

DIANE ACKERMAN BIO

Diane Ackerman was born in Waukegan, Illinois. She received an M.A., M.F.A. and Ph.D. from Cornell University. Her works of nonfiction include, most recently, *The Zookeeper's Wife*, narrative nonfiction about one of the most successful hideouts of World War II, a tale of people, animals, and subversive acts of compassion; *An Alchemy of Mind*, a poetics of the brain based on the latest neuroscience; *Cultivating Delight: A Natural History of My Garden*; *Deep Play*, which considers play, creativity, and our need for transcendence; *A Slender Thread*, about her work as a crisisline counselor; *The Rarest of the Rare* and *The Moon by Whale Light*, in which she explores the plight and fascination of endangered animals; *A Natural History of Love*; *On Extended Wings*, her memoir of flying; and the bestseller *A Natural History of the Senses*.

Her poetry has been published in leading literary journals, and in the books *Origami Bridges: Poems of Psychoanalysis and Fire*; *I Praise My Destroyer*; *Jaguar of Sweet Laughter: New and Selected Poems*; *Lady Faustus*; *Reverse Thunder: A Dramatic Poem*; *Wife of Light*; *The Planets: A Cosmic Pastoral*. She also writes nature books for children: *Animal Sense*; *Monk Seal Hideaway*; and *Bats: Shadows in the Night*.

Ms. Ackerman has received many prizes and awards, including a D. Litt. from Kenyon College, a Guggenheim Fellowship, Orion Book Award, John Burroughs Nature Award, and the Lavan Poetry Prize, as well as being honored as a Literary Lion by the New York Public Library. She also has the rare distinction of having a molecule named after her -- dianeackerone. She has taught at a variety of universities, including Columbia, the University of Richmond, and Cornell. Her essays about nature and human nature have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Smithsonian*, *Parade*, *The New Yorker*, *National Geographic*, and many other journals, where they have been the subject of much praise. She hosted a five-hour PBS television series inspired by *A Natural History of the Senses*.