

[Photo: A logo reads, "Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum."]

Narrator: Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum presents the following audio interview with Daniel Raven-Ellison, "Disconnect". The interview takes place in London where he founded London National City Park. The narrative is overlaid with photos illustrating the landscape and events described.

[Photo: Daniel stands in front of buildings near water wearing an orange jacket.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: It's fundamentally problematic.

Daniel Raven-Ellison: And I don't think that there is adequate language currently in the English

Daniel Raven-Ellison: language to describe nature and wildlife and wildness and people,

[Photo: A family walks in a park near residential buildings.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: because when people say nature, they're often othering nature for themselves,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: but we are part of nature.

[Photo: A brown feathered chicken stands on a wooden board.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: And even the notion of wildlife has been othered from people I think is highly

[Photo: People sit at tables in a park. A sign near them reads, "No Bags, Bums or Beanbags".]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: problematic because I know that I can be wild at times.

Daniel Raven-Ellison: I don't know what point I stopped being wild in my own life.

[Photo: A sign reads, "Keep cities Wild" in a park.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: And so, within the work that I started around making London a national park city,

[Photo: A image of a park is shown.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: I think there are sort of three,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: maybe like really critical principles behind that in terms of getting your head

Daniel Raven-Ellison: around it.

[Photo: A field of vegetation is nearby a residential building.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: One is that the urban life is not worth less

Daniel Raven-Ellison: than

Daniel Raven-Ellison: life that you get in deserts or coral or rainforest, right? It's just different.

[Photo: A red fox is shown standing on a gravel road.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: A red fox that lives in this city is not worth less than a fennec fox or a Artic fox.

Daniel Raven-Ellison: It's just a red fox doing a red fox thing.

[Photo: A close up of a grey common rock pigeon.]



Daniel Raven-Ellison: Same as, a pigeon that is allegedly feral within London. That's just a,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: a rock dove that lives on the cliffs of Scotland.

Daniel Raven-Ellison: It's the same guy just doing what rock doves do, you know,

[Photo: A group of dogs play with a woman on a grass field.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: like fundamentally problematic,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: we're separating off different life forms around the planet based on where they

[Photo: A crowd of people feed birds in the water.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: happen to be born. And I think that applies equally for homo sapiens,

[Photo: A man walks on a road near water.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: one of 15,000 species that occupied this city from the idea that

Daniel Raven-Ellison: we don't deserve a habitat,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: this as pristine as or awesome as nature conservationists may expect of a polar

Daniel Raven-Ellison: bears or orangutans. You know,

[Photo: People and dogs play in a park on a sunny day.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: so actually, fundamentally this is the third element.

Daniel Raven-Ellison: If we think that children and people in general should want to protect life,

[Photo: Residential buildings near a waterway in London.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: then why should we always externalize that mission to people that are in distant

Daniel Raven-Ellison: places who are educated to a certain level?

Daniel Raven-Ellison: Why is it not in their flowerpots or in their balconies?

[Photo: A side of a building with satellite dishes are shown.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: And actually, I think that then that goes deeper still into our consumption

[Photo: People walk on a bridge near water.]

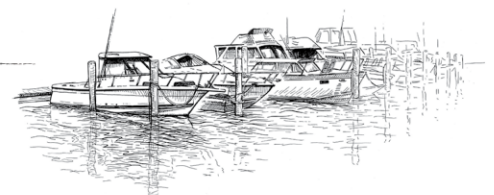
Daniel Raven-Ellison: habits within cities. And this sounds slightly more radical, maybe,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: but nature conservationist often talk about endangered life,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: but they're talking about species.

[Photo: A family at a park on a sunny day.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: So, people are more than happy to consume an individual,



Daniel Raven-Ellison: even though that individual is threatened by them. Right?

Daniel Raven-Ellison: So, I think that there's something difficult about saying to children as they're

Daniel Raven-Ellison: growing up and saying to people that we should,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: there's almost like a species ism where there's a preference for different

Daniel Raven-Ellison: species and animals and culture and peoples based on their geographies.

[Photo: A closeup of a park with a man sitting on a bench.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: And that doesn't make sense,

Daniel Raven-Ellison: which is probably why we have the massive decline in species we have around the world.

[Photo: A mural of a garden is shown on a brick wall with a small garden bed below it.]

Daniel Raven-Ellison: And why so many people think that the environment is not a priority in cities

Daniel Raven-Ellison: where clearly, it's one of the most important things in cities.

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