



# Satellites in the High Country: Searching for the Wild in the Age of Man

*Jason Mark*

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In New Mexico's Gila Wilderness, 106 Mexican gray wolves may be some of the most monitored wildlife on the planet. Collared, microchipped, and transported by helicopter, the wolves are protected and confined in an attempt to appease ranchers and conservationists alike. Once a symbol of the wild, these wolves have come to illustrate the demise of wilderness in this Human Age, where man's efforts shape life in even the most remote corners of the earth. And yet, the howl of an unregistered wolf—half of a rogue pair—splits the night. If you know where to look, you'll find that much remains untamed, and even today, wildness can remain a touchstone for our relationship with the rest of nature.

In *Satellites in the High Country*, journalist and adventurer Jason Mark travels beyond the bright lights and certainties of our cities to seek wildness wherever it survives. In California's Point Reyes National Seashore, a battle over oyster farming and designated wilderness pits former allies against one another, as locals wonder whether wilderness should be untouched, farmed, or something in between. In Washington's Cascade Mountains, a modern-day wild woman and her students learn to tan hides and start fires without matches, attempting to connect with a primal past out of reach for the rest of society. And in Colorado's High Country, dark skies and clear air reveal a breathtaking expanse of stars, flawed only by the arc of a satellite passing—beauty interrupted by the traffic of a million conversations. These expeditions to the edges of civilization's grid show us that, although our notions of pristine nature may be shattering, the mystery of the wild still exists — and in fact, it is more crucial than ever.

But wildness is wily as a coyote: you have to be willing to track it to understand the least thing about it. *Satellites in the High Country* is an epic journey on the trail of the wild, a poetic and incisive exploration of its meaning and enduring power in our Human Age.

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