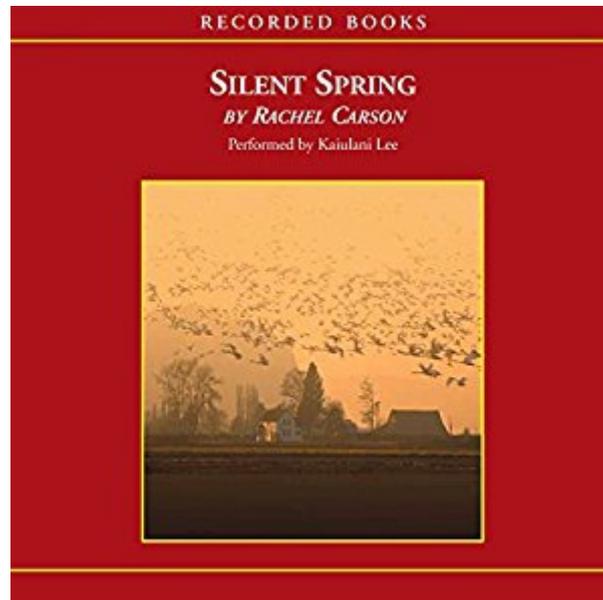


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# Silent Spring



## Synopsis

First published by Houghton Mifflin in 1962, *Silent Spring* alerted a large audience to the environmental and human dangers of indiscriminate use of pesticides, spurring revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. "Silent Spring became a runaway bestseller, with international reverberations . . . [It is] well crafted, fearless and succinct . . . Even if she had not inspired a generation of activists, Carson would prevail as one of the greatest nature writers in American letters" (Peter Matthiessen, for *Time*'s 100 Most Influential People of the Century). This edition celebrates Rachel Carson's watershed book with a new introduction by the author and activist Terry Tempest Williams and a new afterword by the acclaimed Rachel Carson biographer Linda Lear, who tells the story of Carson's courageous defense of her truths in the face of ruthless assault from the chemical industry in the year following the publication of *Silent Spring* and before her untimely death in 1964. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Rachel Carson sent tremors through American society with the publication of her 1962 book "Silent Spring." Carson, a marine biologist who died two years after publication of the book, wrote "Silent Spring" when she received a letter from a concerned citizen lamenting the mass death of birds after a DDT spraying. Carson continues to serve as a touchstone for both mainline and radical environmental groups, from the Sierra Club to Earth First!. It is not difficult to see why; Carson's call for active involvement in our environment is still an absolute necessity today as the industrial system

continues its rapid march across the landscape. If we do not want our children born with gills and fins, keeping Carson in mind is important. Carson's analysis of DDT and other synthetic chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides resulted in a deeply ominous conclusion--pesticides destroy the environment and threaten everything within the ecological system. Carson examined the composition of pesticides, revealing that synthetic pesticides have the ability to not only kill their intended targets, but they also move right up the food chain, eventually reaching the human population. The pesticides then build up in the tissues of the body, rarely breaking down but often building in intensity through continued exposure or changing into forms that are even more toxic by interacting with other ingested chemicals. Even worse, these chemicals cause tremors, paralysis, cancer, and a host of other unpleasant ailments. Carson cites numerous stories about exposed people falling ill and dying shortly after spraying these toxic chemicals. Carson also shows the biological process these poisons take when they enter the body, when they cut off oxygen to the cells and raise the metabolic rate to unhealthy levels.

Every once in a while a book comes along that has such a profound effect on society that it creates a movement for awareness and betterment. Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, is one of those. *Silent Spring* did for the environmental movement what Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* did for the labor movement and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did for the anti-slavery movement. Carson took a stand on environmental abuses, especially against the chemical industry in this work of social criticism. Carson opened the eyes of many and forced many to take responsibility for their actions, which sparked a modern environmental and awareness movement that is still active today. *Silent Spring* discusses the implications of using harmful chemicals to all life--plant, animal, human and the like. They cause negative cyclical reactions--the processes do not continue to work, so it is the harmful chemicals to the Earth are repeated year after year. Though the chemical industry would make you believe the levels in use are not harmful, that is a fallacy. They are extremely dangerous chemicals and poisons, which build up over time in one's body and in the Earth, over time make them lethal. Carson did well in creating a book that everyone, not just science and environmental enthusiasts could both read and understand. The information presented captures the urgent and sincere trouble that the United States was heading down during the time *Silent Spring* was written. The use of chemical insecticides and pesticides was going against nature and creating irreversible damage to all living things. The Earth and its facets have its own built-in system to correct problems and to make it work in harmony.

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