

## *The Sixth Extinction Reading Guide*

1. The hallmark of evolutionary biology is adaptability. Is the main challenge facing our era the speed with which we are forcing things to adapt? Why/why not?
2. Which of Kolbert's examples seems most interesting/troubling to you? Why?
3. Do you find it troubling that species go extinct from human causes? Is that fundamentally different from going extinct from natural causes? Does the presence of awareness/morality in our species hold us to a higher standard?
4. Has reading this book changed your views on climate change in any way? How?
5. Do you think the "islands on dry land" method of studying small ecosystems can help us to predict the effect of our actions on our larger ecosystem?
6. How far would you go to stop a species from becoming extinct?
7. How has "the new Pangea" accelerated certain threats to various species' future around the world?
8. Should human-driven extinctions be considered natural selection? Why/why not?
9. How does Kolbert show that scientific theories change over time? What does that mean for our current understanding of extinction events?
10. What is the symbolism of the Great Barrier Reef?
11. What do you think of the concept of the Anthropocene? Do you think it's a fitting title for our current era? Why/why not?
12. "The Thing with Feathers" (Chapter XIII) refers to Emily Dickinson's poem, "Hope is the thing with feathers." After reading this book, where do you see some hopeful possibilities?