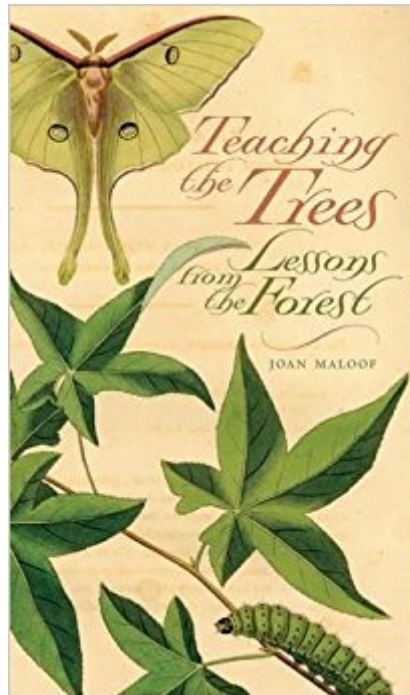




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Teaching The Trees: Lessons From The Forest



Synopsis

In these natural-history essays, biologist Joan Maloof embarks on a series of lively, fact-filled expeditions into forests of the eastern United States. Through her engaging, conversational style, each essay offers a lesson in stewardship as it explores the connections between a tree species and the animals and insects whose lives depend on it.

Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: University of Georgia Press (March 25, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 082032955X

ISBN-13: 978-0820329550

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 20 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #970,009 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #96 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Rural Life](#) #586 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Plants > Trees](#) #1151 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Nature Writing & Essays](#)

Customer Reviews

Trees, the dominant life form of most undisturbed terrestrial ecosystems, get a fitting tribute in this engaging collection of eco-meditations. In each short chapter, Salisbury University naturalist Maloof profiles each familiar tree—from the mighty oak to the humble holly—in the forests near her Maryland home and explores its "magical web of relationships" with the plants, insects, birds, mammals, fungi and people who rely on it. Along the way she gently voices her environmentalist convictions, deploring the clear-cutting of mature forests and their replacement with monoculture pine plantations, urging the use of recycled paper and jousting with county officials who want to cut down a local forest for the timber proceeds (she stymies them by declaring it a "September 11th Memorial Forest" and draping the trees with tags bearing the names of the dead from Ground Zero). Lyrical overtones are provided by sprinkled-in snippets of poetry by Rilke, and illustrations by the 18th-century artist John Abbott add a lovely visual touch. The resulting mix of scientific lore and acute personal observation makes for a beguiling walk in the woods. 18 illus. (July 5) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

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"Not so long ago," Maloof notes, "the largest trees lived in the forests, and the trees in parks and yards were modest by comparison; today, in many parts of the world, the tables have turned." Concerned that so few old-growth trees exist, Maloof offers a lovely collection of essays as spur and solace. A meditation on beech trees explores the trees' relationship to red-backed salamanders, the twayblade orchid, and flying squirrels. An essay on maples recalls the years of childhood, when whirly-gigs (maple seeds) rained down from the trees in Maloof's yard. Unexpected details grace the book. The sweet-gum tree, for instance, which doesn't flower until it is 20 years old, produces two types of flowers that bloom simultaneously, and its aromatic sap, prized by the Aztecs, was used as medicine as well as incense. A biologist by training, the author makes good use of poetry and history to demonstrate the connections between the trees and the rest of the planet's inhabitants. A gem. Rebecca Maksel

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Maloof's honest words and passion for trees strike a chord. Both poetic and incredibly informative, her effortless ability to combine story-telling with science alongside gorgeous illustrations make this book a joy to read.

I'm a tree lover, and I love to read and learn. This is an unusually good book blending narrative, experiences, and a love for the forest. I am hopeful other books will live up to how pleasurable and rewarding this was to read, but few do.

I loved this book which is so simple and sweet and with a powerful message. How sad that these beautiful, ancient forests are being cut down so that pine forests which are fast growing can be planted in their wake. Tragic! I loved the way Joan Maloof shared her experience of the trees she loves so much. She also showed the interconnectedness of all the plant and animal species and how dependent they are on the trees. The trees need them too.

I bought this book for my husband as a gift. He is really into nature and planting trees for the benefits they offer. He said he really liked this book and keeps it by his nightstand for reference.

I liked Ms. Maloof's steady, lighthearted pace in combination with her informative style. I would

recommend this book to anyone who enjoys time in the woods and the feel of the forest. I chose this rating because every time I stopped reading I could hardly wait to begin again.

for everyone wanting to know about the trees and forests of the eastern US. More than just information, Maloof's perspective, her way of knowing, shines through and serves as a gentle, thoughtful wake up call for us to realize how amazingly complex are the woods we may walk through or drive by -- or watch be destroyed -- everyday.

Got this book for my girlfriend. She is studying Environmental Science, as she found the book very interesting. She loved the book.

Maloof does a terrific job of weaving together a magical world of trees, ecology, the wonders of nature and its intricate ways with her style of writing and the depth of her knowledge. It makes me wish that I were on one of her field trips taking in all that I see and hear.

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