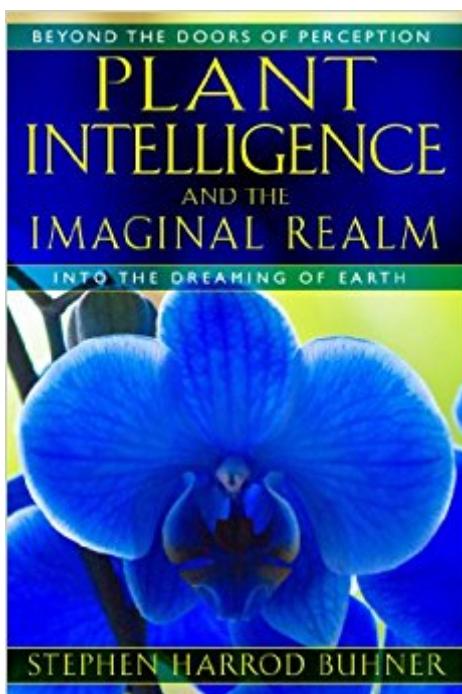


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Plant Intelligence And The Imaginal Realm: Beyond The Doors Of Perception Into The Dreaming Of Earth



Synopsis

A manual for opening the doors of perception and directly engaging the intelligence of the Natural World. Provides exercises to directly perceive and interact with the complex, living, self-organizing being that is Gaia. Reveals that every life form on Earth is highly intelligent and communicative. Examines the ecological function of invasive plants, bacterial resistance to antibiotics, psychotropic plants and fungi, and the human species. In *Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm*, Stephen Harrod Buhner reveals that all life forms on Earth possess intelligence, language, a sense of I and not I, and the capacity to dream. He shows that by consciously opening the doors of perception, we can reconnect with the living intelligences in Nature as kindred beings, become again wild scientists, nondomesticated explorers of a Gaian world just as Goethe, Barbara McClintock, James Lovelock, and others have done. For as Einstein commented, "We cannot solve the problems facing us by using the same kind of thinking that created them." Buhner explains how to use analogical thinking and imaginal perception to directly experience the inherent meanings that flow through the world, that are expressed from each living form that surrounds us, and to directly initiate communication in return. He delves deeply into the ecological function of invasive plants, bacterial resistance to antibiotics, psychotropic plants and fungi, and, most importantly, the human species itself. He shows that human beings are not a plague on the planet, they have a specific ecological function as important to Gaia as that of plants and bacteria. Buhner shows that the capacity for depth connection and meaning-filled communication with the living world is inherent in every human being. It is as natural as breathing, as the beating of our own hearts, as our own desire for intimacy and love. We can change how we think and in so doing begin to address the difficulties of our times.

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Customer Reviews

“Stephen Harrod Buhner’s *The Lost Language of Plants* and *The Secret Teachings of Plants* taught a generation of herbalists to trust our sense that the world was alive and speaking to us. *Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm* takes us further down that path of remembering and re-enchantment, awakening our capacity to tap directly in to the Gaian mind. Be warned: if you read this book, you will never be the same again.” (Sean Donahue, traditional herbalist and instructor, School of Western Herbal Medicine at Pacific Rim) “There is much magic, and a wealth of wisdom in this book. It is a wisdom that anyone can come, not only to understand, but to live within. To take this journey is to embrace a great healing, and to release a great burden. The healing answers your deepest longing, I won’t say what the burden is, but you will know it when you let it go.” (The Fall Buyers MetaGuide, September 2014) “This is a rare and splendid book that takes you right into the heart and soul of the world. Read it and be transformed.” (Stephan Harding, Ph.D., head of Holistic Science, Schumacher College, UK, and author of *Animate Earth*) “The twentieth century was the great age of physics, and the twenty-first is the age of biology. According to Stephen Harrod Buhner, we must interact empathically with the biosphere by opening our perceptual gates to perceive through all body sensations. He deliciously explores music, writing, art, and plants as tools for reclaiming our feeling sense of nature. *Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm* is a work of heartfelt wisdom written so exquisitely that it took my breath away, a must read for anyone who wants to achieve keystone intelligence--empathic immersion within Earth.” (Barbara Hand Clow, author of *Awakening the Planetary Mind: Beyond the Trauma of the Past to a New Era*)

Stephen Harrod Buhner is the senior researcher for the Foundation for Gaian Studies. Described as both an Earth Poet and a Bardic Naturalist, he is the award-winning author of 19 books, including *The Lost Language of Plants*, *The Secret Teachings of Plants*, and *Sacred Plant Medicine*. He has taught for more than 30 years throughout North America and Europe. He lives in Silver City, New Mexico.

Many times in the course of reading *Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm* I wanted to stop and post my reaction to the book here on . I resisted the temptation setting myself the goal of responding

only when I was finished. And now I have done that. In this book Stephen Buhner proposed to me, in a most personal way, that I undertake my re-education. His single piece of advice was this: Whenever you encounter something ask yourself: How does it feel? So I will say how this book feels. This book feels heavy, not the heaviness of its actual weight, though it is not a short book, but the heaviness the old hippies referred to when they said, "That's heavy, man." Importance has its own kind of weight, and the weight of this book settles onto my body, not in any oppressive way but as if it were a fluid of warmth that conformed to every lineament of my physical self. But it was not my physical self that was embraced, it was rather my natural mind; it was, in the end, my heart. For this is a book of love if ever there was one and kindles love in response. It is as if someone nudged me awake from my sleep, gently but insistently. I knew at any moment I could say, "Leave me alone," and the book would depart. Or I could let it rouse me. The book feels full of arousal, awake for the one who would awaken. So the book feels bright, not dazzling and brilliant in its brightness, not a brightness that causes squinting, but a brightness like the moon, never caustic, but when it is full adequate for many discoveries. The book is as stocked with joy as a spring river with trout. It abounds with an energy of the sort the old prophets felt when stirred by the touch of vision. It is lithe like a big cat moving in the forest; it is a repetitious as the old bardic chants composed of formulae worked and reworked in changing skeins. It has the generosity of the potlatch. It has the humor of clowns backstage taking off their facepaint. It calls as sweetly as the morning doves in my garden, seductive, soft, and hinting of intimacy. Feeling? Mine now on reading it: gratitude. The sense of dedication that breathes through this book touched me, held me as spell-bound as one is held by a great recitation. I love the man who wrote this book though I am not likely ever to meet him. Why? Because this book affirms something in me that needs affirming, seeks to feel affirmed. I feel I am in the presence of a true friend. Listen, I am 73 years old. I have a PhD in literature from Harvard. I taught in the academic world Buhner describes. AND I have had those experiences in my life which opened the doors of perception. But I have never quite found a guide to the heart of the earth. If I could only hand down to my children one book from all the books I have read, it would be this book. It is like a map---though not the territory---a golden thread through the labyrinth. Feel? it's the feeling of having listened to a great song sung by a someone who has come back from a long journey with the wish to inspire me to travel there on my own.

This book is Life-Changing. It's long, 500 pages, and you have to read through it because he's really building a case, but it's hard to put down. You start thinking "Phew, made it to page 400!" just

because there's so much in it, but there's no temptation to read something else instead - or even to *do* something else instead. One of his points is that we aren't going to survive as a viable species in any form we'd recognize, till we reanimate the Planet and its Peoples - the Animals, Plants, Amoeba, Bacteria, even Rocks. We are their *partners* on the Planet, not their masters. Along the way he introduces fascinating new science about how perception works.

This may be the most important book you'll read this decade. Maybe ever. It re-enforces things that many of us have intuitively believed for a long time, but it does it through cutting edge science that is completely blowing my mind. Do you sort of think that the gaia hypothesis is kind of true--you know, maybe on a mythical or metaphorical level? Do you want proof that it is absolutely, scientifically true? The science presented here is mind blowing, paradigm shifting. As the mystics and native medicine people have been telling us forever, everything is connected, everything is conscious and communicates with everything else, the earth is actually a conscious, continually evolving being of which we and every other living thing are interconnected expressions. We have the capacity to actually SENSE this, feel it, know it in the ways that all people used to know it, back before the current scientific paradigm--now too slowly changing--started to convince us that we are all separate beings, and the rest of the universe, including the rest of "nature", is basically mechanical and unconscious and cannot communicate with us. The author gives exercises for developing this other way of sensing that we all are capable of but have mostly had beaten and "educated" and conditioned out of us. I'm actually not quite done reading the book yet, but each chapter fills me with more amazement, more "aha, yes, YES!" moments. I'm ordering at least 2 more copies to give to others. This is an absolute must read book, one that COULD help us to pull back from the precipice we are currently hanging over. We won't destroy the planet, though we are currently doing it very serious harm. But we may succeed in getting ourselves eradicated as a sadly failed experiment that was ultimately too destructive to the rest of the living planet of which we are but one expression. There's no way I can say words to do this book justice. Just read it, I totally promise you will not be disappointed. It may change your life. It will absolutely astound you, unless you yourself are a cutting edge biologist--and possibly even then. Just read it.

Every few years a book comes along that pierces one's being to the very core - Stephen Harrod Buhner's Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm is one such book. This is a life-changing book on a personal, and potentially societal level, comparable to classic writings that I've read by Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Eihei Dogen, Longchen Rabjam, Chogyam Trungpa, Carlos

Castaneda, Martin Ball, and John Lamb Lash. Although in the most profound and basic view, reality has no inherent existence, we are here and now and called by integrity to relate to and honor the sacredness of all living systems, from the human to the bacterial to the living Earth known as Gaia. Stephen has written a magnificent instruction manual that offers humanity the opportunity to see through our conditioned exceptionalism and self-imposed isolation, and once again begin to enter into communion with the living world. I recommend this book to all beings everywhere.

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