

Acknowledgments

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Even within such wild interconnection, responsibility exists. All shortcomings remain my own.

In considering to whom this book is addressed, it is also necessary to attend to the fraught and political nature of collective pronouns. In reality there are, as Métis/Michif artist and scientist Max Liboiron notes, “many we’s (including those to which you/I/we do not belong)” (2021, 24). “We,” as used in the work of white and/or settler authors such as myself, is a pronoun that has often ignored difference and oppression, an attempt to claim a whitewash of togetherness (Wiegman 2012, 13). In many ways, it is a word better avoided. And yet, this book argues, collectives matter: dominant conservation paradigms (Liboiron 2021) are hindered by individualism and require the possibility of thinking and acting in collective ways. As settler feminist posthumanist scholar, Astrida Neimanis writes, “‘We’ is probably the most fraught word in the English language” and yet is a word “we can hardly *not* use” (2017, 14). I wrestle with the use of both “us” and “we” throughout this book. At times, the “we” used refers to a limited yet widespread grouping of “those of us,” such as myself, who have been most deeply shaped by dominant “Western” culture and sciences. When used in this way, I attempt to make it clear in the text that the “we” is a limited one. For readers who are not hailed in this “we,” I hope you will read this “we” as an attempt to locate trouble in a particular (although widespread and colonizing) tradition, rather than as a pronoun of exclusion. At other times—such as when thinking about “coming to care”—the “we” gestures toward humans collectively. However, in doing so, I intend for this “we” to be both less generalizing and more expansive than a “we” of species, holding both the reality that “we” are not all the same, nor are we all ‘in this’ in the same way” (Neimanis 2017, 15), as well as that “we” are shaped by forces and lives and materialities that are radically more than human.



Figure 0.1

One of the hedgehogs I discovered living under my house, eating cat food at the side of my cottage in Dunedin, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

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Hedgehogs, Killing, and Kindness

The Contradictions of Care in Conservation Practice

By: Laura McLauchlan

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