Earth Care Poems and Quotes

A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.
- Maya Angelou

*What a Wonderful World*
I see skies of blue and clouds of white
The bright blessed day,
the dark sacred night
And I think to myself, what a wonderful world.
- Louis Armstrong

*The Peace of Wild Things*
When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.
- Wendell Berry

Whether we or our politicians know it or not, *Nature* is party to all our deals and decisions, and she has more votes, a longer memory, and a sterner sense of justice than we do.
- Wendell Berry

...I am speaking of the life of a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children; who has undertaken to cherish it and do it no damage, not because he is duty-bound, but because he loves the world and loves his children; whose work serves the earth he lives on and from and with, and is therefore pleasurable and meaningful and unending; whose rewards are not deferred until "retirement," but arrive daily and seasonally out of the details of the life of their place; whose goal is the continuance of the life of the world, which for a while animates and contains them, and which they know they can never compass with their understanding or desire.
- Wendell Berry
We give you thanks, most gracious God, for the beauty of the earth and sky and sea; for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers; for the songs of birds and the loveliness of flowers. We praise you for these good gifts and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity. Grant that we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation, to the honor and glory of your name, now and forever.
--The *Book of Common Prayer*

Vestigia

I took a day to search for God,
And found Him not. But as I trod
By rocky ledge, through woods untamed,
Just where one scarlet lily flamed,
I saw His footprint in the sod.

Then suddenly, all unaware,
Far off in the deep shadows, where
A solitary hermit thrush
Sang through the holy twilight hush –
I heard His voice upon the air.

And even as I marveled how
God gives us Heaven here and now,
In a stir of wind that hardly shook
The poplar leaves beside the brook –
His hand was light upon my brow.
- Bliss Carman

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature – assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.
- Rachel Carson

“Now I truly believe that we in this generation must come to terms with nature, and I think we’re challenged, as mankind has never been challenged before, to prove our maturity and our mastery, not of nature but of ourselves.
– Rachel Carson

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We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost’s familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road – the one ‘less traveled by’ – offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of our earth.

- Rachel Carson

What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the winter time. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the Sunset.
- Crowfoot

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all –
- Emily Dickinson

The cure for anything is salt water: sweat, tears or the sea.
- Isak Dinesen

Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty.
- Albert Einstein

If it should turn out that we have mishandled our own lives as several civilizations before us have done, it seems a pity that we should involve the violet and the tree frog in our departure.
- Loren Eiseley

Each moment has its own beauty; it beholds every hour a picture which was never seen before and which shall never be seen again.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The soul –
When it breathes through her intellect, it is genius;
When it breathes through her will, it is virtue;
When it breathes through her affection, it is love.
- Ralph Waldo Emerson
God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.
- Genesis 1

Each of us is an artist
Whose task it is to shape life
Into some semblance of the pattern
He dreams about.
So let us be about our task.
The materials are very precious –
And perishable
- Arthur Graham

The human race does a lot stupid things, but we've got a powerful incentive to save the only planet that has pizza and Yosemite and our children. The arc of the logical universe is long and, hopefully, bends toward common sense.
- Michael Grunwald

I love to watch how the day, tired as it is, lags away reluctantly, and hates to be called yesterday so soon.
- Nathaniel Hawthorne, From House of Seven Gables,

Once more the trial must be made to realize the dream;
To distill out of this little piece of cosmic stuff
And this tiny stitch of time,
A strain of music, thrilling, glorious, and beautiful.
- A.E. Haydon

Consider a spider, which spins an intricate web five times stronger than steel, infinitely renewable, while consuming little energy and producing no damaging wastes. She is attuned to her surroundings. She is using her resources wisely. She takes. She gives. She is part of the larger web. She feels the pulse of the planet as her own. She is powerful. We can learn from her.
- Lisa Locke

Education, if it means anything, should not take people away from the land, but instill in them even more respect for it, because educated people are in a position to understand what is being lost. The future of the planet concerns all of us, and all of us should do what we can to protect it. As I told the foresters, and the women, you don't need a diploma to plant a tree.
- Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and author of Unbowed
This we know: the earth does not belong to us, we belong to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. We did not weave the web of life; we are merely strands in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.
- Chief Seattle

Let religion be to us life and joy, a call to generous action. Dissatisfaction with things that are, and wonder for that which is only partly understood. An eye to nature’s majesty and beauty and a heart that rejoices in deeds of kindness and courage. Let it be to us hope and purpose, holding before our eyes the prospect of a better life for all.
- Vincent B. Silliman, adapted

*God’s World*

O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
Thy winds, thy wide, gray skies!
Thy mists that roll and rise!

Thy woods, this autumn day,
That ache and sag

And all but cry with colour!
That gaunt crag

To crush! To life the lean of
That black bluff!

World, World I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,
But never knew I this:
Here such a passion is

As stretcheth me apart, - Lord, I do fear
Thoust made the world too
Beautiful this year;

My soul is all but out of me, -
Let fall
No burning leaf; prithee,
Let no bird call

- Edna St. Vincent Millay

..before we plow an unfamiliar patch
It is well to be informed about the winds,
About the variations in the sky,
The native traits and habits of the place,
What each locale permits, and what denies.
- Virgil, circa 29 B.C.
I would feel more optimistic about a bright future for man if he spent less time proving that he can outwit Nature and more time tasting her sweetness and respecting her seniority.
- E.B. White

I rise in the morning torn between a desire to save the world and a desire to savour the world. This makes it hard to plan the day
- E. B. White

To me, every hour of the day and night is an unspeakably perfect miracle.
- Walt Whitman

I believe a blade of grass is no less than the journeywork of the stars.
- Walt Whitman

To be whole. To be complete. Wildness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from.
- Terry Tempest Williams