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NO SWEAT

Ecology's menagerie

How the Earthquake Bird Got Its Name and Other Tales of an Unbalanced Nature
H.H. Shugart
Yale University Press, \$27.50

By Susan Dworski

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Deconstructing ecology for laymen is a vexing and potentially boring process, but noted ecologist and master storyteller H.H. Shugart succeeds in engaging us, navigating the requisite scientific shoals deftly while helping us understand the complex environmental processes that confront us in our role as "stewards of the Earth."

Utilizing homey animal parables, Shugart explores the major environmental issues facing humankind, balancing his research with dry wit. Dingoes, wolves, beavers, rabbits, woodpeckers and humans provide the focus for meditations on the relationship between environmental change, extinction and population explosion.

Ecology is not a slam-dunk science but a combination of many fields. Nature is not now and never has been "in balance."

Shugart enlightens by entertaining, in the hope that we become inspired to become better caretakers of our small, blue marble.

— Susan Dworski