

Saving Planet Earth by Tony Juniper.  
Collins 2007.

This book was published to tie in with the BBC series Saving Planet Earth which sent a group of celebrities to different parts of the world to investigate the fate of an endangered creature. The series was reasonably effective, and certainly had some beautiful pictures in it, but celebrity driven conservation efforts are not necessarily the best way to get everyone engaged in the cause.

Tony Juniper's book, with lavish illustrations from the BBC series Planet Earth, is a serious book about the dangers posed to our planet by a variety of issues – global warming and climate change chief among them.

Saving Planet Earth is divided into three main sections, Living earth, Warming world and Plundered planet; as the author ranges through all the expected areas of his subject it is hard not to become overwhelmed by the sheer enormity of the task of putting right the damage that we human beings have inflicted on the planet, and despairing of our ability to rectify that damage even if the political will were there across the world to do so. In this though Tony Juniper is not alone, for it is hard for any writer in this field to avoid gloom, doom and despondency.

Nevertheless, the final section has some very helpful, clearly expressed advice and suggestions regarding what each of us can do to try and prevent a catastrophe enveloping our children and grandchildren, or at least to put it off.

This looks like a coffee table book but it is much more serious than that and it is worth noting that proceeds from its sale will go towards a dedicated conservation fund for wildlife set up by the BBC.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh