

For Immediate Release

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Department of Communications

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The Fragile Edge: Diving and other Adventures in the South Pacific

(Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007)

Wins

Burroughs 2008 Medal Award

The John Burroughs Association, founded and headquartered at the American Museum of Natural History, announces the winner of its Annual Medal Award in existence for 82 years for outstanding natural history writing. In *The Fragile Edge*, Julia Whitty, reflects on the world of coral reefs in the Tuamotu Archipelago, the Society Islands, and off the tiny nation of Tuvalu. In a travel narrative that includes the extraordinary creatures of the deep, Whitty brings the fragile ocean to us in a way that helps us understand the threats facing coral reefs and why they are vital to human survival. She is being acknowledged as one of our strongest winners for her excellence in the tradition of the genre of nature essay-writing, which John Burroughs perfected.

Julia Whitty is the author of *A Tortoise for the Queen of Tonga*, a book of award-winning short stories. Her writing has been featured as cover articles in *Mother Jones* and *Harper's Magazine*. She has written and produced more than seventy documentaries for PBS,

(more)

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National Geographic, the Discovery Channel, and others. Whitty lives in northern California.

The John Burroughs Medal has been given annually since 1926 for a book that combines scientific accuracy, firsthand fieldwork, and creative natural history writing in the United States. Past Burroughs medallists include Rachel Carson, Joseph Wood Krutch, Loren Eiseley, Paul Brooks, John Hay, Ann Zwinger, Barry Lopez, Gary Nabhan, Robert Pyle, Richard Nelson, Carl Safina, and Ted Levin.

The award is bestowed at the annual meeting of the Burroughs Association at a ceremony and luncheon that will be held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

The John Burroughs Association, a membership organization of conservation and environmental literary professionals and stewards dedicated to preserving the environment, gives the Medal award that encourages writing in the Burroughs tradition and maintains sites associated with the famous naturalist John Burroughs. The Association publishes the newsletter *Wake~Robin*.

The reservations-only luncheon will be held on Monday, April 7, at the American Museum of Natural History. For more information about the Association, and/or a web listing of medallists, visit our website at <http://research.amnh.org/burroughs>.

For reservations, please contact Lisa Breslof at 212-769-5169 and to arrange an interview with Julia Whitty or to receive a review copy, contact Patrice Taddonio at Houghton Mifflin Company at Patrice_Taddonio@hmco.com.

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