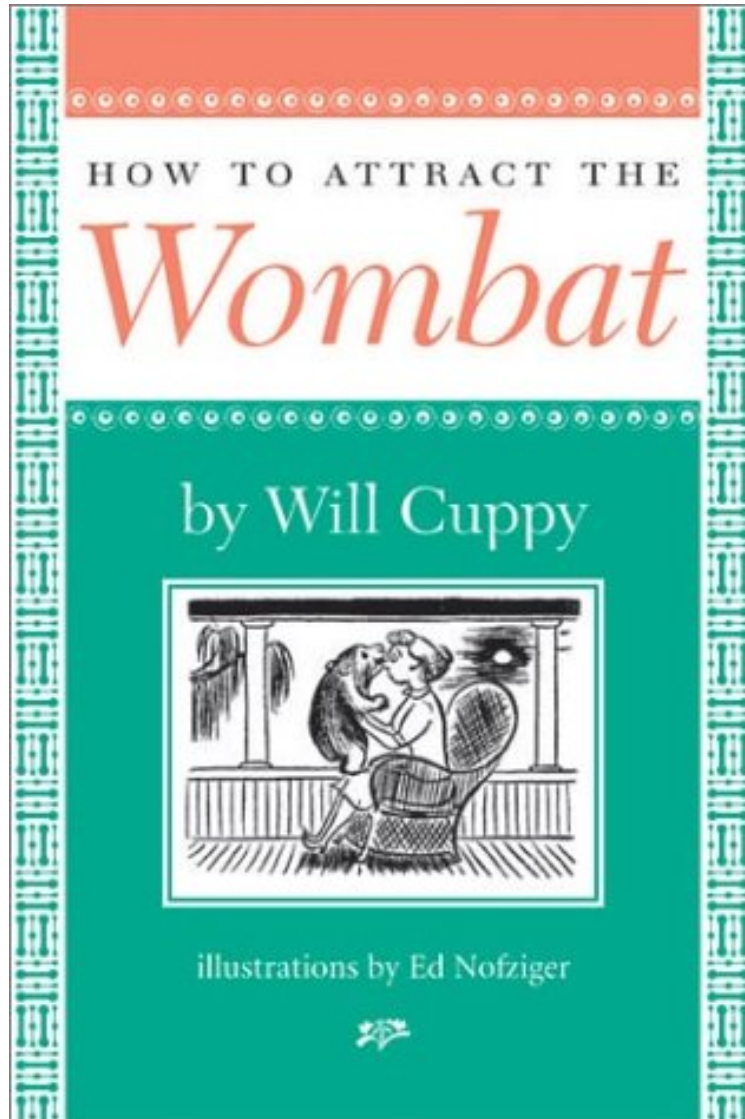


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How to Attract the Wombat (Nonpareil Book, 93.)

Will Cuppy

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Will Cuppy : How to Attract the Wombat (Nonpareil Book, 93.) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How to Attract the Wombat (Nonpareil Book, 93.):

20 of 20 people found the following review helpful. Wombats, Mollusks, and Greek Literature All In ModerationBy Robert I. HedgesWill Cuppy has written a very strange, very funny little volume that covers a lot of territory. Ostensibly, it is mainly devoted to an overview of animal characteristics, and includes a great deal of odd and relatively unknown facts on a myriad of animals (my undergraduate degree is in Biology, and I learned many peculiar

things from this book). The amazing thing about the book for me is the literate weaving of a coherent book which includes not only an explanation of the head-foot and lifestyles of lower mollusks, but a tracing of literary references of mollusks through history, from the ancient Greeks to Wordsworth (really). That kind of surreal juxtaposition runs throughout the book, and is perfectly delightful. The net result is a book that is genuinely educational, and simultaneously hilarious. Cuppy has a wonderful way with words, indeed he has a rich vocabulary and elegant writing style that is mostly forgotten in contemporary writers. I wish this book was compulsory reading in all high schools (take your pick in English or Biology class) to expose students to the concept that a book, even with a sometimes strange or mundane subject, can be utterly fascinating when told well. My only minor critique of the book is the relative abundance of footnotes, which is sometimes a bit distracting. If you want a good laugh, or you just love animals this book is a good choice. It turns out that wombats are pretty interesting, believe it or not! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Hilarious By Melisa Michaels Love Will Cuppy's work. It's a little awkward on the Kindle, because the footnotes are often the best (funniest) part, and it's hard to navigate to some of them without turning a page instead (or to navigate back instead of turning a page); but it's well worth the trouble. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Funny By Larry the Lawyer Cuppy seems to have been forgotten, unlike many of his NYer inferiors, e.g., Benchley and Parker. This book is hilarious. Funny books are rare. Give it a chance.

Will Cuppy is one of the greatest humorists this country has produced and is still (despite eleven printings of his imperishable *The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody*) too little known. Here is one of his three classic "How-To's," considering notable birds and animals whose habits (and often existence) seem to have disturbed Cuppy ("Birds Who Can't Even Fly," "Optional Insects," "Octopuses and Those Things"), as well as more mundane creatures like the frog, the gnat, and the moa, who have no visible vices but whose virtues are truly awful. Spanning the breadth of the animal kingdom, Cuppy neatly classes his observations for easy reference: *Problem Mammals*, *Pleasures of Pond Life*, *Birds Who Can't Sing and Know It*. Included with 50 shorter pieces are longer meditations like "The Poet and the Nautilus," "Swan-umping, Indeed!" and "How to Swat a Fly," which codifies the essentials of this simple activity in ten hilarious principles. All this, plus over 100 delightful Nofziger drawings! But the seat of honor is, of course, occupied by the Wombat, the nocturnal star of three essays. Whether asleep in Rossetti's silver epergne or tunneling under the lawn, the wombat never fails to fascinate Cuppy, clearly supplying his alter ego for the animal kingdom.

About the Author Will Cuppy wrote a weekly column of reviews of mystery books for the *New York Herald Tribune* and various freelance journalism for other newspapers and magazines. His other books include *The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody*, *How to Get from January to December*, and *How to become Extinct*. He died in 1949.