

Does nature have inherent value?

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Does nature have inherent value? On the news over the last

week there has been a lot of talk over the loss of songbirds in Europe, mainly France where the survey was done. The same is true [here](#) though. Last Autumn there were a series of letters to the Guardian stating that there had been a huge drop in the number of insects. This was obvious it was said since there were no longer insects splatted over the front bumpers of cars. Its funny how you do not notice something until someone points it out... But the letter writers were right. I also saw less insects in the garden last summer both in variety and in numbers with hindsight. Not a week goes by without some threat to a species in the natural world being reported and this has led me and others thinking about this from a biblical perspective. Starting in Genesis God states that the earth and all creation is good (Gen1v24). Interestingly he states this *before* the creation of mankind. But Psalm 104 which by "coincidence" was one of my readings this week backs this up, or even goes even further on the inherent value of nature. The whole Psalm is a meditation on nature. There is too much here except to pick out a few points, but its well reading through and would make ideal meditation material. It talks about God's provision not just for humans but also the wildlife (14, 21, 27) and plants (16). The whole Psalm shouts about the inherent value of nature and suggests God rejoices in his works. At the end of the Psalm there is a hint that perhaps sinning is linked to not caring for his creation. Even if this is a stretch too far theologically there is an implicit need to care for God's creation both in this Psalm and other passages. There is no doubt we are all culpable for the destruction that is going on either directly or indirectly due to our lifestyles and will be judged for this one day. PS there is some good news in the news today, there has been an increase in the numbers of garden birds in the UK and this shows something we can do to combat losses in the countryside - feed them. Neil

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