

Jungian Society for Scholarly Studies
21st Conference of Research in Jung and Analytical Psychology



Rewilding the Psyche: Jungian and Post-Jungian Perspectives

Portland, Oregon: June 11-14, 2026

Deadline for Proposals: January 31, 2026

We invite you to submit a proposal to participate in this interdisciplinary gathering of scholars, educators, practitioners, and artists exploring topics and ideas related to the conference theme of rewilding the psyche in the context of Jungian and post-Jungian theory, concepts, and practice-oriented work.

Location

Lewis & Clark College, 615 S. Palatine Hill Road, Portland, Oregon 97219 USA

Program Committee

Conference Chair: Sharon Wallace, PhD

Site Coordinator: Nick Literski, PhD

Technology Coordinator: Jessica Fink, PhD

Call for Proposals

In the course of the millennia, we have succeeded not only in conquering the wild nature all round us, but in subduing our own wildness. ("On Psychic Energy," CW 8, par. 87)

The theme of this conference, *Rewilding the Psyche: Jungian and Post-Jungian Perspectives*, provides an interpretive framework for exploring Jung's concept of individuation in a manner that considers both internal and external nature. As we seek to integrate wild parts of the psyche by engaging the unconscious as our inner, untamed wilderness, we are asked to re-examine and reanimate our relationship with the natural, other-than-human world as well.

The term "rewilding" typically refers to the process of recovery and restoration of ecosystems to their natural, self-sustaining state. What might this look like for the Jungian psyche? What changes might this new form of rewilding the psyche entail in our deeper work, and what might

change in the day-to-day? How might it operate in personal, familial, social, and cultural settings? For the individual psyche, the most fundamental challenge we face is to live in an authentic and meaningful manner. In other words, how do we respond to the calling of our inner nature and undertake the demanding work of psychological development that Jung termed individuation? Again, at least a partial answer lies in our relationship with the world. As the psychotherapist Nick Totton reminds us, “Jung saw individuation as a natural process that could proceed just as well without consciousness as with it” (2011, *Wild Therapy*, p. 18).

When ego consciousness continually rejects our inner wildness, we can live small and inauthentic lives. Individuation stalls, hurting the ability to create. In Jung’s view, the unconscious is a wellspring of creative wisdom that contributes to authentic development. We can think of rewilding the psyche as both the cultivation of an ecological consciousness and the reclaiming of eros and instinct. When there is a loss of instinct, there is a “rootless condition of consciousness” that “becomes a real danger” (1946/1954, “Psychotherapy Today,” *CW* 16, par. 216). By subduing the wild, we subdue our own psyches, repressing our inner wildness, which includes the body. Jung writes: “We suffer very much from the fact that we consist of mind and have lost the body” (1988, *Nietzsche’s Zarathustra*, vol. 1, p. 251). To deny this body wisdom is to deny our essential vitality. The cost of not rewilding, then, can be a cost to the soul as our overly domesticated psyches fill with longing for the creative unknown.

The symbiotic relationship between psyche and nature has interested artists for centuries. The nineteenth century nature poet, John Clare, imaginatively locates the doomed psychological question of conscious understanding in an unkempt nature. In “The Flitting,” he describes being unable to distinguish between those thoughts that are important and those that are background noise:

I dwell on trifles like a child
I feel as ill becomes a man
And still my thoughts like weedlings wild
Grow up to bloom where they can. (1833)

Wilderness is both a physical space and a psychological state. The psyche’s metaphorical wilderness is a place of liminality and transformation. Experiencing the solitude of wilderness deepens human experience, where the mystery of an embodied psychic life is its own unknown territory. This authenticity rises out of the connection to the “wilds” of both the unconscious psyche and the natural world. Jungian scholar C. A. Meier, in *A Testament to the Wilderness*, defines our inner wilderness as “really the original biotope of the Soul” (1985, pp. 13-14), which points to the living ecosystem of the psyche. The wilds of nature hold a vitality that not only invites but also demands human presence and the embrace of the totality of disowned aspects of the psyche. In this rewilding process, wilderness becomes an alchemical vessel for the soul.

Jung sees Western culture’s disconnection from nature as an impediment to individuation. The loss of outer wilderness in our current world is the loss of the world’s body and contributes to the fragmentation of the psyche. In a needed response, rewilding summons encounters with

the archetypal energies of the natural world, bridging inner life and spiritual creative expression. Jung asserts:

Archetypes are systems of readiness for action, and at the same time images and emotions. They are inherited with the brain structure—indeed they are its psychic aspect. They represent, on the one hand, a very strong instinctive conservatism, while on the other hand they are the most effective means conceivable of instinctive adaptation. They are . . . the chthonic portion of the psyche . . . that portion through which the psyche is attached to nature. (1927/1964, “Mind and Earth,” CW 10, par. 53)

This label of “the chthonic portion” refers not only to the metaphorical underworld but to the Earth’s waters as well as soil. Through traditional rewilding, ecosystems rebalance and serve as metaphors for our inner journey. Outer nature mirrors the body with its cycle of seasons and its patterns of growth, death, and regeneration. By allowing the psyche to run wild in its own habitat, psychic balance may be restored. This can expand and deepen our place and connectivity within the natural world and the world’s community. Engaging with these archetypal patterns is part of our rewilding.

Tending the rewilding psyche reminds us that humans are part of nature, in all its wild and unpredictable ways. In the essay “Working Through Environmental Despair,” scholar Joanna Macy notes:

Processes of growth and transformation . . . require a letting go of outmoded ways of being, of old assumptions and old defenses. . . . This letting go can be a passage through darkness. . . . As life-forms evolve in intelligence, they shed their armor and reach outward to an ever-wider interplay with the environment. They grow sensitive, vulnerable protuberances . . . the better to feel and respond, the better to connect in the web and weave it further. (1995, in Roszak, T., M. E. Gomes, & A. D. Kanner, [Eds.], *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind*, pp. 255-256)

Applying Macy’s description, perhaps the generative nature of rewilding can help foster a shift in the collective and bring renewal to forgotten or abused lands that would then be freer to be feral and regrow. This is but one imagined outcome. In “The Summer Day,” the poet Mary Oliver entreats, “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” (1992)

The 2026 conference theme invites us to explore Jungian and post-Jungian ideas for rewilding the psyche and restoring our relationship with the natural world.

Criteria:

The conference organizers are particularly interested in receiving proposals for presentations of scholarly research addressing the conference theme that include, but are not limited to, the following areas of inquiry:

1. Exploring the writings of Jung and or post-Jungians about the psyche’s relationship to

nature, culture, and the wild;

2. Exploring possible applications of ecopsychology with applications for navigating the future;
3. Examining how psychological reflections on notions of wildness can open psychological understanding of the past and present, with implications for the future;
4. Exploring how perspectives from other disciplines such as mythology, literature, archeology, ecopsychology, somatic psychology, philosophy, religion, spirituality, education, information technology, political science, history, or neuroscience can illuminate and help activate our ideas of the Jungian psyche and the rewilding process;
5. Exploring Jungian examples of wild archetypes;
6. Offering scholarly frameworks for research or action based on Jungian and or post-Jungian ideas;
7. Presenting work and or exhibiting completed artistic works, including sculpture, painting, poetry, music, drama, dance, moving image, photography, and digital media;
8. Revitalizing psychic systems that have been marginalized or depleted energetically;
9. Undertaking somatic practice;
10. Designing research that explores the psyche within the conference theme's context of rewilding the psyche;
11. Exploring any aspect of Portland, Oregon and its environs as a case study in the Jungian psyche and its relationship to the conference theme.

This list is intended to suggest entry points into the conference theme. Submissions that explore the conference theme from other entry points are welcome.

Proposal Submission

Only one proposal will be considered per presenter (this includes group efforts). No marketing or sales materials are permitted during presentations. The Program Committee invites submissions for:

Paper: Single- or multi-authored scholarly paper. May include arts-based research. 20-minute presentation. QA time added.

Panel: Panel of three or more presenters. 20 minutes per presenter. QA time added.

Roundtable: Works in progress. 15-minute presentation plus 15-minute discussion period. No supporting technology is available for roundtable presentations.

Workshop: Experiential workshops lasting 90 minutes. This is our most competitive format. A limited number will be accepted. Proposals must include a description of the workshop, scholarly framework, and process.

Creative Practice: Creative presentation that involves a practice or performance within a scholarly framework that includes film, dance, visual arts, music, performance, etc. 20-minute presentation. QA time added.

Requirements for Proposal Submission

Information and Word Count Limits:

- Presenter Name (list all names for panel or multi-person presentation)
- Email address (point person to contact)
- Preferred Presentation Format
- Title of Presentation (for inclusion in conference program)
- Proposal Body Text (350 words max)
- Works Cited in Proposal
- Relevance to the Conference Theme
- Short Abstract (50 words max for inclusion in conference program)
- Presenter Bio(s) (60 words max per presenter for inclusion in conference program)

Proposal Deadline and Feedback Dates

Proposals must be submitted via the JSSS website by January 31, 2026. All submissions will be acknowledged and then peer reviewed. All presenters will be notified of the review outcome by March 9, 2026. Note: the committee may exercise its prerogative to reallocate presentation formats other than those originally requested.

Media Options

Each room will be equipped with a screen, projector, lectern, and presenter microphone. Presenters, you are expected to use your own laptops that will support USB-C and HDMI connections. Other types of connectors may not be available, so bring your own adapter if needed. Volunteers will be available to help you get connected, but we expect you to know your own laptop and notify the technology team at technology@jungiansociety.org ahead of time if you have audio/visual needs beyond the basics.

Note: Roundtable presentations will not have audio/visual technology available because several people will be presenting at the same time.

Registration and Conference Fee Details to be Announced Shortly.

Booking Accommodations

Accommodations at the Juniper Hall dormitory are available at the rate of \$59.25 per night for single occupancy, plus a \$50.00 full bed and bath linen packet charge. You will be able to book the dormitory during the registration process and the entire cost must be paid at the time of registration.

As an alternative, attendees can reserve rooms at area hotels. Suggestions will be announced soon.

Our Care for the World

The JSSS will make a contribution to offset the carbon impact of the conference. A contribution is included in this year's conference fee to replenish the Society's Sustainability Fund for next year's conference.

Submit your proposal at <https://jungiansociety.org/2026-conference/>