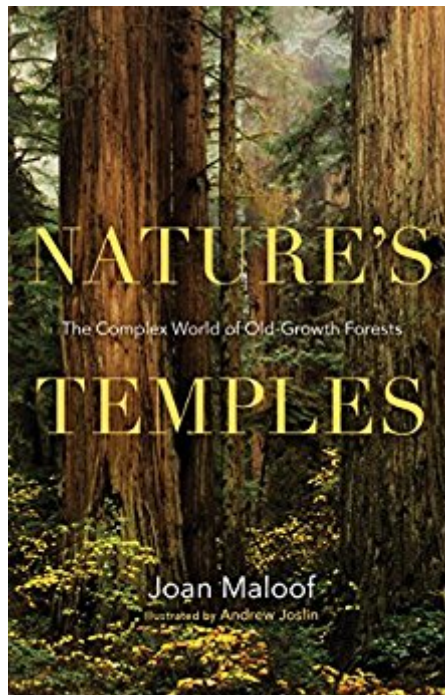




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Nature's Temples: The Complex World Of Old-Growth Forests



Synopsis

Joan Maloof eloquently urges us to cherish the wildness of what little old-growth woodlands we have left. . . . Not only are they home to the richest diversity of creatures, but they work hard for humans too. • "New York Times Book Review" An old-growth forest is one that has formed naturally over a long period of time with little or no disturbance from humankind. They are increasingly rare and largely misunderstood. In *Nature's Temples*, Joan Maloof, the director of the Old-Growth Forest Network, makes a heartfelt and passionate case for their importance. This evocative and accessible narrative defines old-growth and provides a brief history of forests. It offers a rare view into how the life-forms in an ancient, undisturbed forest—including not only its majestic trees but also its insects, plant life, fungi, and mammals—differ from the life-forms in a forest manipulated by humans. What emerges is a portrait of a beautiful, intricate, and fragile ecosystem that now exists only in scattered fragments. Black-and-white illustrations by Andrew Joslin help clarify scientific concepts and capture the beauty of ancient trees. •

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Customer Reviews

After reading Joan Maloof's second book, "Among the Ancients", I eagerly set out to visit some of the old growth forests that she described. As I walked among the giant trees, I realized that although I was experiencing something profound, I didn't fully comprehend what I was seeing and feeling. Joan's third and most recent book "Nature's Temples" became required reading. This is an eloquent and meticulously researched history of the forces that have shaped old growth forests, but it is also a testament to the urgency of developing a strategy for protecting them. In a writing style that is both accessible and exciting, Joan takes the reader into a rare and fascinating ecosystem that cannot be replicated by human management. Beginning with a description of the characteristics of old growth forests, she continues with chapters on the birds, fungi, insect, plants and many other inter-connected lifeforms that inhabit these sacred places. But this book goes beyond the scientific. It embraces the necessity for humans to allow the ancient trees to teach us what a forest should look like and why the experience of this kind of beauty is essential for us all. By the time I reached the last chapter entitled "Do Humans Need the Forest?", my answer was a resounding "Yes!" And I have now begun to understand what it is that surrounds me as I walk through Nature's Temples. Julie McCall

How astonishing that when I visit an old-growth redwood forest in California, I am visiting a place that may have been forested continually for fifty million years! - Joan Maloof

I came across Maloof's Nature's Temples: The Complex World of Old-Growth Forests quite by chance while I was browsing the Kindle Store. The title sounded intriguing, especially after reading *The Secret Life of Trees: How They live and Why They Matter* (by Colin Tudge), so I could not resist reading it. Joan Maloof doesn't disappoint and her book is packed with information (like the fact that the tallest tree in the world is some 380 feet tall!) while remaining accessible to the lay reader. These are just some of the diverse chapters contained in the book:

- What is an old-growth forest?
- History of the forest
- Forests and carbon
- Birds and their habitat preferences
- The role of insects in the forest
- Fungi in the ecosystem
- What lichens tell us about forests
- Do humans need the forest?

Maloof looks at and explains the extremely intricate and intricately balanced life of the old-growth forests and rightly bewails their loss to logging, deforestation, and other means of human interference. The harm of our interference is, after all, becoming more and more apparent and there is also now studies to show that, even if forests are replanted, the same abundance of flora and fauna will not be present again - even after many decades.

We know we need clean air and clean water, but do humans need beauty? - Joan Maloof

Maloof also notes in

Nature's Temples that researchers from Japan and elsewhere have shown that a walk in the forest can improve one's mood, reduce stress hormones, strengthen the immune system, lower blood pressure, and reduce blood sugar levels. This kind of walk in the woods even have a name in Japanese - shirin-yoku; "cedar-air bathing". We should always allow and encourage the left-alone woods, for it is there that our true riches reside. Today, and in the future, these are the places of refuge - for both the species we share the planet with and for our human spirit. Joan Maloof can highly recommend this book to those who love nature, woods, and trees or even just those who wish that there really are shepherds of the forests residing deep in the forests. After reading this book you will want to go and walk in a forest and - yes - even hug some trees.

I love to read about how forests grow and what we can do to preserve them. This is a good book among many that are out there.

This is a beautiful book that combines solid biology with the author's clear love for the aesthetics of an untouched natural world. We must deal with loss of habitats of all sorts. Old growth forests are arguably the most important for the health of our planet. I have long shared the author's concern for the preservation of ecosystems. It seems unfashionable in today's political climate. Maybe this gentle book will awaken some people to some treasures we too often take for granted.

Joan's writing puts into place scientific research, and translates it well for a non-scientist to comprehend. An excellent book for anyone engaged in debate over the need to "manage" all of our publicly-owned state forests in Indiana on 20-40year cutting cycles vs. setting aside at least a portion of them to recover, on their own into older and hopefully Old Growth forests.

Not normally something I'd read, but I found it very interesting.

EXCELLENT!!

Marvelous and inspiring. Just what I needed to remind me why I work in conservation. Rutgers AG'59

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