



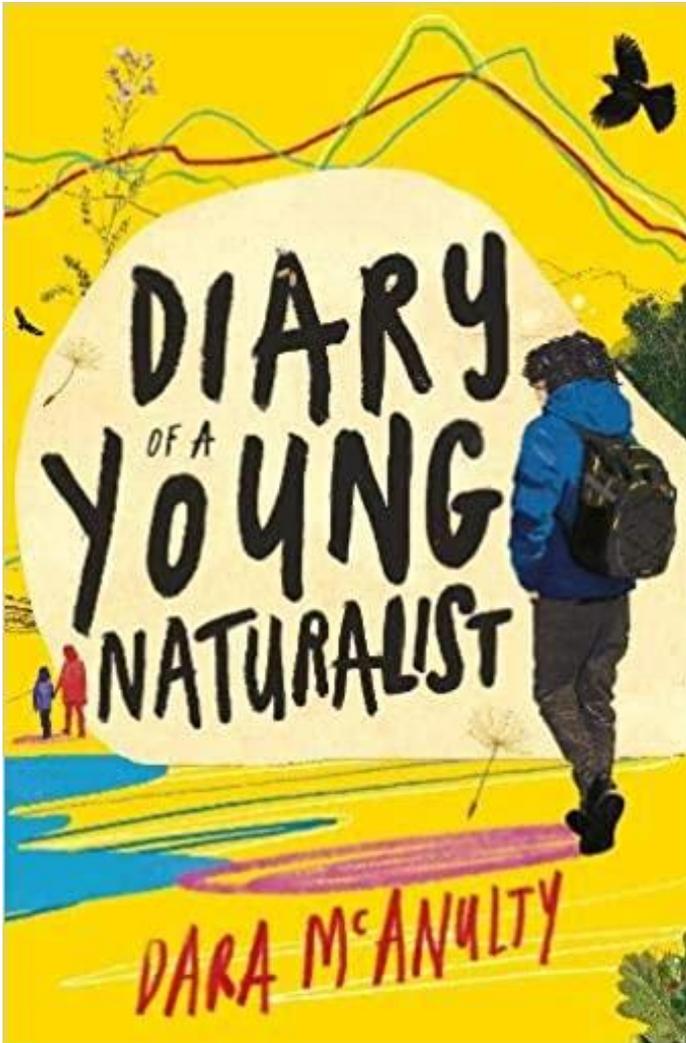
## Suntrap Book Review

### Diary of a Young Naturalist

By Dara McNulty

Published by Little Toller Books £16.00 (Hardback)

**Age range:** Young adults



### Description

Diary of a Young Naturalist chronicles the turning of 15-year-old Dara McNulty's world. From spring and through a year in his home patch in Northern Ireland, Dara spent the seasons writing.

These vivid, evocative and moving diary entries about his connection to wildlife and the way he sees the world are raw in their telling.

"I was diagnosed with Asperger's/autism aged five ... By age seven I knew I was very different, I had got used to the isolation, my inability to break through into the world of talking about football or Minecraft was not tolerated. Then came the bullying. Nature became so much more than an escape; it became a life-support system."

Diary of a Young Naturalist portrays Dara's intense connection to the natural world, and his perspective as a teenager juggling exams and friendships alongside a life of campaigning.

"In writing this book," Dara explains, "I have experienced challenges but also felt incredible joy, wonder, curiosity and excitement. In sharing this journey my hope is that people of all generations will not only understand autism a little more but also appreciate a child's eye view on our delicate and changing biosphere."

### Reviews

"His portrait of loving parents raising three neurodivergent children on poetry, punk and puffins is profoundly moving." Alex Preston, The Observer;

"Rich poeticism courses through the writing that belies his years." Hilary A White, Irish Independent;

"Like reading William Blake or Ted Hughes, it really is a strange and magical experience...surely one of the most talked about nature books, or any books, this year." The Daily Mail;

"I adored it." Lauren St John.;

'...the fanfare is wholly justified: this is an astonishingly assured book for one so young.' Caroline Sanderson, The Bookseller (Non-fiction Book of the Month, June 2020);

"This lovely and remarkable book." Charlotte Moore, The Spectator;

'an extraordinary voice and vision: brave, poetic, ethical, lyrical'. Robert Macfarlane;