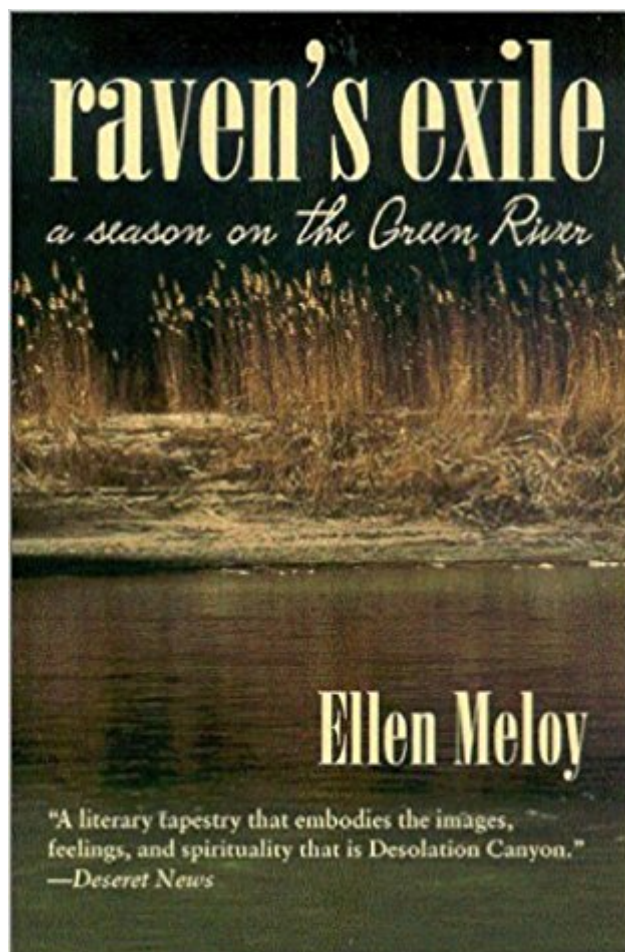




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# Raven's Exile: A Season On The Green River



## Synopsis

More than a century after John Wesley Powell launched his boat on the Green River, Ellen Meloy spent eight years of seasonal floats through Utah's Desolation Canyon with her husband, a federal river ranger. She came to know the history and natural history of this place well enough to call it home, and has recorded her observations in a book that is as wide-ranging as the river and as wild as the wilderness through which it runs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Each summer, Meloy, a freelance writer, and her husband, a river ranger with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, raft Utah's Green River through the 84-mile-long gorge at Desolation Canyon. In this scintillating account of one season on the river, she uses rich and sensuous language to convey the breathtaking beauty of the region--the play of color and light on steep canyon walls, the force of spring windstorms and the mystery of abandoned Indian cliff dwellings. Although Desolation Canyon is relatively unspoiled, the threat of human meddling is ever present; Meloy considers ravens, wily birds whose absence from Desolation Canyon she has never been able to explain and which become a symbol of everything that is, and should remain, beyond human comprehension and control. This paean to the beauty of desert wilderness includes the author's drawings of ancient petroglyphs found on the canyon walls. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Meloy describes this as a book about place. That place is mainly the Green River, the Colorado's

longest tributary, as it passes through Desolation Canyon. Her husband is a ranger for the Bureau of Land Management, and together they spend summers monitoring use and abuse of the canyon, often from a raft on the river itself. Meloy is extremely protective of Desolation Canyon, so much so that her narrative is more prohibiting than welcoming. She left this reader with a feeling of having been told, "Don't come here; you're an outsider" rather than of being invited to come along on an armchair visit to a spectacular area. Her history lessons, both natural and cultural, are not quite in-depth enough to be completely fulfilling, yet are still informative. Suggested only for regional and Colorado River collections. Nancy Moeckel, Miami Univ. Libs., Oxford, Ohio Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The first book I read by Ellen, and my favorite. A beautiful, lush, incredibly well-written view of the desert southwest.

Book in wonderful condition!

May have commented on this prior but it's a very touching and enjoyable read from a naturalist's POV.

Ellen Meloy is one of a kind. Her vivid descriptions of Desolation Canyon transported me down the Green in the raft with Meloy and her husband, Mark. I felt the heat, watched as the canyon walls rose around us as the raft drifted down the river and listened, always listened for the ravens who weren't there.

The author was the wife of a Colorado River/Green River ranger, and her account of river running is spectacular. Very enjoyable book for outdoor lovers, and those readers like me who love the outdoors, and nature, but are unable to actually go there.

Ellen Meloy is a writer of nature par excellence!! I recommend all her books!!

I have a 1995 copy of "Raven's Exile" and I picked it up again a week ago because I am planning a trip through Labyrinth Canyon and I was looking for insights on the Green River. Colin Fletcher wrote "The River" which I re-read first and then I opened Ellen's work and was immediately entranced and transported again to the Utah desert. While I like Abbey's work, Meloy is less of a

curmudgeon. I am an admirer of Fletcher but Meloy is less Narcissistic. She reports her emotions and has a turn of phrase which is astonishing. After a chapter on the absence of Ravens in Desolation... a chapter later she throws in a bombshell about the disappeared native Fremonts... "I believe a small band of Fremont Indians remain in Desolation Canyon. They spend a great deal of time with ravens." After reading that line I believe too.

This book is a gem. If Abbey had a feminine counter-voice Meloy's would be it. Like Desert Solitaire Meloy speaks of the raw, untamed beauty of the southern Utah wilderness. We travel with her and her husband Mark down the Green River through Desolation Canyon and deep into the wild places of the human psyche. Meloy takes us back to our more primitive self with an eye for detail and a soft, gentle humor. She transports us on a journey that few of us will ever take. Through her eyes we see the river from a myriad of uses and view points: the prehistoric Fremont culture, early river runners to the modern river rat. Like Abbey before her, Meloy gives us a sense of place that comes alive through her words. This is an ode to a wild river and as she feared, possibly a eulogy. Desolation Canyon its environs remains one of the more endangered places in the southwest. The wild in all of us lost a voice with her untimely death in 2004.

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