

Title

Feathers: The Evolution of a Natural Miracle, by Thor Hanson, 336 pages **£18.99 BUY NOW** In "Feathers", biologist Thor Hanson tells a sweeping natural history of feathers, as they've been used to fly, protect, attract, and adorn through time and place. Applying the research of paleontologists, ornithologists, biologists, engineers, and even art historians, Hanson asks: What are feathers? How did they evolve? What do they mean to us? "A fantastic trip through history, both human and natural. Hanson's casual elegance and wit make this an unexpected page-turner"- **LoWa** "This is a wonderful book written by a true naturalist. Hanson includes plenty of hard science and theory, but explains it with simplicity and joy" - **H. Powell**

*Thor Hanson's new book takes on the intriguing subject of feathers. With infectious enthusiasm, he describes them, from their earliest known incarnations to their place in the modern world. Hanson's unpretentious style makes what is essentially an excellent scientific work into an enjoyable read for the ignorant and uninitiated. [He] has delivered an illuminating study of an evolutionary marvel. **The Economist** [Hanson] looks at, thinks about, dreams of and chases [feathers] across the globe. In doing so, he writes the story of the world as seen through the story of feathers. It is a tale that includes the origins of flight, the science of how feathers push up through the skin of birds, the lives of other scientists (and yes, there are many) obsessed with feathers and much, much more. Feathers will encourage you to look at flight differently. In fact, it will make you want to gently pick up a sparrow and take a good look at what you have been missing... Damn good book. **BBC Wildlife (UK)** Thor Hanson's Feathers is a sparkling history of the protein-based structures that keep birds aloft. Flitting between the aerodynamics of flight, thermodynamics of heat regulation, aesthetics of courtship and plenty more besides, Hanson provides an accessible and interesting introduction to what could have proved a dry topic. Well-written science adds gravity to the more featherweight content of witty anecdotes from interviews with feather-clad Las Vegas showgirls to plucking roadkill in the name of biology. The skilful way Hanson combines the two makes this book popular natural history at its best. **New Scientist***