

The Road to Beaver Park

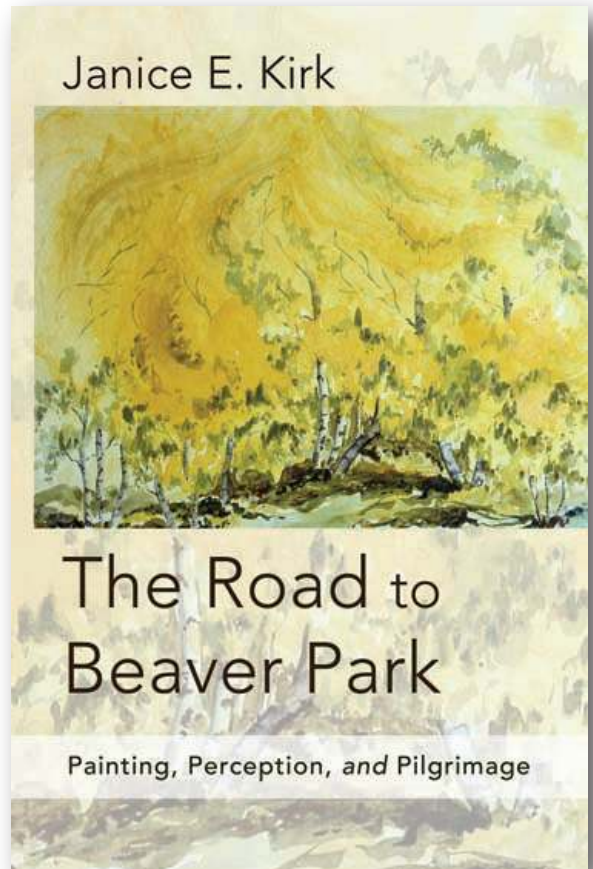
Painting, Perception, and Pilgrimage

Janice E. Kirk

Learn to paint, learn to see—it will change your life.

On Sabbatical, Janice carries her art pack and folding stool into one of the most incredible landscapes on the planet: the canyons, deserts, mountains, and river valleys of the greater Southwest. Awed, amazed, inspired, and humbled by what she finds there, she sketches and paints *en plein air*. The family fishes, hikes, catches bugs, chases lizards, digs fossils, photographs, and studies plants. The year-long campout in National Parks and Forest Service sites becomes a journey of the heart. The family grows to love the way the great outdoors is put together. Part travelogue, part natural history, part field course in art appreciation, the author records her development as an artist as she learns to paint and learns to see. To her surprise, a spiritual awakening sneaks up on her, and the journey turns into something more—a pilgrimage.

Janice E. Kirk is author and illustrator of *The Christmas Redwood, A Forest Parable*; *Cherish The Earth: the Environment and Scripture*, and illustrator of *Wild Edible Plants of Western North America* by D. R. Kirk. She has taught art, language arts, and music, including voice at Simpson University, Redding, California. During a lifetime of family camping adventures in the American West, she sketched, painted, learned nature's ways, and grew to cherish the beauty of the earth.



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"Kirk's account of her family's year camping in the southwest is both an inspiring travelogue and timely clarion call. The average school-aged child spends nearly seven hours *per day* in front of a screen and less than thirty minutes *per week* outdoors in unstructured play. Beautifully written and joyfully illustrated, *The Road to Beaver Park* will help you see nature with new eyes."

—NANCY SLEETH, Author, *Almost Amish*; Managing Director, Blessed Earth

"It is no accident that this book's genesis was a sabbatical experience, for Kirk's prose and sketches are the fruit of a prolonged Sabbath. By slowing down and stripping away non-essentials, Janice and her family discover the transformative power of rest, silence, and contemplative time spent in the outdoors. In this she offers a likely solution to our ecological crisis: natural settings inspire wonder, which reveals beauty, which instills a reverence that leads to stewardship."

—PAUL STONEHOUSE, Associate Professor Adventure Education, Green Mountain College

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