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PRESS RELEASE

‘A marvellous, revelatory natural history’

THE BOOKSELLER

Endless Forms

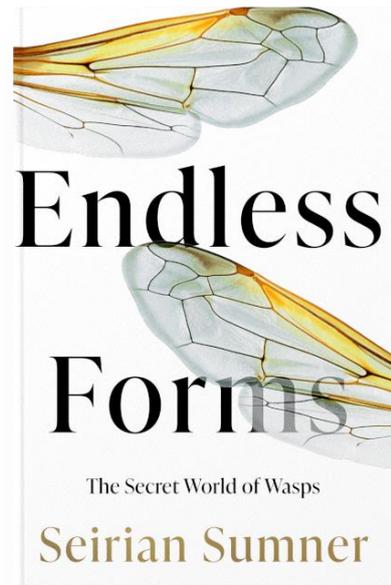
The Secret World of Wasps

Seirian Sumner

Thursday 26th May

HB £20 • EB £12.99

Also available in audio



There may be no insect with worse PR than the wasp, and none guarding so many undiscovered wonders.

Bees and ants have long been the darlings of the insect world. But the first ant was a wasp that lost its wings, and a bee is a wasp that has forgotten how to hunt. This much-maligned winged thug of the insect world is the stinging picnic botherer of most people’s imagination but is in fact older, cleverer, and more diverse than them all. The evolutionary ancestor of the bee – flying 100 million years earlier – the wasp is just as essential for the survival of our environment.

Exquisitely endless in form and function, they are probably more species-rich than any other animal group. Secretive and mysterious, their skills and complex societies are as wondrous and diverse as those of the much-loved bee. As stewards of our eco-systems they are superior pest controllers, pollinators and seed-dispersers, holding hidden treasures of relevance to our culture, survival, health and happiness. Some live inside figs, others turn cockroaches into zombies, while one species even taught us how to make paper.

Seirian Sumner passionately fights for the wasp to be rightly reframed in the public’s consciousness. From their extraordinary evolutionary story and ecological significance to their sophisticated social worlds, unique hunting methods and cultural inspiration she unravels all their mysteries, challenges our perceptions, and gives reasons to value them, stirring new heraldry for these undiscovered gems of nature.

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The closer you look at these spurned, winged insects – both custodians and bouncers of our planet – the more you see. Their secrets have so far gone mostly untapped, but *Endless Forms* offers up a maligned insect in all its unexpected, mesmerising splendour and reveals that the potential of the wasp is indeed, endless.



SEIRIAN SUMNER is a Professor of Behavioural Ecology at University College London, where she studies the ecology and evolution of social insects. She has published over 70 papers in scientific journals, and has received numerous awards for her work, including a L'Oréal for Women in Science Award, a Points of Light Award, and a Silver Medal from the Zoological Society of London. She is a Fellow and Trustee of the Royal Entomological Society and co-founder of the citizen science initiative Big Wasp Survey. She lives in Oxfordshire.

PRAISE FOR *ENDLESS FORMS*

‘A book I never knew I needed that is an absolute delight to read. Face your fears and dive into this captivating excursion into the lives of this most maligned insect. Finally, a cure for our irrational fear of this unfairly demonised insect... a book that draws us in to the strange beauty of what we so often run away from.’

ROBIN INCE

‘Sometimes the most perfect books are those that shine a light on surprising, neglected subjects. *Endless Forms* is just such a book. Seirian Summer writes lucidly and entertainingly about this most fascinating of creatures. You'll never ask 'what's the point of wasps?' again.’

WILL STORR

‘If you've ever wondered “why do wasps exist?” you must read this book. There is so much more to them than you ever imagined. A funny and beautifully written welcome to the enigmatic, weird and wonderful world of wasps. Wasps are seriously cool.’

PROFESSOR DAVE GOULSON, AUTHOR OF *A STING IN THE TALE*