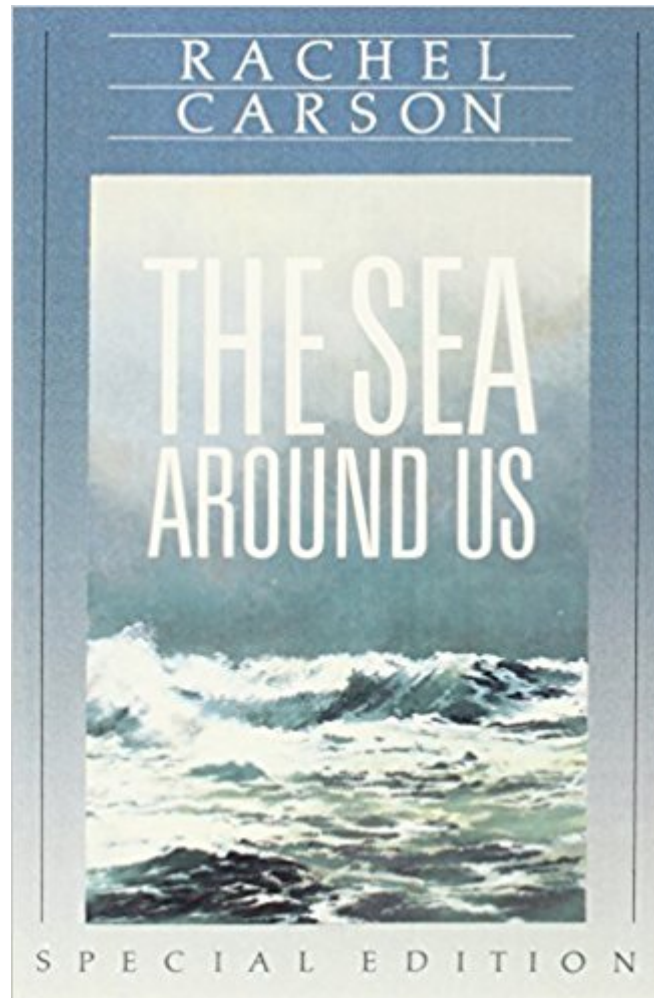




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# **The Sea Around Us, Special Edition**



## Synopsis

Published in 1951, *The Sea Around Us* is one of the most remarkably successful books ever written about the natural world. Rachel Carson's rare ability to combine scientific insight with moving, poetic prose catapulted her book to first place on The New York Times best-seller list, where it enjoyed wide attention for thirty-one consecutive weeks. It remained on the list for more than a year and a half and ultimately sold well over a million copies, has been translated into 28 languages, inspired an Academy Award-winning documentary, and won both the 1952 National Book Award and the John Burroughs Medal. This classic work remains as fresh today as when it first appeared. Carson's writing teems with stunning, memorable images--the newly formed Earth cooling beneath an endlessly overcast sky; the centuries of nonstop rain that created the oceans; giant squids battling sperm whales hundreds of fathoms below the surface; and incredibly powerful tides moving 100 billion tons of water daily in the Bay of Fundy. Quite simply, she captures the mystery and allure of the ocean with a compelling blend of imagination and expertise. Reintroducing a classic work to a whole new generation of readers, this Special Edition features a new chapter written by Jeffrey Levinton, a leading expert in marine ecology, that brings the scientific side of *The Sea Around Us* completely up to date. Levinton incorporates the most recent thinking on continental drift, coral reefs, the spread of the ocean floor, the deterioration of the oceans, mass extinction of sea life, and many other topics. In addition, acclaimed nature writer Ann Zwinger has contributed a brief foreword. Today, with the oceans endangered by the dumping of medical waste and ecological disasters such as the Exxon oil spill in Alaska, this illuminating volume provides a timely reminder of both the fragility and the importance of the ocean and the life that abounds within it. Anyone who loves the sea, or who is concerned about our natural environment, will want to read this classic work.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Rachel Carson elucidates the creativity and majesty of the ocean's power. She takes us from the first emergence of life through its turbulent transitions, and awakens us to the life-giving and life-sustaining qualities of the sea and our relationship with water. Once you dive into these pages, there's no turning back. You will become completely engulfed by Rachel's magic voice as she tells the ocean's story."--The WomanSource Catalog and Review

"A classic work reprinted with all the force and drama of the original. A book about the natural world - scientific insight combined with poetic prose....The compelling mystery and fascinating allure of God's mighty ocean. A wonderful book."--The Macon Beacon

"[Carson has] a rare gift for transmuting scientific fact into lucid, lyrical language."--Time

The late Rachel Carson was for many years a marine biologist and then editor-in-chief of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. She was also the author of *Silent Spring*, *Under the Sea Wind*, and *At the Edge of the Sea*. Jeffrey Levinton teaches at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and is the author of *Marine Ecology*. Ann Zwinger is the author of *A Desert Country Near the Sea*, *Beyond the Aspen Grove*, and *Run, River, Run*.

This was a surprise read for me. I knew that this work was out of date when I ordered it, but I was willing to overlook mistakes of fact if Ms. Carson could give me insight. Good call. This book is a great book. If one has any feelings for the sea at all, she or he will enjoy this book immensely. Forget about continental shift or any other fact that one might find missing or incorrect when Ms. Carson wrote this book. We have Wikipedia nowadays for the finicky. Ms. Carson's love of the sea is timeless. Immediately upon finishing "The Sea Around Us", I had to call up Conrad's, "The Mirror of the Sea" (mentioned by Ms. Carson as one of the most moving books she had read). Two great books, especially if one reads them back to back. What a great experience!

The Special Edition is a small paperback that does not include any of the pictures in the original ---- only the text, with an updated introduction and afterward written in 1989 by other authors. While the

text is worthy of 5 stars, this edition is being rated at 3 because it does not include the pictures. Those seeking the text and pictures of *The Sea Around Us* would be advised to buy another edition, perhaps the 2003 one.

*The Sea Around Us* was first published in 1950 and revised in 1960. The revisions mostly take the form of footnotes, which in my edition are shown in the text. TSAU is one of the single handful of most famous popular science books ever. I probably never would have picked it up, thinking it hopelessly outdated, except for a wonderful PBS documentary on Ms. Carson. But having the added hook, knowing the context, joined with the motivation of that it must be famous for something, inspired me after all these decades to give it a go. So first of all, what is it? From the bio I know that it is highly scientific, i.e., it is largely based on primary sources. Also, that it was many years in writing. What emerges is 15 chapters, loosely grouped into three sections, which are loosely grouped into the book. Some of the subjects of the chapters are what does the bottom of the ocean look like and how could these structures, e.g., canyons in the continental shelf have formed? How did humans migrate over the ocean, especially in prehistoric times? Some of the subjects are rich and surprising: life on the ocean bottom depends on the long snowfall of detritus. Now for evaluation. I learned much. Considering the beginning was perhaps the most outdated I was pleasantly surprised. Of course, the tides must affect the deep ocean. The tides were really much higher in the ancient earth? Of course, since the moon was much closer. So, the oceans daily must have swept over much greater parts of the continents. And with violence. How dated is it? There were only the first computers. Only the first satellites. Only the first DNA sequencing. Continental drift was still speculative. Deep ocean vents were still undiscovered. Some of the fun is seeing how much has changed, but yet how much they got right. Much of the praise is for the writing and the language. Certainly, every word is indeed in its place. And every paragraph. Often the best language though is from the quotes, especially from the mariners. Digressing, I now understand *Moana* better than before! So yes, it is a great book and very much recommended for anybody who looks forward to their vacation on the ocean every year. Especially if they love nature. And science.

A terrific book. Though dated with scientific facts at the time (1960's), it is an invaluable resource for learning about the precepts of life sciences and the ocean specifically. You would not be dissatisfied with this lovely book. Rachel Carson's writing is fluid, easy to understand and so well written that even more complex scientific principles come to life.

It was amazing. It has a section first off about the person giving more information on what we have discovered from what Rachel knew to now. There's sections on almost every page giving more detail. Rachel's writing is amazing it gives a sense of wonder about the ocean as it gives you information, it inspires you to get behind the cause of saving our ocean or at least to care about it more.

This landmark book was for many the first glimpse of the underwater world of our vast oceans. While there have been many discoveries since it was written, Carson's writing is captivating and worth diving into.

This book is amazing. Rachel Carson has made me want to go to sea again with both a new knowledge as well as a greater desire to observe. Rodger IS a lucky man to have traveled with and to have been adopted by this Woman. READ and grow from this tome.....

Rachel Carson changed the way I see our world. Thank you for opening our eyes to the hazards of chemical pollution.

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