



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

Postgraduate/Distance Learning Assignment Coversheet & Feedback Form

[Please insert this coversheet as the first page of the assignment you are submitting]

For completion by the student:

Student Name:

Module code: HPPH7009

Student University
Number:

Educational
support needs:
Yes/No

Module title: Environmental Philosophy

2115751

Module tutor: Rebekah Humphreys

Assignment title: Essay 4000 words

Assignment due date: 19/08/2022

I confirm that this is my original work and that I have adhered to the University policy on plagiarism.

Name Kim T. Wightman.....

Assignment Mark

1st Marker's Provisional mark

66

2nd Marker's/Moderator's provisional mark

External Examiner mark (if relevant)

Final Mark

NB. All marks are provisional until confirmed by the Final Examination Board

66%. Kim Wrightman, Ass 2, essay

This is a very well written essay that reveals a very good grasp of the topic, theories & underlying concepts. The environmental ethics theories are analysed & evaluated throughout, but you could

For completion by Marker 1:

Comments:

discuss the implications of some of the claims. This would definitely allow for a stronger conclusion. In place, more by way of precise presentation / precise argument is needed for greater clarity. But, overall, this is a very good piece of work that is well researched & that evinces an in-depth understanding of the topic. Well done!

Marker 1 signature:

R.H.

Date:

21/8/22

For completion by Marker 2 / Moderator:

Comments:

Marker 2 / Moderator signature:

Date:

External Examiner's comments (if relevant):

External Examiner signature:

Date:

12. Do species have a good of their own, and do they have moral standing as such? Provide support/reasons for your answer.

Introduction

Environmental philosophy emerged in the 1970's as a response to various concerns about the environment and the impact human behaviour was seen to be having on the natural world through issues such as population growth, pollution, and 'the growing awareness that human agency was destroying ecosystems.'¹ These issues were illuminated by the writings of Rachel Carson in *Silent Spring* (1962) who exposed the² and Paul Ehrlich in *The Population Bomb* (1971) 'for whom 'overpopulation' was the key global problem.'³ Where traditional western philosophy had been predominantly anthropocentric or 'human-centred' it was challenged by environmental philosophers for being an inadequate ethic for dealing with the looming environmental crisis and as a instrumental factor in the further depletion of the environment. In environmental ethics anthropocentrism only grants moral standing to humans, thus philosophers from the non-anthropocentric perspectives of sentientism, biocentrism and ecocentrism argued for a broader scope within the ethical framework about who or what, apart from *homo sapiens* should have moral consideration and why. There was a call for a shift in consciousness to a more ecocentric view which expands moral thinking to include species, the ecosystem, and other 'non-living' entities. ✓

This paper rests on a cognitive, objective axiological question, as it asks about value and obligation and seeks to answer whether species have a good of their own and whether they have moral standing as such. From the onset, is necessary to outline the concept of species and to address the concept of 'moral standing' so as to understand what is meant when something is said to have 'a good of its own.' The essay briefly outlines the position of non-anthropocentric theories before moving on to a more in-depth evaluation of ecocentrism through the philosophical views of Aldo Leopold and Arne Naess. After some criticism it will reach the conclusion. Good introductory

Species

The definition of species, in a way that applies to all organisms, has proved challenging and no singular definition has been reached. In biology, simply put, a species is a taxonomic rank of an organism and the basic unit of classification, it is also a unit of biodiversity. Often, a species, is referred to as the largest group of organisms which can produce fertile offspring from two individuals of the opposite sex. This has led, in part, to a debate known as the 'species problem' and was recognised by Charles Darwin, in 1859, in his book *On the Origin of Species*. One challenge is that species do not have clear boundaries and some reproduce asexually.⁴ In a paper on 'Species, Concepts of', James Mallet et al. has outlined the historical development and discussed the difficulties in defining concepts species, in his words:

*If species are fundamental units of nature (like cells, or organisms, say), as some scientists believe, then their underlying basis has yet to be revealed. Instead, it seems more likely that the species rank in taxonomy is a man-made distinction; a heuristic cut-off that can perhaps be agreed upon by biologists to enable communication on issues of biodiversity, human health, agriculture, and conservation.*⁵

Thus, it is necessary to accept that there is no singular definition of species and that the boundaries are fluid and changeable. Indeed, Pedro Tom, in a recent discussion on the moral standing of dogs that are, with their owners, given rights to walking during a lockdown for humans in Madrid, he refers to dogs as a trans-species and posits

¹ Robin Attfield, *Environmental Ethics* (Wiley. Kindle Edition, 2014), pp. 36-37.

² Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p.36.

³ Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 153.

⁴ James Mallet & Seixas, Fernando & Thawornwattana, Yuttapong. 'Species, Concepts of', Harvard University, Cambridge (Elsevier Inc: 2022), pp. 3-5. <10.1016/B978-0-12-822562-2.00022-0.> [Accessed 07/08/2022]. ✓

⁵ Mallet et al. 'Species, Concepts of'.

groups of dogs and humans (walkers) together as interspecies⁶, 'whereas ecologists group species into higher structures such as communities and ecosystems.'⁷

A Good of its Own and Moral Standing

Environmental ethics, or moral philosophy, is concerned with what is right and what is wrong behaviour, what is good and evil, how humans ought to act or what moral obligations they have to other humans, to non-humans, and to other entities. Thus, the discussion on moral standing considers what it means to have moral standing, what things count in morality or matter in their own right and could be said to have moral relevance. Anthropocentrism does not extend consideration to species, rather it is presented as speciesist and operates from a hierarchical framework which assumes homo sapiens as the pinnacle whereby all other species exist as a means to an end and, are instrumental for the benefit of human life.⁸ 'Instrumental value uses something as a means to an end; *intrinsic value* is worthwhile in itself.'⁹ Thereby when something has intrinsic value, it has inherent value, and it has a good of its own whereas instrumental view it extrinsic. *Reward. Gr.*

In 1978, Kenneth Goodpaster wrote 'On Being Morally Considerable' and questioned the requirements for having moral standing, which things matter in their own right or have relevance in the moral sphere. He argued that it is crucial to be clear about the framework of moral considerations and claimed the concept of 'moral considerability' to be synonymous for having moral standing. Equally, Goodpaster formulated that 'moral standing attaches to everything that has a good of its own.'¹⁰ When someone, or something, (*the patient X*) has 'moral standing,' it is deserving of 'basic respect' and 'moral consideration,' when action is needed, on the part of the *agent A* (being a rational agent). Therefore, the *agent* has a moral obligation to *the patient* when *the patient* meets the criterion the agent must consider the actions which might affect it, that is harming or benefiting it. The *patient* is deserving of 'moral considerability' even without 'being the bearer of rights.' Goodpaster ascertains that 'moral rights' are 'more specific' and 'roughly synonymous with Warnock's notion of "moral relevance."¹¹ When something has a 'good of its own' it has intrinsic value, it matters in its own right, which is to say it has value beyond being useful or instrumental to someone or something else.

Non-Anthropocentric – Individualist

*Besides being theories of the scope and extent of moral standing, these theories (anthropocentrism, sentientism, biocentrism and ecocentrism) are also theories of the location of intrinsic value. As the above passage about things that are intrinsically valuable suggests, something has intrinsic value if it is valuable because of its nature, or because of what it is in itself.'*¹²

Sentientism, which includes animal species to have a good of their own, takes the view that only psychologically complex entities capable of phenomenological experience, meaning that they experience pleasure and pain, need to have their interests considered. Peter Singer called for 'members of species other than

⁶ Pedro Tomé, 'Walking the dog in Madrid during the pandemic', *Anthropology Today*, Vol 36 No5, (October 2020), pp. 24-25, (p. 24).

⁷ Mallet et al., 'Species, Concepts of', p. 3.

⁸ Peter Singer, 'All Animals Are Equal' [Originally appeared in *Philosophical Exchange*, Vol 1, No5 (Summer, 1974), 243-257], in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 2nd edn., ed. by Michael E. Zimmerman and others, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998), pp. 26-40.

⁹ Holmes Rolston III, 'Challenges in Environmental Ethics' [The essay was originally prepared for an American Philosophical Association symposium on Rolston's book *Environmental Ethics*. A revised version appears in *Ecology, Economics, Ethics: The Broken Circle* (Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 1991)], in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 2nd edn. ed. by Michael E. Zimmerman and others (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998), pp. 124-144 (p. 140).

¹⁰ Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 11.

¹¹ Kenneth Goodpaster, 'On Being Morally Considerable', [originally appeared in *The Journal of Philosophy*, 75, (June 1978)], in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 2nd edn. ed. by Michael E. Zimmerman and others (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998), pp. 56-70 (p. 58.)

¹² Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 12.

our own¹³ to be considerable, yet he argues that whilst sentient species may deserve moral considerability it is the individual of the species that is morally relevant, thus an animal that is sentient should be considered equally, but that does not mean that it should be treated equally, for it may belong to a species that have less rights.

Biocentrists, 'who believe all living creature have a good of their own' and that 'flourishing or attaining their good is intrinsically valuable,' have argued that 'moral considerability' should extend to all living organisms.¹⁴ The most general arguments have attempted to show that if humans and sentient beings have inherent worth then non-humans ought to as well arguing that there is no valid justification not to consider them. Thus, rejecting the anthropocentric notion of rationality and autonomy as necessary criterion. Goodpaster's theory rests on the moral consideration of *being alive* 'nothing short of the criterion...seems to me to be a plausible and nonarbitrary criterion.' He criticises others for making the range of consideration too narrow '...several respected philosophers whose arguments seem to count against casting the net as widely as I am inclined to do'¹⁵

*Goodpaster also raises (without settling) the question of whether ecosystems have a good of their own and are also to be included. If so, his theory is ecocentric, and if not, it is biocentric. However, he is clear that inanimate entities lack moral standing, as they have no good of their own, and thus cannot be benefited.*¹⁶

However, it is argued that Goodpaster's biocentrism is not egalitarian as it is species specific and attributes more interest, or moral worth, to certain species than others. Paul Taylor, whose biocentrism is egalitarian, agrees that species have 'a good of their own' but likens it to 'weather systems and traffic systems'.¹⁷ The inclusion of a mechanical system in the last statement makes it challenging to ascribe moral standing, suffice to say species only have 'moral considerability.'

Ecocentrism – Holistic

Ecocentrists have extended the moral boundaries beyond human, sentient and living organisms to include whole entities such as species and ecosystems. A reference is often made to the 'The Land Ethic', by Aldo Leopold, which is often seen as the conceptual bedrock for environmental philosophy. Leopold was a philosopher, forester, ecologist, environmentalist, and an educated writer and made the earlier call for such an 'extension in ethics' in his book *A Sand County Almanac* first published in 1949. In Leopold's words 'A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.'¹⁸ Hence, for Leopold, the land itself has a good of its own, its own integrity and deserves practical respect and is the rightful bearer of what Goodpaster's calls 'moral considerability'. Leopold claimed that the progression, in philosophical and ecological terms, from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism and to become a member of the biotic community as an equal member, is a matter of evolution. A progression from a free-for-all competition to co-operation in a community of 'advanced symbiosis'.

A symbiosis is an evolved interaction or close living relationship between organisms from different species, usually with benefits to one or both of the individuals involved.¹⁹ Mutualism is symbiosis which occurs when both organisms benefit from the relationship and may produce significant gain for both partners. Other forms of symbiosis include commensalism whereby one organism (or group) may benefit from, or is completely dependent on, the other but not detrimentally and conversely amensalism occurs when there is damage, or one is inhibited by the other. Parasitism is a form of non-mutualistic symbiosis in which an organism benefits at the expense of the other though it does not always result in death.

¹³ Singer, 'All Animals are Equal', pp. 26-40.

¹⁴ Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 10.

¹⁵ Kenneth Goodpaster, 'On Being Morally Considerable', p. 58.

¹⁶ Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 11.

¹⁷ Paul Taylor cited by Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 39.

¹⁸ Aldo Leopold, 'The Land Ethic' [originally appeared in Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949], in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 2nd edn., ed. by Michael E. Zimmerman and others (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998), p. 99.

¹⁹ Biologydictionary.net Editors. "Symbiosis." *Biology Dictionary* (Biologydictionary.net, 23 Nov. 2016), <https://biologydictionary.net/symbiosis/> [Accessed 08/08/2022.]

What do you think
of this claim?

The human economic system, for Leopold, inclines towards a parasitic relationship with the land and 'Land, like Odysseus' slave-girls, is still property'²⁰ and so he pleaded for a system which is more mutualistic. Leopold's 'land ethic' advocates an ecological consciousness based on a different value system other than economic. He criticised the purely economic system, in conservation, for not respecting the importance of the land and neglecting some members of the biotic community, arguing that if a species is of no economic value, no extrinsic or instrumental value for humans, then it gains no validity or interest. Examples are that of 'predatory mammals, raptorial birds, and fish-eating birds' which were given economic and instrumental value as controlling weak game, rodents, or 'worthless' species' and so benefiting the hunter or the farmer and not harming the economy. Leopold acknowledged that more recently 'predators are members of the community and that no special interest has the right to exterminate them for the sake of a benefit'²¹. Leopold further referenced the 'timber crops: white cedar, tamarack, cypress, beech, and hemlock' as examples where the 'economic minded foresters' have neglected to conserve them as species, as their growth rate is not profitable, despite their important roles including the 'valuable' role of beech in 'soil fertility'.²²

In what he called 'The Land Pyramid' Leopold sketched a picture whereby a fountain of energy travels through different layers via the biota, an energy circuit, from the soil on the bottom layer to the carnivores on the apex of the pyramid. Species are grouped on each trophic layer similar in what they eat and these form dependent relationships, with services and nourishment, between the layers in food chains. Leopold claims that 'each species, including ourselves, is a link in many chains' all woven together in a complex, functioning, pyramid of 'co-operation and competition'.²³ Not only does Leopold argue for the right of species as members of the biotic community but that the system itself is alive and the 'component species' sustain it. ✓

Leopold claimed that the land should be freed from the shackles which define it as a resource for humans. He refers to the extension of community to include 'soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively the land' and goes to profess that it 'changes the role of Homo Sapiens from conqueror of a land-community to plain members and citizens of it.' Thus, all species ought to have an equal moral considerability as 'interdependent parts.'²⁴ In the essay 'Thinking Like a Mountain' Leopold recounts the killing of a wolf and how he saw 'a fierce green fire dying in her eyes' and sensed, that she was an inherent part of something much more than he had previously understood, indeed part of the mountain where it happened. After which the successive extermination of the wolves from mountains has led to a trophic cascade, the repercussions of losing a trophic-level predator on the food chain, which Leopold vividly demonstrates through his rendition of the changing face of the mountain where deer numbers grew unthreatened, plus cows, which then grazed relentlessly has left the mountain stripped.²⁵

While Leopold's ecological ethic is 'a mode of guidance for meeting ecological situations so new or intricate, or involving such deferred reactions, that the path of social is not discernible to the average individual'.²⁶ It promotes an 'intellectual and emotional' progression from a system which values the individual and 'cash' to 'investments of time, forethought, skill, and faith' in which all species have a good of their own within the whole ecosystem. It has been argued that Leopold did not offer a 'systematic ethical theory or framework to support his ethical ideas concerning the environment' but his conceptual ecocentrism inspired later environmental philosophers.²⁷ ✓

The Norwegian mountaineer and social activist, Arne Naess, was one ecocentric philosopher who did propose a 'set of practical environmental policies underpinned by a set of normative principles'²⁸ in a paper 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecological Movement' which was published in 1973. Ecology being

²⁰ Leopold, 'The Land Ethic', p. 88.

²¹ Leopold, 'The Land Ethic', p. 92.

²² Leopold, 'The Land Ethic', pp. 92 & 93.

²³ Leopold, 'The Land Ethic', pp. 94-95.

²⁴ Leopold, 'The Land Ethic', p. 89.

²⁵ Leopold, Aldo, *A Sand County Almanac: with essays on conservation from Round River* [First published in 1949] (New York: Ballantine Books 1982).

²⁶ Leopold, 'The Land Ethic', p. 88.

²⁷ Brennan, Andrew and Norva Y. S. Lo, "Environmental Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/ethics-environmental/> [Accessed 13/08/22].

²⁸ Joy A. Palmer, ed. *Fifty Key Thinkers on the Environment* (London: Routledge, 2001) p. 213.

'the study of the relationships of organisms to one another and to the elemental environment.'²⁹ According to Naess, the shallow movement is substantially anthropocentric which is shallow ecology and only concerned with issues of pollution and other human endeavours (utility) and that the 'central objective' is 'the health and affluence of people in the developed countries.'³⁰ It is contrasted with 'deep ecology' which Robin Attfield lucidly poses as 'a movement which aims at the flourishing or self-realization of all Earth's species,' and urges us to identify with the totality of life on Earth, the planetary biosphere.'³¹ Naess described, and commented on, eight reference points or terms, drawn out with George Sessions, to define the deep ecological movement and as principles for followers of the movement to adhere to. The first point made is that

*'The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.'*³²

'Naess presented as a key tenet 'the equal right' of all species 'to live and blossom'³³ and inspired by Leopold (or perhaps by a mountain) Naess claimed that all living things have a right of their own, which is not determined by their usefulness to humans, and transcends the individual. Naess rejected the 'man-in-environment image' in support of what he calls '*the relational, total-field image*.' Positing that "organisms" are 'knots in the biospherical net or field of intrinsic relations.'³⁴ The connections or relationships between things are what defines them, thus, if something i.e., a species, were lost from the net then everything that was connected to it would change. It is 'complexity' rather than 'complication' in 'biospherical relationships' which unites an ecosystem as a whole system. When applied to humans in a city, Naess likens the 'complexity-not-complication principal' to labour and advocates 'the division of labour' over the 'fragmentation of labour' so that 'the whole person is active' through 'integrated actions.'³⁵

The central proposition of Naess' theory is self-realisation, of the self ('the narrow self' or 'ego'), of species, which includes the human species ('the comprehensive Self') and the ecosystem. For humans this could be understood as transcending the human condition, anthropocentrism, of humans thinking that they are separate from nature and the web of life in which all species are actively connected and interdependent. Naess described this transpersonal wisdom as 'ecosophy' and stated that there are 'common attitudes' of ecosophy (the 'philosophy of ecological harmony or equilibrium').³⁶ However it is through personal beliefs and introspection by which humans self-realise and conceive of the 'ecological self' as 'in-between the environment and himself/herself, and the community of species that purposefully participates in the unfolding of life as a whole.'³⁷ It is through identification with 'one's Self' that the individual is able to 'self-realize' in the wider context. Naess develops this in his own theory 'Ecosophy T'³⁸ and self-realization with 'individuals, species, ecosystems and landscapes.'³⁹

Could it also be seen as a form of egoism, do you think?

²⁹ J. Baird Callicot, 'The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic', in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn, by Louis P. Pojman (Wadsworth Publishing Company: Belmont. 1998), pp. 124-133.

³⁰ Arne Naess, 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecological Movement' [Summary of an Introductory Lecture at the 3rd World Future Research Conference, Bucharest, 1972, originally printed in *Inquiry*, 16 (Spring 1973)], in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn, by Louis P. Pojman (Wadsworth Publishing Company: Belmont. 1998), pp. 134-136 (p. 134).

³¹ Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, p. 4.

³² Arne Naess, 'The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects' [originally printed in *Ecophilosophy VI* newsletter (May 1984) by ed. George Sessions] in *Philosophical Inquiry*, 8, 1 (1986).

³³ Attfield, *Environmental Ethics*, citing Naess, p. 38.

³⁴ Naess, 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecological Movement', p. 134.

³⁵ Naess, 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecological Movement', p. 135.

³⁶ Naess, 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecological Movement', p. 136.

³⁷ Raymundo R. Pavo, 'Arne Naess' Ecosophy T: Its Norms, Hypotheses and Systematization', *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Volume 4, Number 2, (October 2018) pp. 15-30 (p. 15).

³⁸ Naess, A., 'Ecosophy T: Deep Versus Shallow Ecology', in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn, by Louis P. Pojman (Wadsworth Publishing Company: Belmont. 1998), pp. 137-143.

³⁹ Louis J. Pojman, *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn (Wadsworth Publishing Company: Belmont. 1998), p. 137.

'The Ecological Self' is the title of Freya Mathews' book⁴⁰ and while she may advance consciousness beyond species and ecosystems in her panpsychism visioning, which includes the cosmos itself, her approach is ecocentric. Like Naess, Mathews argues, in part, from a metaphysical perspective that open systems are living systems and have conatus. The Spinozian concept, Conatus, is an impulse which strives to preserve its self being for the presence of being and is more than just survival. It strives for self-preservation and self-increase and Mathews argues that is different from mechanical systems, and thereby constitutes self-value. Naess stresses that even a 'high level of identification does not eliminate conflicts of interest: Our vital interests, if we are not plants, imply killing at least some other living beings.'⁴¹ The explanation for species bias in conflicting interests are given as the rules of symbiotic relationships which are said to prefer 'vitalness and nearness' in which 'the more vital interest has priority over the more remote--in space time culture, species. Nearness derives its priority from our special responsibilities, obligations and insights.'⁴²

Some Criticisms

Edward LeRoy McCord demonstrates a normal anthropocentric critique and believes that it is 'almost always absurd' that 'abstract categories like "species" have "rights," or that they should be treated fairly,' and argues that species cannot be hurt or feel pain like an individual animal, insisting that compassion can even be damaging to species (and non-humans). Further McCord points out that species cannot rationalise, nor can they bargain for their right to exist, even if they did know they were being granted rights. For McCord, endangered species may be protected by law, but it is only for the benefit of humans even though he does accept that instrumental value is a sufficient reason.⁴³

A criticism of deep ecology levied by Murray Bookchin was that it is 'at its core deeply misanthropic' and 'reduces humanity to a parasitic swarm of mosquitoes in a mystified swamp called "Nature..."'⁴⁴ He also claimed that the philosophy originated with privileged white males in academia and Bookchin's parodied deep ecology and Naess personally.⁴⁵ After Bookchin's 'assault' on deep ecology Naess eventually responded with his revised philosophy and platforms for the deep ecological movement. He made it clear that he did not believe in egalitarianism with his concept of symbiotic relations. He also gave the background to his philosophy which is more founded on eastern views than western privilege.⁴⁶

Previously, Holmes Rolston III had argued that 'A species lacks moral agency, reflective self-awareness, sentience, or organic individuality.' Compared to an organism which has a centre which 'defends the whole.'⁴⁷ Later he states that...

'The species line is the *vital* living system, the whole, of which individual organisms are the essential parts. The species too has its integrity, its individuality, its "right to life" (if we must use the rhetoric of rights): and it is more important to protect this vitality than to protect individual integrity. The right to life, biologically speaking, is an adaptive fit that is right for life, that survives over millennia, and this generates at least a presumption that species in niche are good right where they are, and therefore that it is right for humans to let them be, to let them evolve.'⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Freya Mathews, 'Value in Nature and Meaning in Life', in *Environmental Ethics*, by Robert Elliot (Oxford: University Press, 1995), pp. 142-154 (p.142).

⁴¹ Naess, A., 'Ecosophy T: Deep Versus Shallow Ecology', p. 139.

⁴² Naess, A., 'Ecosophy T: Deep Versus Shallow Ecology', p. 142.

⁴³ Edward LeRoy McCord, *The Value of Species* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012),

⁴⁴ Murray Bookchin, cited by Jeffry C. Ellis, 'On the Search for a Root Cause: Essential tendencies in Environmental Discourse', in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, by ed. William Cronon (New York: Norton, 1996), pp. 256-268 (p. 264).

⁴⁵ John P. Clark, 'A Dialogue with Arne Naess on Social Ecology and Deep Ecology (1988-1997)' *The Trumpeter*, Volume 26, Number 2 (2010). < <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/233904156.pdf> > [Accessed 18/08/2022].

⁴⁶ Arne Naess, 'The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects'.

⁴⁷ Holmes Rolston III, 'Challenges in Environmental Ethics' [The essay was originally prepared for an American Philosophical Association symposium on Rolston's book. *Environmental Ethics*. A revised version appears in *Ecology, Economics, Ethics: The Broken Circle* (Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 1991 in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, 2nd edn., ed. by Michael E. Zimmerman and others (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998), pp. 124-144 (p. 134).

⁴⁸ Rolston III, 'Challenges in Environmental Ethics', in *Environmental Philosophy*, p. 135.

Hence, species, do not have the criterion prescribed by anthropocentrism and sentientism, and yet are seen by Rolston as having moral considerability if the prescription for human specificities is widened to include life. Even the standard biocentrist meaning is expanded to include species in their own environment and 'niche'.

Rolston highlighted the problem of placing the good of species as 'a whole' over the individual by drawing on the example, on San Clemente Island, where hundreds of feral goats were killed, to preserve 'three endangered plant species...the surviving numbered only a few dozens.' Indeed, the plan had been to shoot 2,000 of the goats but after protest some were caught and relocated but as Rolston questions 'Is it humane to count plant species more than mammal lives, a few plants more than a thousand goats?'⁴⁹ Thus suggesting a version of ecocentrism (a nature based theory) which includes the moral consideration of biocentrism and an ethic which includes inherent value to all living things.

Develop this a bit more. What does this mean exactly?

Conclusion

It is possible to broaden the moral boundaries from the theories which place individuals at the centre of moral standing to incorporate the moral considerability of specific species and even ecosystems. In this direction it is even attainable within an anthropocentric philosophy to give interests to certain species, especially endangered ones. Goodpaster suggested such an expansion from within a biocentrist framework, thus considering all living entities as having intrinsic value which may extend beyond to the 'biosphere itself'.⁵⁰ Leopold, Naess, and Rolston have posited that species do have a good of their own as inherent beings in systems wider than the individual, whether that be in a *pyramid*, *net*, or *niche* respectively. However, this essay has shown that it is not enough to simply extend boundaries to include species, what is required is an ecocentric ethic or holistic world view to fully comprehend the good of species. In cases of conflict, between wholes and individuals, it is not sufficient to say that species ought to have more interests than individuals, nor that individuals (whatever species they originate from) ought to have more interests than other species. Conatus feelings and beliefs, coupled with Naess' explanation of the symbiotic rules of preference for vitality and nearness enable an understanding of the anthropocentric condition (even if not supporting it). The perspectives offered by Leopold and Naess are transcendental and go beyond the individual schools of thought in a way that is impossible for the anthropocentric to imagine. It is not even enough to even 'think like a mountain' one must become the mountain or even become one with the mountain. The question of 'moral standing' being pertinent here because it implies that one must be 'standing somewhere' to give a 'moral' judgement, to this it is difficult to argue that species have such a position.

Bibliography

Attfield, R., *Environmental Ethics* (Wiley, Kindle Edition, 2014).

Callicot, J. B., 'The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic', in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn. by Louis P. Pojman (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1998), pp. 124-133.

John P. Clark, 'A Dialogue with Arne Naess on Social Ecology and Deep Ecology (1988-1997)', *The Trumpeter*, Volume 26, Number 2 (2010).
< <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/233904156.pdf> > [Accessed 18/08/2022].

Jeffrey C. Ellis, J. C., 'On the Search for a Root Cause: Essential tendencies in Environmental Discourse', in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, by ed. William Cronon (New York: Norton, 1996), pp. 256-268.

Goodpaster, K., 'On Being Morally Considerable', in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, by eds. Michael E. Zimmerman et al (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998) pp. 56-70.

⁴⁹ Rolston III, 'Challenges in Environmental Ethics', p. 135,

⁵⁰ Goodpaster, 'On Being Morally Considerable', p. 58.

Leopold, A. 'The Land Ethic' [originally appeared in Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949], in *Environmental Philosophy: from animal rights to radical ecology*, by eds. Zimmerman et al (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998) pp. 87-100.

Leopold, Aldo, *A Sand County Almanac: with essays on conservation from Round River* (New York: Ballantine Books 1982).

Mathews, F., *The Ecological Self* (Oxon: Routledge, 1991).

Mathews, F., 'Value in Nature and Meaning in Life', in *Environmental Ethics*, ed. by Robert Elliot (Oxford: University Press, 1995), pp. 142-154.

McCord, Edward LeRoy, *The value of species* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

Naess, A., 'The Deep Ecological Movement: Some Philosophical Aspects', *Philosophical Inquiry*, 8, 1 (1986).

Naess, A., 'The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecological Movement', in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn, by Louis P. Pojman (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company: Belmont. 1998), pp. 134-136.

Naess, A., 'Ecosophy T: Deep Versus Shallow Ecology', in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn, by Louis P. Pojman (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1998), pp. 137-143.

Palmer, J. A., ed. *Fifty Key Thinkers on the Environment* (London: Routledge, 2001).

Raymundo R. Pavo, 'Arne Naess' Ecosophy T: Its Norms, Hypotheses and Systematization', *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Volume 4, Number 2, (October 2018) pp. 15-30.

Rolston III, H., 'Challenges in Environmental Ethics', in *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, eds. Michael E. Zimmerman et al (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998) pp. 124-144.

Rolston III, H.,

Peter Singer, 'All Animals are Equal', In Zimmerman, M. E., ed., *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998) pp. 26-40.

Pojman, L. J., *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, 2nd edn (Wadsworth Publishing Company: Belmont. 1998).

Tomé, P., 'Walking the dog in Madrid during the pandemic', *Anthropology Today*, Vol 36 No5, (October 2020), pp. 24-25.

Internet

Biologydictionary.net Editor, 'Symbiosis', *Biology Dictionary* (Biologydictionary.net, 23 Nov. 2016) <<https://biologydictionary.net/symbiosis/>> [Accessed 08/08/2022]

Mallet, J., & Seixas, F. & Thawornwattana, Y. 'Species, Concepts of', Harvard University, Cambridge (Elsevier Inc: 2022), <10.1016/B978-0-12-822562-2.00022-0.>

[Accessed08/08/2022].

Words Count: 3875

Not including footnotes or Bibliography 3875.