



Outdoor News Bulletin

Review: “The Forest That Fire Made” — A Majestic Ode to Nature’s Resilience

By Leo Miranda-Castro | October 2023 | Volume 77, Issue 10

In “The Forest That Fire Made,” authors John McGuire, Carol Denhof, and Byron Levan have brilliantly encapsulated the wonder and allure of the longleaf pine forest ecosystem—a significant yet often overlooked jewel of the southeastern United States. While early colonists might have dismissed these forests as “pine barrens,” this work stands as a testament to the robust life, diverse ecology, and undeniable beauty these woodlands harbor.

The book’s central narrative revolves around the importance of the regular low-intensity surface fires that, paradoxically, give life to this ecosystem. It’s a fascinating exploration of how nature sometimes uses what humans would see as “destruction” as a tool for creation, sustainability, and resiliency. Through this lens, readers gain insight into the delicate balance of the environment and our critical role in its conservation.

“The Forest That Fire Made” is not just an informative guide but also a visual treat. With 300 beautiful color photographs capturing the enchanting flora and fauna, paired with detailed illustrations, readers are offered a comprehensive look into this unique Southern ecosystem. The vivid imagery serves as an invitation, drawing the reader into a world where the whispers of the past blend seamlessly with the present.

A particularly commendable feature is the list of over 40 longleaf pine forests available for visitation across nine southern states. This provides both novice and seasoned outdoor enthusiasts with a roadmap to embark on their own adventures, rediscovering the natural wonders that might have marveled our ancestors.

The authors’ passion for the subject is palpable on every page, transforming what could have been a mere scientific account into a lyrical narrative, celebrating the majesty of



nature. This book is a timely reminder of the wonders that exist on our doorstep and the responsibility we bear to protect and cherish them.

As a landowner, life-long conservationist, and outdoorsman, I would say that “The Forest That Fire Made” is a love letter to the longleaf pine forests—a must-read for anyone who seeks to understand and appreciate the intricate tapestry of nature.

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