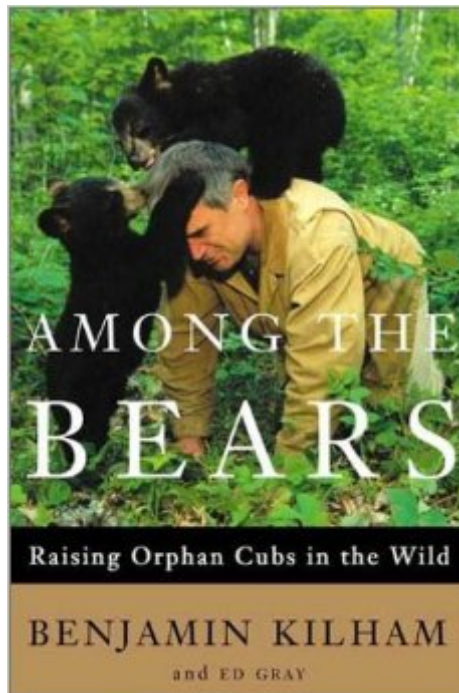


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# Among The Bears: Raising Orphaned Cubs In The Wild



## Synopsis

A first-person account of wild bear behavior that is both a thrilling animal story and a groundbreaking work of science. In the spring of 1993, Ben Kilham, a naturalist who lives in the woodlands of New Hampshire, began raising a pair of orphaned wild black bears. The experience changed his life. While spending thousands of hours with the cubs, Kilham discovered unknown facets of bear behavior that have radically revised our understanding of animal behavior. Now widely recognized for his contributions to wildlife science, Kilham reveals that bears are altruistic and cooperate with unrelated, even unknown individuals, while our closer relatives, the supposedly more highly evolved chimps, cooperate only within troops of recognizable members. Kilham, who turned a disability, dyslexia, to his advantage as a naturalist, offers fascinating insights into the emotional life of bears. His work—which has been featured in several National Geographic television specials—also illustrates the powerful black bear intelligence that has survived bounties and overhunting to make them North America's dominant omnivore, familiar to every reader. Beyond the natural history, he introduces individual bears who become enthralling and memorable characters. As in the bestselling books by Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey, *Among the Bears* explores the breaking down of mutual suspicion and building up of trust between species, with its hopeful implications for the shared future of humans and animals in the wild.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Most of us will never get to have bears in the basement, or to walk in the woods with bear cubs, or to stick our heads into a bear's den to see how things are going. So if our only bear contact has been through TV, this book will be valuable. Kilham writes well enough that he largely disappears from the story, and you can imagine doing what he is doing, learning what he is learning, walking in his shoes. And in so walking, we learn how little we previously knew about bears, become fascinated with their lives and society, and want to know more. Much of the power of the book comes from stories. Stories of how a mother bear introduced her cubs to the author, of how she protected the author from a big male bear that saw him as a rival, of how bears form friendships and share food with their friends, how bear cubs love to play, how mother bears go about teaching the kids, how bears can love a man, and show that love. As a story teller, Kilham is terrific. For spending every daylight hour outdoors in New England, summer and winter, he never seems to get hot or cold, never seems to get wet when it rains, never gets tired, never spots a black fly or mosquito. The story is not about him. It is about the bears. They couldn't have asked for a better translator or advocate. I don't think this book delivers as much insight into ourselves as "Illumination in the Flatwoods: A Season with the Wild Turkey", which is slightly better written, but the two authors approached their subject matter in the same way, with similar results: they devoted all of their time to raising young wild animals and re-introducing them to the wild, and along the way were admitted to a secret society.

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