



# Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800

By Keith Thomas

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

## Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas

Throughout the ages man has struggled with his perceived place in the natural world. The idea of humans cultivating the Earth to suit specific needs is one of the greatest points of contention in this struggle. For how would have civilization progressed, if not by the clearance of the forests, the cultivation of the soil, and the conservation of wild landscape into human settlement? Yet what of the healing powers of unexploited nature, its long-term importance in the perpetuation of human civilization, and the inherent beauty of wild scenery? At no time were these questions addressed as pointedly and with such great consequence as in England between the sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries. "Between 1500 and 1800 there occurred a whole cluster of changes in the way in which men and women, at all social levels, perceived and classified the natural world around them," explains Keith Thomas. "New sensibilities arose toward animals, plants, and landscape. The relationship of man to other species was redefined; and his right to exploit those species for his own advantage was sharply challenged."

*Man and the Natural World* aims not just to explain present interest in preserving the environment and protecting the rights of animals, but to reconstruct an earlier mental world. Thomas seeks to expose the assumptions beneath the perceptions, reasonings, and feelings of the inhabitants of early modern England toward the animals, birds, vegetation, and physical landscape among which they spent their lives, often in conditions of proximity which are now difficult for us to appreciate. It was a time when a conviction of man's ascendancy over the natural world gave way to a new concern for the environment and sense of kinship with other species. Here, for example, Thomas illustrates the changing attitudes toward the woodlands. John Morton observed in 1712, "In a country full of civilized inhabitants" timber could not be "suffered to grow. It must give way to fields and pastures, which are of more immediate use and concern to life."

Shortly thereafter, in 1763, Edwin Lascelles pronounced the "The beauty of a country consists chiefly in the wood." People's relationships with animals were also in the process of dramatic change as seen in their growing obsession with pet keeping. The use of human names for animals, the fact that pets were rarely eaten, though not for gastronomic reasons, and pets being included in family portraits and often fed better than the servants all demonstrated a major shift in

man's position on human uniqueness.

The issues raised in this fascinating work are even more alive today than they were just ten years ago. Preserving the environment, saving the rain forests, and preventing the extinction of species may seem like fairly recent concerns, however, *Man and the Natural World* explores how these ideas took root long ago. These issues have much to offer not only environmental activists, but historians as well, for it is impossible to disentangle what the people of the past thought about plants and animals from what they thought about themselves.

 [Download Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in E ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in ...pdf](#)

# Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800

By Keith Thomas

## Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas

Throughout the ages man has struggled with his perceived place in the natural world. The idea of humans cultivating the Earth to suit specific needs is one of the greatest points of contention in this struggle. For how would have civilization progressed, if not by the clearance of the forests, the cultivation of the soil, and the conservation of wild landscape into human settlement? Yet what of the healing powers of unexploited nature, its long-term importance in the perpetuation of human civilization, and the inherent beauty of wild scenery? At no time were these questions addressed as pointedly and with such great consequence as in England between the sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries. "Between 1500 and 1800 there occurred a whole cluster of changes in the way in which men and women, at all social levels, perceived and classified the natural world around them," explains Keith Thomas. "New sensibilities arose toward animals, plants, and landscape. The relationship of man to other species was redefined; and his right to exploit those species for his own advantage was sharply challenged."

*Man and the Natural World* aims not just to explain present interest in preserving the environment and protecting the rights of animals, but to reconstruct an earlier mental world. Thomas seeks to expose the assumptions beneath the perceptions, reasonings, and feelings of the inhabitants of early modern England toward the animals, birds, vegetation, and physical landscape among which they spent their lives, often in conditions of proximity which are now difficult for us to appreciate. It was a time when a conviction of man's ascendancy over the natural world gave way to a new concern for the environment and sense of kinship with other species. Here, for example, Thomas illustrates the changing attitudes toward the woodlands. John Morton observed in 1712, "In a country full of civilized inhabitants" timber could not be "suffered to grow. It must give way to fields and pastures, which are of more immediate use and concern to life." Shortly thereafter, in 1763, Edwin Lascelles pronounced the "The beauty of a country consists chiefly in the wood." People's relationships with animals were also in the process of dramatic change as seen in their growing obsession with pet keeping. The use of human names for animals, the fact that pets were rarely eaten, though not for gastronomic reasons, and pets being included in family portraits and often fed better than the servants all demonstrated a major shift in man's position on human uniqueness.

The issues raised in this fascinating work are even more alive today than they were just ten years ago. Preserving the environment, saving the rain forests, and preventing the extinction of species may seem like fairly recent concerns, however, *Man and the Natural World* explores how these ideas took root long ago. These issues have much to offer not only environmental activists, but historians as well, for it is impossible to disentangle what the people of the past thought about plants and animals from what they thought about themselves.

## Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1157678 in Books
- Brand: Oxford University Press
- Published on: 1996-10-24

- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 5.31" h x .87" w x 8.00" l, 1.20 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 332 pages



[Download Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in E ...pdf](#)



[Read Online Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in ...pdf](#)

## Download and Read Free Online **Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800** By Keith Thomas

---

### Editorial Review

#### Review

"This book has two great charms. One is the almost incredible wealth of supporting detail....The other charm is closely related. Mr. Thomas has a gift for apt quotation. One hears a thousand or more voices in his book."--*The New York Times Book Review*

#### From the Back Cover

Preserving the environment, saving the rain forests, and preventing the extinction of species may seem like fairly recent concerns, but in *Man and the Natural World*, Sir Keith Thomas explores how these ideas took root long ago. In this entertaining and illuminating history, Thomas aims not just to explain present interest in preserving the environment and protecting the rights of animals, but to reconstruct an earlier mental world as well. Throughout the ages humankind has attempted to rationalize its place in nature. At no time was the idea of exploiting the earth for our own advantage so sharply challenged as in England between the sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries. For it was during these years that there occurred a whole cluster of changes in the way in which men and women, at all social levels, perceived the natural world around them. Thomas seeks to expose the assumptions which underlay the views and feelings of the inhabitants of early modern England toward the animals, birds, vegetation, and physical landscape among which they spent their lives. The issues raised here are even more alive today than they were just ten years ago. This fascinating work deftly shows that it is impossible to disentangle what the people of the past thought about plants and animals from what they thought about themselves.

#### About the Author

About the Author: Sir Keith Thomas is President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford University. His works include *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, and other writings on the social and cultural history of early modern England. He is also editor of the *Past Masters* and *Oxford Studies in Social History* series.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### **Diane Reid:**

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also get a life style. This reading addiction give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge even the information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The knowledge you get based on what kind of e-book you read, if you want send more knowledge just go with knowledge books but if you want feel happy read one using theme for entertaining like comic or novel. Often the *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* is kind of publication which is giving the reader unstable experience.

**Christine Andrews:**

The reason? Because this Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will shock you with the secret the idea inside. Reading this book beside it was fantastic author who write the book in such wonderful way makes the content on the inside easier to understand, entertaining means but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of gains than the other book get such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I had been you I will go to the guide store hurriedly.

**Mark Nixon:**

In this era globalization it is important to someone to acquire information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The healthiness of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of references to get information example: internet, newspaper, book, and soon. You will see that now, a lot of publisher this print many kinds of book. Typically the book that recommended to your account is Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 this e-book consist a lot of the information from the condition of this world now. This kind of book was represented so why is the world has grown up. The language styles that writer value to explain it is easy to understand. The actual writer made some research when he makes this book. That's why this book acceptable all of you.

**Cherly Plaster:**

A number of people said that they feel bored stiff when they reading a reserve. They are directly felt the idea when they get a half areas of the book. You can choose the particular book Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 to make your personal reading is interesting. Your skill of reading skill is developing when you including reading. Try to choose simple book to make you enjoy to study it and mingle the idea about book and studying especially. It is to be initial opinion for you to like to wide open a book and examine it. Beside that the guide Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 can to be your brand-new friend when you're sense alone and confuse in what must you're doing of their time.

**Download and Read Online Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas #HUGMT175Z04**

# **Read Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas for online ebook**

Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas books to read online.

## **Online Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas ebook PDF download**

**Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas Doc**

**Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas MobiPocket**

**Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas EPub**

**HUGMT175Z04: Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800 By Keith Thomas**