

Charles DesBaillets

Why do places like Mono Lake matter?

As I sat by the lake, a gentle breeze caused the water to lap gently against the shore and carried the invigorating scent of salt into my nostrils; meanwhile the sun came in and out from behind the clouds, changing the shade of the water and sending sparkles off of the tiny swells made by the wind. The only wildlife I saw was a lone California Gull, reminding me that soon this place would be overrun with gulls hatching their young. As I took in the natural beauty, a sense of calm came over me that I've only ever experienced outdoors, a peace of mind that cannot come from any place overtaken by man. And this is when I realized why places like Mono Lake matter to me.

These places matter, first, because we as humans need natural places to escape to from the concrete and steel webs we have woven ourselves into. The journey of humans ever since we learned to walk on two legs has seemed to take us farther and farther from our roots in nature. While I cannot deny the good in many of man's advances, I would vehemently argue that keeping ties with nature is just as important as any advance we could ever make. Places like Mono Lake matter and must be preserved because they serve to remind us of where we came from, and this reminder brings a tranquility to our minds that nothing else can. We need places like Mono Lake in order to be able to commune with nature away from the pollution of the world man has created for himself

Places like Mono Lake matter, secondly, because places like this are necessary in order to preserve the fragile balance of our planet. Even those unlucky people who do not find peace in nature, cannot deny that we need this planet and the resources it kindly provides it. Humans are only one part of the massive machinery of this planet; Mono Lake and its delicate ecosystem are another part. We must preserve each and every part of the machine we can, because if one part breaks, others can quickly follow. If man continues in his disregard for the planet, the engine of the world will eventually reach a point where it is beyond repair, and man will fall along with everything he has destroyed. This is perhaps the simplest reason why places like Mono Lake matter; if they fall, we fall. We must preserve them in order to preserve ourselves.

Easy access to natural places like Mono Lake is important to us as human beings; these places can bring us peace and beauty that cannot be found in the manmade-world. These places are also important for every other organism on our planet; we must preserve every level of the environment we can in order to preserve ourselves. Places like Mono Lake matter because they bring beauty to the world, and help sustain life.