

"Lynn Nyhart brings a dazzling range of knowledge to this rich account of German natural history and biology at the end of the nineteenth century. Museums and zoos have rarely looked so significant before. Moving fluently from the art of making animal exhibits for popular education to the rise of populist, community-based ideas that led to ecological thought, her story explores the growing conviction that a love for nature was a defining feature of the German national character. Every page adds exciting new angles to our understanding of the ways that science got done in the past." JANET BROWNE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

"In this highly innovative book, Lynn Nyhart shows how a series of 'practical natural historians,' including taxidermists, museum curators, zookeepers, and elementary school teachers, rejected what they deemed lifeless classificatory science in favor of a dynamic and integrated biological understanding of nature. Nyhart shows how this new perspective both 'trickled out' and 'trickled up,' and in the process transformed both scholarly and popular views of the natural world. Full of carefully considered insights into the interactions between practical naturalists, specialized scientists, and nineteenth-century German cultural institutions, *Modern Nature* tells a wonderfully rich and extremely important story. This exemplary contribution to the cultural history of science should also be a must-read for scholars of German history, museum studies, intellectual history, and German studies."

SUZANNE MARCHAND, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, BATON ROUGE

"In *Modern Nature*, Lynn Nyhart retrieves from the dark well of history a popular or 'populist' biology that flourished a century ago on the cultural fringes of German academic science—in museums, zoos, and secondary schools. Unlike elite zoology, 'Naturkunde,' or nature studies, depicted animals as living communities in actual environments. Its advocates—curators, taxidermists, teachers, writers—took pains to relate science to the lived experience of ordinary citizens. Their humanized, public science has much relevance to contemporary environmentalism. It's an eye-opening and a compelling story." ROBERT KOHLER, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

"Ecology, Nyhart argues in her absorbing new study, developed in German cultural institutions in the public sphere, such as museums, libraries, and botanical and zoological gardens, rather than in the elite realm of university science. Instead of treating the different facets of 'popular' separately, she offers us a common history that integrates them into one powerful cultural force capable of changing the face of 'elite' science. Setting her analysis of the practical naturalists firmly into the social and cultural context of late nineteenth-century Germany, Nyhart has produced a major contribution to our understanding of how a new biological perspective became integrated into modern science. This book is a must-read."

BERNARD LIGHTMAN, YORK UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS www.press.uchicago.edu

ISBN-13: 978-0-226-61089-4
ISBN-10: 0-226-61089-6



9 780226 610894



9 0000