

Charles Foster

Charles Foster: The Adventurer-Philosopher of Biology & Medicine

Charles Foster is a British writer, veterinarian, barrister, and explorer with a mind as wild as the landscapes he studies. Part scientist, part philosopher, and full-time provocateur, Foster doesn't just write about nature—he lives it.

Trained in veterinary medicine at the University of Cambridge, Foster also holds a law degree and a PhD in medical ethics from Oxford. But his real education came from crawling through forests, swimming with otters, and even burying himself in dirt to understand the world from an animal's perspective. His work blends hard science with lyrical prose, challenging how we see ourselves in nature.

A fellow at Oxford's Green Templeton College, Foster teaches medical law and ethics—but his true passion is experiential biology. He's slept in a badger sett, foraged like a fox, and even tried (disastrously) to live as a urban red deer. His radical experiments in "being beast" have made him a cult figure in nature writing.

Beyond academia, he's a TED speaker, a contributor to The Guardian and BBC Wildlife, and a relentless critic of humanity's arrogance toward other species. Whether dissecting the soul of a swallow or the legal rights of rivers, Foster's work is always bold, witty, and deeply humane.

Charles Foster's Books

Being a Beast (2016) – The cult classic where Foster tries living as a badger, otter, fox, deer, and swift. A mix of science, memoir, and madness.

Being a Human (2021) – A sequel exploring what it means to be human by living as our Stone Age ancestors did.

The Screaming Sky (2021) – A poetic ode to swifts, blending biology and mythology.

Cry of the Wild (2023) – A meditation on animal consciousness and human ignorance.

Edges of the World: Travels in the margins of life, lands and ideas (Transworld, 2026)