.A. from Manhattanville College, New York and his Ph.D. from the University of Washington. He is an author, poet, playwright, environmentalist, ordained Buddhist monk, and popular media spokesman for nature and wildlife protection in documentaries, radio and television.

He is considered a world authority on boreal forest ecology, national parks management, the relationships of people and nature, and ecotourism. He divides much of his current time among enjoying wild nature, writing, consulting worldwide and lecturing around the globe on cruise ships on topics which include whales, penguins, albatross, Darwin and the voyage of the *Beagle*, ecology of tropical islands and ocean life.

