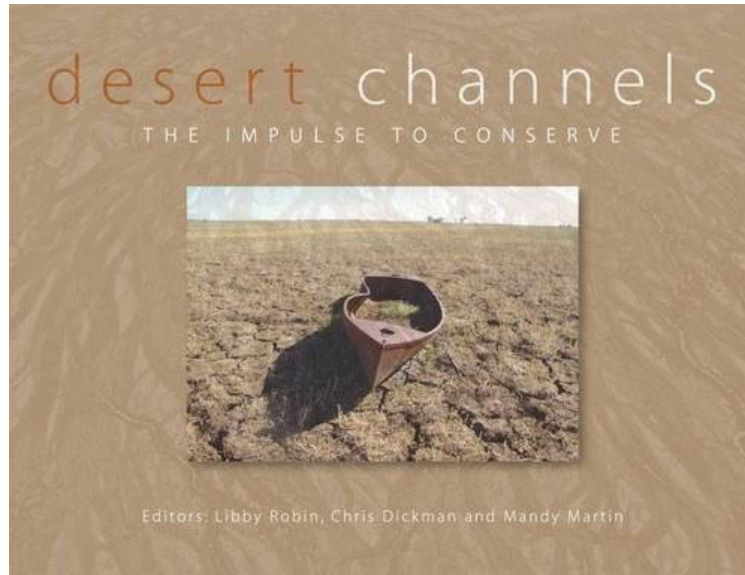


Desert Channels: The Impulse to Conserve

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From CSIRO Publishing : Desert Channels: The Impulse to Conserve before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Desert Channels: The Impulse to Conserve:

Desert Channels is a book that combines art, science and history to explore the impulse to conserve in the distinctive Desert Channels country of south-western Queensland. The region is the source of Australia's major inland-flowing desert rivers. Some of Australia's most interesting new conservation initiatives are in this region, including partnerships between private landholders, non-government conservation organizations that buy and manage land (including Bush Heritage Australia and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy) and community-based natural resource management groups such as Desert Channels Queensland. Conservation biology in this place has a distinguished scientific history, and includes two decades of ecological work by scientific editor Chris Dickman. Chris is one of Australia's leading terrestrial ecologists and mammalogists. He is an outstanding writer and is passionate about communicating the scientific basis for concern about biodiversity in this region to the broadest possible audience. Libby Robin, historian and award-winning writer, has co-ordinated the writings of the 46 contributors whose voices collectively portray the Desert Channels in all its facets. The emphasis of the book is on partnerships that conserve landscapes and communities together. Short textboxes add local and technical commentary where relevant. Art and science combine with history and local knowledge to richly inform the writing and visual understanding of the country. Conservation here is portrayed in four dimensions: place, landscape, biodiversity and livelihood. These four parts each carry four chapters. The 4x4 structure was conceived by acclaimed artist, Mandy Martin, who has produced suites of artwork over three seasons in this format with commentaries, which make the interludes between parts. Martin's work offers an aesthetic framework of place, which shapes how we see the region. Desert Channels explores the impulse to protect the varied biodiversity of the region, and its Aboriginal, pastoral and prehistoric heritage, including some of Australia's

most important dinosaur sites. The work of Alice Duncan-Kemp, the regions most significant literary figure, is highlighted. Even the sounds of the landscape are not forgotten, The book includes a CD by Alaskan radio journalist Richard Nelson talking to ecologist Steve Morton at Ocean Bore in the Simpson Desert country; the twitter of zebra finches accompanies the interview. Conservation can be accomplished in various ways and Desert Channels combines many distinguished voices. The impulse to conserve is shared by local landholders, conservation enthusiasts (from the community and from national and international organizations), Indigenous owners, professional biologists, artists and historians.

About the Author Libby Robin is a Professor in the Fenner School of Environment and Society at the Australian National University, and affiliated professor of KTH Stockholm and the National Museum of Australia. She is a historian of environmental ideas who has worked in interdisciplinary environmental studies since 1999. Libby's current project works with museums to give voice to communities facing the effects of global warming. Chris Dickman is Professor in Terrestrial Ecology at the University of Sydney, and author of the popular book *A Fragile Balance: The Extraordinary Story of Australian Marsupials* (2007), which won the Whitley Medal for advancing zoological knowledge in 2008. He has been studying the natural history of the Desert Channels area for 20 years, and has published extensively on this. Mandy Martin is an internationally-renowned artist and this is her third major collaborative project in the Australian deserts incorporating art, science and story. She is an Artist and Adjunct Professor, Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University.