

# Marty Essen

Born in Duluth, Minnesota in 1962, Marty Essen developed a love of animals at an early age. When he was eight years old, his first “pet,” a black widow spider, gave birth to hundreds of babies, which promptly crawled onto his hands when he opened the jar to feed them. He prudently traded his spiders for a horned toad.

Marty’s dream of an animal-oriented career became sidetracked at the age of 13, when he volunteered to answer request lines at a radio station. That position led to a job as a radio announcer, which in turn led him to become the owner of a Minneapolis-based talent management agency.

In 1990, *Gig Magazine* contracted Marty for his first professional writing work—a series of feature articles on the music business.

Eventually Marty moved to Montana to launch an independent local telephone company. In 2001, while being interviewed for a story about his telephone company, Marty mentioned to the reporter he was heading to the Amazon rainforest. The reporter invited him to write a story about his adventures.

Marty’s Amazon story ran as a feature article in two Montana newspapers. The Amazon story, and a second story about a trip to Australia, were so well received that he decided to expand his travels to all seven continents.

While traveling the world, in search of rare and interesting wildlife, Marty was stung by one of the world’s most venomous insects, bitten by a poisonous snake, surrounded by wolves, attacked by a hippo—and had the time of his life. He chronicled his unique adventures in his first book, *Cool Creatures, Hot Planet: Exploring the Seven Continents*.

*Cool Creatures, Hot Planet* has won three first-place awards for travel/essay writing: the 2007 Benjamin Franklin Award, the National Indie Excellence 2007 Book Award, and the Best Books 2006 Book Award. It has also won bronze metals in the *ForeWord Magazine* Book of the Year Awards and the IPPY Awards.

Now concentrating on his love of animals, Marty has recently finished writing a children’s book about the value of predators and is working on additional wildlife-oriented projects.