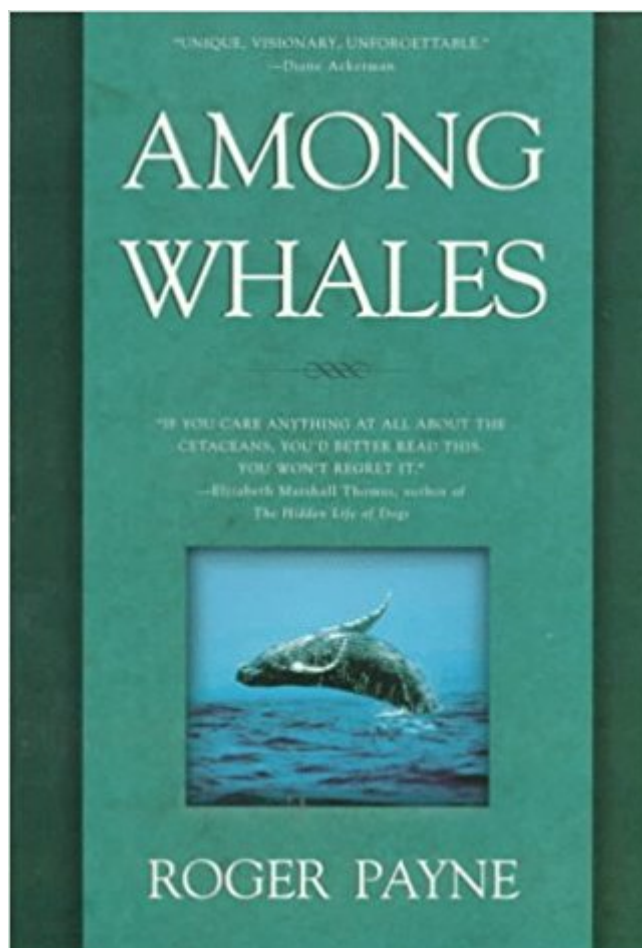


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# Among Whales



## Synopsis

How can we understand the language of whales? How will the evolving composition of seawater affect life on earth? Why do whales sing? Roger Payne has listened to the whales' haunting songs for most of his adult life and taught us to listen too. He's swum with them. He's fought for them. He's studied them and become the world's foremost cetacean biologist. Sharing his scientific observations in spellbinding detail, Payne brings vividly to life the awesome presence of these great, noble -- and desperately threatened -- creatures. A work of biology, of philosophy, and most certainly of literature, *Among Whales* is more than a book about whales. It is also a journey of the heart, a journey of discovery about the larger questions of life on earth. Passionate in his love, Roger Payne is also passionate in his outrage at the whalers who slaughter whales for profit and at the pollutants that are destroying our oceans. His words shimmer with truth; his ideas strike powerfully at our consciences. Destined to become a classic, *Among Whales* is a book of great beauty -- a cautionary tale every one of us who cares about our planet must read.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,454,945 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #95 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Field Guides > Mammals](#) #13344 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Conservation](#) #88667 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors](#)

## Customer Reviews

I am astonished that this book is out of print. How can this be? Why aren't people using it as a textbook in writing, psychology, ethics and marine biology classes? Why aren't high schools and universities clamouring to have Roger Payne speak at their commencement exercises? Why isn't he being interviewed by Oprah and Good Morning America? Why isn't the name Roger Payne as familiar to us as Jacques Cousteau or Keiko the whale? Believe me, it should be. Roger Payne is a cetacean scientist - that is to say he studies whales - however that doesn't begin to tell you about

what he really does or who he really is. You see, Roger Payne swims up to Right Whales and looks them in the eye. He hangs upside down next to Humpback whales in order to experience their bone shaking songs up close. He spends hundreds of hours a year on boats watching and recording the movements, behaviors and songs of whales. Best of all, Roger Payne has stories to tell about another world that exists beyond land. He knows and can prove, for example, that Humpback whales sing. Yes sing. Not simply make sounds but create rhythm, patterns and notes in sequences that put some of our greatest composers to shame. He has stories to tell of his encounters with whales that make it abundantly clear that they think, feel and communicate. In short Roger Payne has something to teach us about our relationship to another species on this planet, and we should be listening. But if you're not the sort to read a book just because it would be good for you, read it because Payne is a fine writer whose stories are well told and fascinating, and whose scientific explanations are so clear that even the most scientifically-challenged person can follow. Read it because it will enchant you with its descriptions of whales at play and captivate you with its studies of why whales do what they do. Read it because it will challenge your mind and touch your heart. It's that good.

If you have wondered about the beauty of these mammals, then you must read this book. Roger Payne shares the wonders of the graceful animals. If you care for them at all, then you are foolish not to read this book. It has really brought me closer to who they really are.

This book explains many theories about whale behavior, communications, etc. in great detail. It is fairly complicated in its analysis and does not have any pictures. Definitely a must read.

Satisfy your literary and scientific interest in whales--and it is a select few who have both--with Payne's fantastic and sadly out-of-print book. By way of a deeper wrinkle, it should also be pointed out that Payne is (allegedly) a good friend of Cormac McCarthy, whose novel "Blood Meridian" has been characterized as the twentieth century's answer to "Moby Dick." At some point in the last twenty-five years, McCarthy wrote a (still unpublished) screenplay called "Whales and Men," which includes a character believed to be based on Payne. (McCarthy is credited in "Among Whales.") So, two literary strands, Melville and McCarthy, and one scientific one, cetology, are smoothly wound in Payne's book. Used copies abound.

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Sharks, Killer Whales, Barracudas, Seahorses, Seals, and More... National Geographic. October 2009. Vol. 216 No. 4. The Tallest Trees. Redwoods. Plus Whales; Indonesia; Sahara; Shipwreck. (Rocketing Whales; Indonesia Faces the Fanatics; Lost in the Sahara; A Priceless Shipwreck., 216)

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