



Ecological Understanding, Second Edition: The Nature of Theory and the Theory of Nature

Steward T.A. Pickett, Jurek Kolasa, Clive G. Jones

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This widely anticipated revision of the groundbreaking book, *Ecological Understanding*, updates this crucial sourcebook of contemporary philosophical insights for practicing ecologists and graduate students in ecology and environmental studies. The second edition contains new ecological examples, an expanded array of conceptual diagrams and illustrations, new text boxes summarizing important points or defining key terms, and new reference to philosophical issues and controversies. Although the first edition was recognized for its clarity, this revision takes the opportunity to make the exposition of complex topics still clearer to readers without a philosophical background.

Readers will gain an understanding of the goals of science, the structure of theory, the kinds of theory relevant to ecology, the way that theory changes, what constitutes objectivity in contemporary science, and the role of paradigms and frameworks for synthesis within ecology and in integration with other disciplines. Finally, how theory can inform and anchor the public use of ecological knowledge in civic debates is laid out. This new edition refines the understanding of how the structure and change of theory can improve the growth and application of one of the 21st century's key sciences.

- Explains the philosophical basis of ecology in plain English
- Contains chapter overviews and summaries
- Text boxes highlight key points, examples, or controversies
- Diagrams explain structure and development of theory, and integration
- Evaluates and relates paradigms in ecology
- Illustrates philosophical issues with classic and new ecological research

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