

# Book Trails Heading West Reading List

by  
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This list began with authors and titles included in a talk first delivered at the SMU-In-Taos Summer Colloquium in 2011. Then I added other books that merit attention but couldn't be squeezed into a single lecture. Now for the caveats: (1) This is not the beginning of a bibliography on writers in the West -- I'm retired; (2) This is not a list for a course -- I'm writing now but not teaching; (3) This list is not meant to be balanced, so it is bound to irritate some folks who don't find their favorite genres, books, or authors here. In short, these are personal choices for a few of the books encountered in more recent decades after a lifetime of reading -- books others might find worthwhile. While there are many more titles that could have been included, the ones here may introduce you to new friends or remind you of old ones.

For those 'hooked' on books about our region, see J. Frank Dobie's *Life and Literature of the Southwest* and books by Lawrence Clark Powell on writers he enjoyed. Like all older reference works in this fast-changing era of publishing and the growth of e-books, Dobie and Powell won't be revised. So browse the reference section in your local library and 'Google' the internet to find additional guides. Then, catch reviews of new work and head to your local independent book shop, not Amazon. Share titles and books with your friends! Happy reading!! [Titles marked by an asterisk were discussed or mentioned in my talk.]

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## **Rick Bass**

*Platte River.*

*Winter, Notes from Montana.*

## **Isabella Bird**

\**A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains.* (Classic narrative of a trip taken in 1873 by an intrepid Englishwoman who thought nothing of traveling alone; many printings available)

## **Craig Childs**

\**The Animal Dialogues, Uncommon Encounters in the Wild.*

*The Way Out.*

*The Secret Knowledge of Water.*

*Finders Keepers, A Tale of Archaeological Plunder and Obsession.*

**Richard Henry Dana**

*\*Two Years Before the Mast.* (First published in 1840, this classic of account of sailing and early California has been reissued by various publishers)

**Ivan Doig**

*\*This House of Sky, Landscapes of a Western Mind.*

*\*English Creek.*

*\*Dancing at the Rascal Fair.*

*\*Ride With Me, Mariah Montana.*

*The Eleventh Man.*

**Gretel Ehrlich**

*The Solace of Open Spaces.*

*A Match to the Heart.*

*Drinking Dry Clouds, Stories from Wyoming.*

**Jim Harrison**

*A Good Day to Die.*

*The Beast God Forgot to Invent.*

*Off to the Side, A Memoir.*

**Linda Hasselstrom**

*Going Over East.*

*Windbreak.*

*Land Circle.*

**Linda Hogan**

*\*Solar Storms, A Novel.*

*\*Mean Spirit.*

*People of the Whale.*

**Barbara Kingsolver**

*Pigs in Heaven.*

*High Tide in Tucson.*

**William Kittredge**

*Hole in the Sky, A Memoir.*

**Barry Lopez**

*\*Arctic Dreams.*

*\* Of Wolves and Men.*

*\*River Notes, The Dance of Herons.*

*Winter Count.*

**Sylvia Lopez-Medina**

*Cantora, a Novel.*

**Ellen Meloy**

*\*Eating Stone, Imagination and the Loss of the Wild.* NY: Pantheon, 2005.

*Raven's Exile: A Season on the Green River.*

*The Anthropology of Turquoise.*

**Gary Nabhan**

*The Desert Smells Like Rain.*

*Enduring Seeds.*

**Douglas Preston**

*Talking to the Ground, One Family's Journey on Horseback Across the Sacred Land of the Navajo.*

**Annie Proulx**

*\*Close Range, Wyoming Stories.*

*That Old Ace in the Hole.*

*The Shipping News.*

*Postcards.*

*Accordion Crimes.*

**Wallace Stegner**

*\*Beyond the Hundredth Meridian, John Wesley Powell and the Second Opening of the West.*

*\*Angle of Repose.*

*The Sound of Mountain Water.*

*Crossing to Safety.*

**Luis Urrea**

*\*The Devil's Highway.*

*\*Into the Beautiful North.*

*\*The Hummingbird's Daughter.*

*\*By the Lake of Sleeping Children.*

*Nobody's Son.*

**Larry Watson**

*Montana 1948, a Novel.*  
*Justice.*

**Terry Tempest Williams**

*Pieces of White Shell, A Journey to Navajoland.*  
*Red, Passion and Patience in the Desert.*  
*Refuge, An Unnatural History of Family and Place.*

**Ann Zwinger**

*Downcanyon, A Naturalist Explores the Colorado River Through the Grand Canyon.*