

## **Remains of a Rainbow: Rare Plants and Animals of Hawaii**

David Liittschwager, Susan Middleton



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Remains of a Rainbow: Rare Plants and Animals of Hawaii David Liittschwager, Susan Middleton PART OF NEW NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC INSIGHT SERIES featuring breathtaking photographic retrospectives by individual photographers on a variety of subjects. Liittschwager and Middleton began photographing endangered plants and animals of North America with a desire to introduce them to people who otherwise would not come into contact with them. A powerful message of their previous work was that these creatures are being pushed out of existence even before being seen by the people who will ultimately determine their fate. They are statistics rather than living beings with faces, unique characteristics, and beauty. Liittschwager and Middleton have sought to give these animals and plants a vivid presence and raise public awareness of their plight. Recognizing that life of any kind is intrinsically elegant and endlessly intriguing, their work focused on a deepening interest in native species which have evolved and adapted to their habitats over millions of years, quintessential expressions of the places where they live. This led them to Hawaii, one of the biologically richest places on earth, and one of the most threatened. Their work there highlights species which are new discoveries (not yet known to science) or rediscoveries (thought to be extinct), working closely with internationally known field biologists. The collection of photographs that have resulted from these years of involvement, encompass the spectacular array of life forms endemic to the Hawaiian Islands. Beyond the portraiture of individual species which forms the heart and soul of the book, are illustrations of rare native habitats - intact ecosystems where plants and animals still live in healthy relationship to one another, creating spectacular assemblages of multiple organisms resembling magic gardens. Fragile as they are remote, often situated high in the mountains on razorback ridges, on steep cliffs, and isolated densely vegetated valleys, their inaccessibility has helped protect them from damage yet also meant that few people will ever have the opportunity to experience them directly. The richness and value of these native places can now be appreciated through these photographs. Together these powerful and elegant photographs and text will link to tell a story - of the rare creatures of the world, of habitats in the wild, of the human cultural practices and alien invaders that threaten their survival, and the people devoted to their preservation.

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