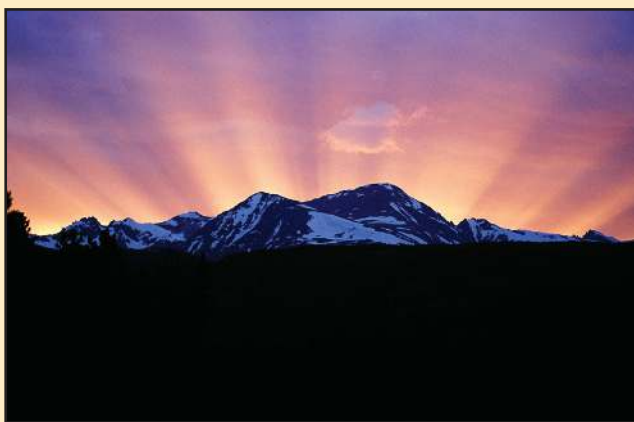


THE WILD SIDE by Dave Gibson

Crepuscular Rays

Sunbeams or crepuscular rays form when objects such as mountains or clouds partially shadow the sun's rays. Most often occurring at sunrise and sunset and pinkish or reddish in color, crepuscular rays are near parallel but appear to radiate from a vanishing point due to linear perspective. At twilight, when short wavelength light (blue and green) is scattered by airborne compounds, the Sun's rays pass through 40 times as much atmosphere as they do at midday. Under perfect conditions, the diffused



diffraction results in a spectacular sunbeam.

When crepuscular rays diverge from a hole in a cloud

they are known as “Jacob’s ladder”- a bridge between Heaven and Earth. The ancient Greeks believed that sunbeams drew water into the sky in an early attempt at explaining evaporation. Maori mythology tells of hero Maui Potiki snaring the Sun with ropes and beating it with the jawbone of an ances-

trouser until the Sun agreed to slow down and allow the people to get their work done.

*Dave Gibson is a photographer & writer focusing on the natural world around us.
His imagery can be found on his web site at www.davegibsonimages.com*