

Email Interview: Mark Madison
Chief Historian, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Katie McLaughlin: Have you or anyone you know had any sort of connection to Rachel Carson or DDT?

Mark Madison: I work in the same agency as her and I have interviewed a number of her co-workers. I also have an archive with many of her personal papers and her private library.

Katie McLaughlin: What would have happened if Rachel just had given up on her book & let the cancer consume her?

Mark Madison: We would not have any raptors or many songbirds. DDT was ravaging our birds, fish, and certain other wildlife and without Silent Spring our nature would indeed be more silent.

Katie McLaughlin: How do you think Rachel would react to science & technology today?

Mark Madison: She would love technology to make communications faster. She would be aghast at Genetically Modified Organisms and the new pesticide resistant crops we have created that are killing off monarch butterflies.

Katie McLaughlin: In one sentence, how would you sum up Rachel Carson's impact on, not only the environment but also society as a whole?

Mark Madison: Rachel Carson ushered in the 20th C. environmental movement by making sure we still had an environment left to protect!
