

# Designing The City of Awe




Tim Beatley



Pixabay



A group of people, including children, are shown from the chest up, looking upwards with expressions of awe and wonder. They are outdoors, with trees and foliage in the background. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The text is overlaid on the image.

“Awe is what we feel during or after an encounter with something unexpected, and stimulates a sense of vastness and possibility, such as hearing thunder, listening to a moving piece of music, sensing the infinite during prayer or meditation...” —Rich Louv, *Our Wild Calling*

## ***A Constellation of Terms/Emotions***

Wonder  
Discovery  
Curiosity  
Wildness  
Magic  
Humility  
Empathy and  
Compassion

# Awe



# Awe Expands People's Perception of Time, Alters Decision Making, and Enhances Well-Being

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## Abstract

When do people feel as if they are rich in time? Not often, research and daily experience suggest. However, three experiments showed that participants who felt awe, relative to other emotions, felt they had more time available (Experiments 1 and 3) and were less impatient (Experiment 2). Participants who experienced awe also were more willing to volunteer their time to help others (Experiment 1) and more likely to help others (Experiment 2). Awe also led to greater life satisfaction (Experiment 3). Mediation analyses revealed that these changes in decision making and well-being were due to awe's ability to increase subjective experience of time. Experiences of awe bring people to see their surroundings and being in the present moment in a new light, which allows them to adjust time perception, influence decisions, and make life feel more satisfying than it would otherwise.

## Keywords

awe, time perception, well-being, decision making, prosocial

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—Rudd, Vohs, Aaker, 2012

# Awe Expands Time Perception

Awe involves perceptual vastness, and alters one's understanding of the world...

When do people feel as if they are rich in time? Not often, research and daily experience suggest. However, three experiments showed that participants who felt awe, relative to other emotions, felt they had more time available (Experiments 1 and 3) and were less impatient (Experiment 2). Participants who experienced awe also were more willing to volunteer their time to help others (Experiment 1) and more likely to help others (Experiment 2). Awe also led to greater life satisfaction (Experiment 3). Mediation analyses revealed that these changes in decision making and well-being were due to awe's ability to increase subjective experience of time. Experiences of awe bring people to see their surroundings and being in the present moment in a new light, which allows them to adjust time perception, influence decisions, and make life feel more satisfying than it would otherwise.

# Awe = Generosity, Kindness, Prosocial Behavior

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## Awe, the Small Self, and Prosocial Behavior

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University of California, Irvine

Pia Dietze  
New York University

Matthew Feinberg  
University of Toronto

Daniel M. Stancato and Dacher Keltner  
University of California, Berkeley



Figure 5. View of the eucalyptus trees used to induce awe (left panel) and the adjacent building used for the control condition (right panel) in Study 5. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

“Our investigation indicates that awe, although often fleeting and hard to describe, serves a vital social function. **By diminishing the emphasis on the individual self, awe may encourage people to forego strict self-interest to improve the welfare of others.**

Future research should build on these initial findings to further uncover the ways in which awe shifts people away from being the center of their own individual worlds, toward a focus on the broader social context and their place within it.” —Paul Piff et al



*Biophilic Cities* Are Cities  
That Work to Expand and  
Maximize Moments of Awe

**How?**



# Teaching Awe





# San Diego BioBlitz

# Making Awe in Cities Visible?



"Pier Into the Night"  
Gig Harbor, Washington







Island Bay Marine Education Centre  
Wellington, NZ



# Opportunities for Hands-On Ecological Restoration

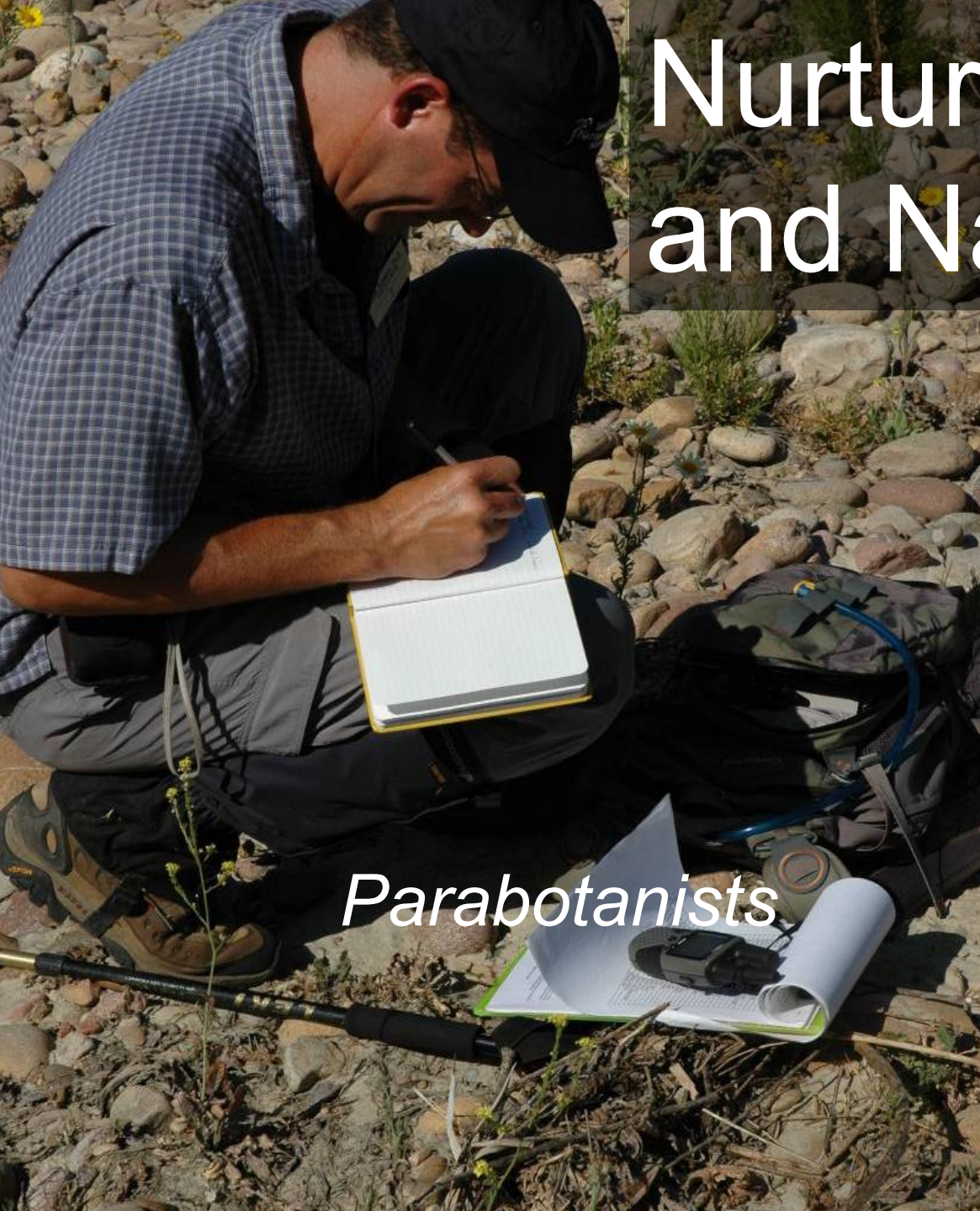


Burrowing Owl Habitat Restoration Phoenix



# Nurturing Citizen Science and Nature Mentors

*Parabotanists*





Thank you to the Urban Vitality & Ecology core  
below, and the many organizations that support



# Engaging the Imagination

Engaging the Imagination

## Kids in the Canyons







Helena Klangemo  
Nature Guides, Stockholm







Common  
Swift



# Designing Awe Into the Places We Live and Work



A New Wildlife-Friendly Development  
**Kingsbrook**, in Buckinghamshire, UK





Residents of Aldea de Sante Fe, NM,  
working to save the Juniper Titmouse







# Gotham Whale



Images: Artie Raslich

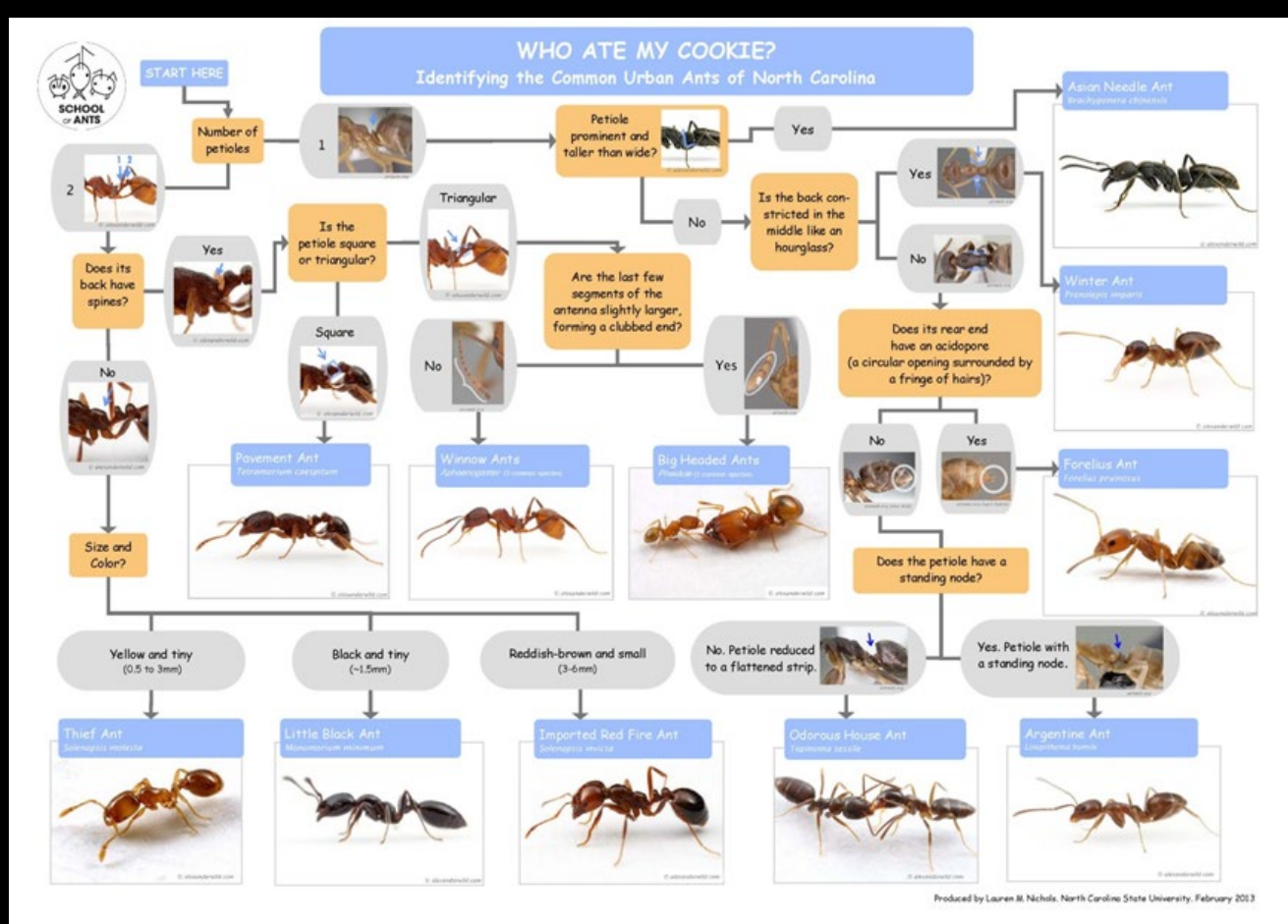


PAUL SIESWERDA  
GOTHAM WHALE





Amy Savage, Rutgers



# “Miracles of Minuteness”





# Cultivating Habits and Practices of Awe

Ant Playing  
Cards—Collect  
Them All!

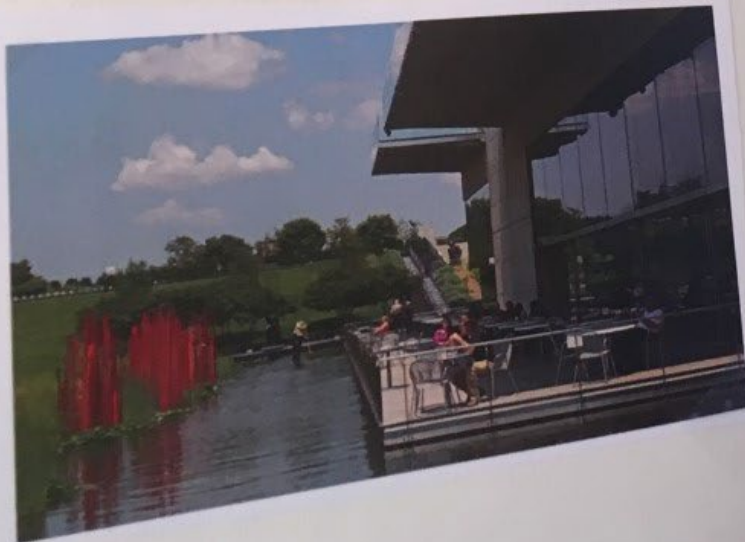


# Awe Requires Deep Observation



Carolina Chickadee (one of my grandparents' birds)  
While I was visiting them

Cafe at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond



14 April 2018

Below is a map of my favorite park in my hometown (Falls Church), Cherry Hill Park. I think it fully exemplifies what a great park should be, in terms of a balance between manmade and natural elements.



To the right is another park in Falls Church, the Howard Herrmann Stream Valley Park, which incorporates the naturally occurring stream with native plantings and a wide footpath.







# Native to Nowhere

## Sustaining Home and Community in a Global Age

Timothy Beatley

# Every Home Gets an Ecological Owners Manual

## February 1st-7th.

- \* Ring tail possums have babies in the pouch.
- \* Planets visible on the eastern and western horizons at night.
- \* *Angophora costata*, (smooth barked apple) "gumnuts", litter the ground.
- \* Sunshine wattle in bloom.
- \* Huntsman spiders lay their eggs.
- \* Harvester ants collect Golden Wattle seeds.

**COAST ROSEMARY**, *Myrtus laevis*. A small, bushy plant with narrow, pointed leaves and small, white flowers. It is native to the coastal regions of Australia and is now found in many gardens. The plant is extremely salt-tolerant, even to the extent of being drowned by waves occasionally. We have many stunted, wind-pruned and twisted specimens growing from cracks in the rock, seemingly quite happy in their austerity.

Coast rosemary flowers most of the year. The flower is white with orange dots, having a long narrow throat, suggesting that they may be pollinated by moths. The grey-green leaves are recurved and in whorls of 4.



### PEEWEE,

*Grallina cyanoleuca*. Looking a lot like miniature magpies these black and white birds stick to their territory. They like to be near permanent water and their nest is made of mud and plant fibres. In asserting their territory the male and female perch side by side and alternately cry pee-wee, pee-wee.



Found all over Australia this insect-eater is also known as the magpie lark.

They spend a lot of time on the ground where they walk with their head jerking back and forth in time with their legs. Watch out for them on the side of the road in Newcastle.

**BLACKBUTT**, *Eucalyptus pilularis*. The "blackbutt" refers to the rough bark on the lower part of the tree that remains charred after a bushfire. It is distinguished from bloodwood by having rough, scaly bark on its lower half only, the upper half being smooth. The rough bark persists for many years.

The blackbutt is a koala food tree, providing a well-known source of food for koalas. It is also used for house building. A blue-green dye can be had from the wood chips. On good soil it grows to a height of 60 metres. Most aboriginal canoe tree scars occur in this area on blackbutt trees.

**FORKED SUNDEW**, *Drosera binata*. One of the largest sundews, it grows up to 60cm tall. A carnivorous plant, it lives only in wet places and traps insects for extra nourishment. The sticky blobs on the end of short 'hairs' are both the bait and the trap. The plant is best viewed with the sun behind it.

Looking over this plant you will find various insects stuck, or in a state of decay. These sticky hairs fold around any insect that lands on the plant. In the summer a cluster of small white flowers grow from a stem that emerges from the base of the plant.



**MOSQUITO**. The Aboriginal name is *Dooping*. Hot days and warm nights are a mosquito's paradise. Nelson Bay has plenty of mosquitos. The larvae of one species, *Aedes australis*, lives in saline water in rock pools above the normal high tide level. The *Anopheles* larvae live on the top film of water while other kinds of mosquito larvae hang from the surface film and filter the water around them with their mouth brushes.

The larvae of *Monsonia* mosquitos extract air from aquatic plants by inserting their breathing syphons into the stem, thus saving them the need to make a daily trip to the surface.

Mosquitos will breed in tree hollows, rock pools, ground pools, drains, and freshwater swamps. The larvae feed on any minute particle of organic matter, like algae and bacteria. The female of most mosquitos suck blood and the males feed on nectar. Most feed at night when their host is likely to be asleep, or at least unable to see them. Male mosquitos will gather in swarms and emit sounds, making it easier for the female to find them.

The mosquito that hides behind your picture frame and bites you at night is the *Culex fatigans*. Another domestic species is *Aedes aegypti*, a proven vector for dengue fever. Other mosquitos carry malaria, Murray Valley encephalitis, myxomatosis, yellow fever, Ross River fever and filariasis.

Mosquitos lay eggs on the surface of water. Within a day the eggs hatch into larvae, which have a breathing tube at one end and a moustache-like feeding apparatus at the other. Larvae are preyed upon by fish, dragon flies and water beetles. After a week of wriggling the larva is mature. The lighter-than-water pupa spend three days turning into mosquitos. Floating on the water the pupa case splits and the mosquito emerges, dry. The male lives only a few days as a vegetarian. The "blood-thirsty" female can live for eight months. There are 27 species of mosquito living in this area.

The Black one, *Aedes vigilax*, is the most common (57%). The big Hexham grey is *Aedes alternans*.



## LONG-NECKED

*Chelodina longicollis*. wandering about in the middle of the day. Drive on the road, or Stockton Road, for this amphibian. It has a feeling to drive over water, but after a sickening experience proves to be a slow tortoise. The top of the shell is a dark blackish-brown, the undershell is a creamy yellow. The shell is 25cm long. Always a popular pet, in captivity, it always wags its tail and sometimes found under the log.

The long-necked turtle emerges 2-3 months later and short claws for



## BUSHFIRE.

can wallabies, dingoes and other climbers survive from burning or as dwelling reptiles, insects with stupefied bats, b

Wombats and other echidnas, snakes, ants the blaze. Fire annihilates the normal population of fire.



# Do We Need a New Language of Awe?

Murmuration



Spy-hopping



Mackerel Sky



Woodpecker  
Drumming





# Do We Need New Nature Words?

Bark Scooting?



Mullet Soaring?



Skip-Feeding?



Pelican Patrolling?





# Totemic Cities?: Choosing To Love



Noel Nannup, Noongar Elder



Bronzewing Pigeon





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# Connecting Cities And Nature

WHY JOIN THE NETWORK? —



Welcome to Biophilic Cities



The Nature of Cities



Chattahoochee Hills Charter School Nature Based Edu...



Catio Tour, Portland, Oregon

