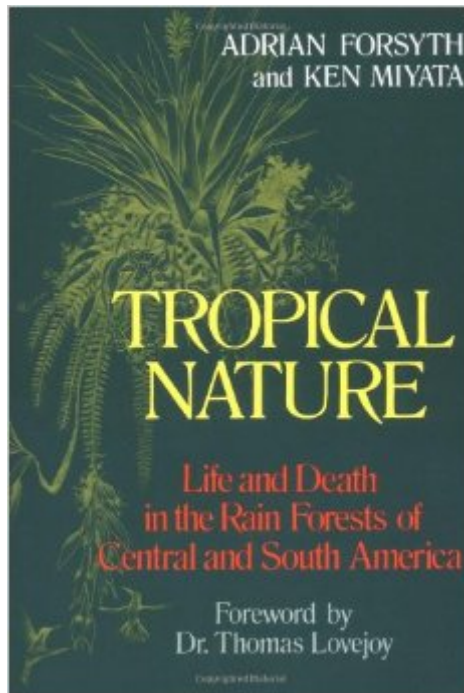


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Tropical Nature: Life And Death In The Rain Forests Of Central And South America



Synopsis

A Simon & Schuster eBook

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Customer Reviews

Among books that aim to express to readers the wonders of the rain forest, this one stands out. In 17 chapters that touch upon different aspects of the rain forest, the authors transmit their own passion for the rain forest and the unique intricacies that make rain forests some of the most precious places on earth. The book is not written as one coherent whole, but rather as 17 individual chapters or essays. Below is a brief sample of topics:- the strategy of dung scarabs to capture important proteins- the symbiotic relationship of sloths with the trees they prefer- the mimicry some insects have developed to elude their main predators, birds- the reason why some birds have developed migratory patterns to temperate climates- the reason why some frogs developed a parental care strategy and even marsupial pouches- the reason why some trees are hollow- how parasited species can benefit even in the most unlikely scenarios- why some plants developed hallucinogenic substances These are just a few of the topics covered in the book. It is written in a pop science format, so that an interested reader will easily understand and appreciate these and many more concepts. The authors carefully explain the relationships, often comparing the rain forest experience with those of temperate forests. The authors also focus on the possible evolutionary principles involved in adaptations presented. This is the very best introductory book on the subject. It is designed to excite the reader into learning more and even visiting the rain forest. In the mold of Stephen Jay Gould and Richard Dawkins, Miyata and Forsyth write a masterpiece that will make the

reader feel smarter after reading it.

A well written, easily readable biological treatise about basic American Tropical ecology. Initial chapter on the climate that dictates all else in the tropics is particularly interesting. The remainder of the book is divided into various chapters dealing with various plant and animal idiosyncracies. Numerous fascinating facts, anectodes spice up what can potentially be a pretty dry, high-school biology textbook subject matter. The section on the importance of excrements to the rainforest and two chapters on tropical ants and their social lives fascinating. Good reading for anyone interested in basic tropical ecology.

This book took me awhile to read because on almost every page I stopped and thought, "That's amazing" or said to my husband "Listen to this.". The illustrations are beautiful, the writing is clear with careful explanatons of complicated inter-relationships of plants, people, birds, and insects of the tropics.If you want to be amazed, read this book."In many parts of tropical America, Indians have found a remarkable use for these soldier ants as practical first aid. The ants are picked up by the body and the jaws are placed over an open cut. The soldier will clamp her mandibles shut, and the Indian promptly twists her head from her body, making an efficient and readily available emergency suture."" I was once in a rubber plantation in the lowlands of western Ecuador on a rare day when the sun made regular excursions out from behind the clouds. Every time the sun appeared, I heard what sounded like shots ringing out from the trees overhead. The sun was warming up the seed pods, which explosively propelled the walnut-sized seeds as far as thirty feet off. ""Francis Putz, a botanist who has studied lianas in Panama, has suggested that it may be advantageous for trees to sway out of phase from their neighbors because this would tend to snap vine connections. Swaying out of phase is best accomplished by evolving different architectures, which in turn result in different flexibilities. The need for out-of-phase swaying might thus promote an increase in diversity of rain forest trees.....There is an alternative to swaying. If swaying fails to shed hangers-on, a tree can prune itself, sending a liana tumbling down into obscurity at little cost to itself by dropping branches and entangled leaves, particularly if these branches and leaves are shaded."

I read Tropical Nature in preparation for a trip to Costa Rica. First, this is not a textbook or a feild guide. Rather, it is a collection of chapters so richly and interestingly written that I demanded my travel partner read it so that we could discuss its content on our trip. He loved it as well, and we continually reffered to it as our experience of tropical nature itself unfolded. He's thinking of

assigning it to high school students. If you need something to get you 'hooked' on the wonders of neotropical ecosystems, this book will easily instill a desire to visit and learn more. If you have been to the tropics or study them and haven't read this book, I still recommend it highly.

This book is so "scientifically correct" that it was used in my ecology of the tropical rainforest class that went down to do research in Costa Rica. It was so enjoyable though that I've read it through 3 times since my completion of the class. This book brings the best of the tropics to you.

This was a great book. You can see the authors' passion for rain forests while you read it. The chapters are short and insightful. They don't cover any subject with a great amount of detail but if they did the book would be 2000 pages long. You don't need to be a specialist to appreciate this book. The concepts that are presented are explained by using stories from the authors' experiences in the rain forests. It is a super introduction, if you're planning a trip to Costa Rica, Belize or any other tropical country to see rain forests, you would really enjoy your experience more after reading this book. Like the authors say, rain forests can seem a little dull because all you see is a tangle of green under a dark canopy. After reading this book you'll begin to see things that you normally would look for.

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