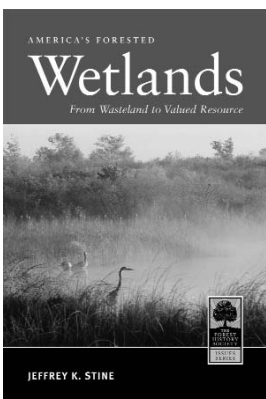


BOOKS OF INTEREST

By Eben Lehman

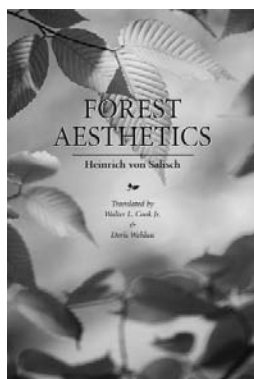


The Forest History Society's Issues Series consist of books that bring historical context to current issues of forestry and natural resources management. One of the latest books in the series, Jeffrey K. Stine's *America's Forested Wetlands: From Wasteland to Valued Resource* (Durham: Forest History Society, 2008), explores the evolution of American attitudes and actions toward the nation's wetlands. Stine begins with a look at the destruction of wetland areas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through draining for agricultural use and the logging of bottomland hardwood forests. The shifting approaches towards wetlands through the twentieth century are examined in detail through topics such as wildlife protection efforts, government regulation, and private land management. Photographs and other visual aids provide an excellent overview of the importance of wetlands as a natural resource. The historic mistakes in approach to these areas and the subsequent responses of American society are explored in order to draw conclusions about the future of wetland management and protection. The other new book in the series is *Genetically Modified Forests: From Stone Age to Modern Biotechnology* (Durham: Forest History Society, 2006) by Rowland D. Burdon and William J. Libby. Biotechnology has become more controversial over the last few decades as the level of technology has increased, making an objective look at the topic vital to fostering a continuing



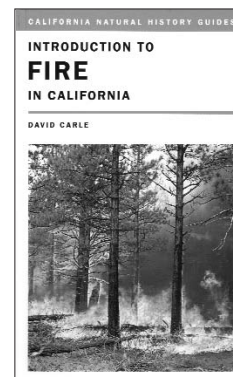
dialogue. This Issues Series book offers a brief overview of forest tree improvement—from its beginnings more than 5,000 years ago to today—in an accessible way that engages science teachers, students, state and federal policy makers, forestland managers and owners, and environmental advocates. It enables all to gain familiarity with the often-contentious subject of biotechnology.

Foresters will wonder at the similarities of problems and situations between Central European forestry of the late nineteenth century and late twentieth-century American forestry while reading *Forest Aesthetics*, a textbook written in 1902 by Heinrich von Salisch and translated by Walter L. Cook Jr. and Doris Wehlau (Durham: Forest History Society, 2008). Von Salisch, a forester and forest landowner in then-German Silesia who rebelled against his profession's addiction



to economic forestry and its attendant clearcutting, argued that there was a middle ground—that through simple compromises land managers could enhance the beauty of the forest without forgoing income. With its publication, von Salisch became the central promoter of aesthetics, trail maintenance, and forest health. Landscape management and design students and professionals will gain insight into the origins of forestry and landscape design, while others will find jewels of forest history in the author's philosophy and practical applications.

Fires are a natural and necessary part of the forest ecosystem, yet they remain a hot-button issue with the general public. The issue was again brought to a head during this past summer with the outbreak of



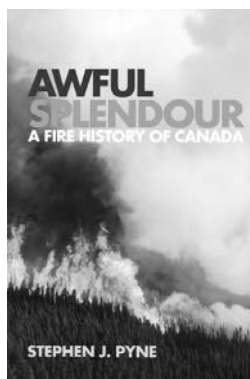
thousands of wildfires in the western United States. California alone saw almost 2,000 wildfires ignited over a two-week period in June. The many ecological and policy issues connected with fire are examined in three new books. Issues within the state of California are presented in a condensed fashion for a general audience in David Carle's *Introduction to Fire in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). This work, part of the "California Natural History Guides" series, gives a clear and concise overview of fire ecology and management in the state. The book begins with the question, "What is fire?" which is answered by delv-

ing into the chemical foundations, sources, and behavior of fires. Also examined are California's unique vegetation types and how each reacts to fire, as well as tactics for fighting and preventing large wildfires. One chapter of note looks into the history of wildfire events and fire management issues in California, revealing their importance in shaping national fire policy and American public attitudes towards wildfires. Along with numerous full-color photos, illustrations, and maps, this pocket-sized guide includes a listing of online fire resources and information on



fire-safe planning for your home. For a broader view of wildfire issues looking beyond California, but one also written in concise and accessible language, there is *Living with Fire: Fire Ecology and Policy for the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008) by Sara E. Jensen and Guy R. McPherson. The authors of this work lament that when it comes to knowledge about fire, “very little meaningful information ever filters beyond the realm of wildfire experts to the general public.” The authors seek to rectify this by writing for non-experts. This volume covers important topics such as the role of fire in the ecosystems of the western U.S., misguided attempts to solve the wildfire problem, and fire management policies that meet both economic and ecological needs. Written in clear language, this work includes historical looks at unsuccessful fire policies that help to shed light on current issues as well as to form sound strategies and new solutions for living with wildland fires. Together, both books provide general audiences with clear discussions of fire’s place in western ecosystems, and point to new information on protecting human lives and property while using fire to maintain biodiversity and sustainably manage landscapes.

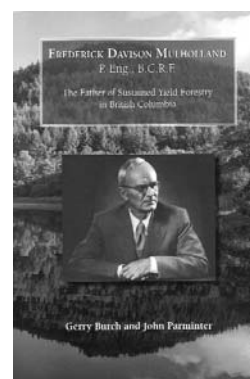
A more thorough and detailed examination of fire history can be found in the new work by Stephen J. Pyne, one of the world’s leading historians of wildfire, who brings his focus to Canada with *Awful Splendour: A Fire History of Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007). Pyne provides a comprehensive study of Canadian fire history from prehistoric times through the twenty-first century, revealing the connections between fire and the nation’s greater ecological and cultural history. This large volume is broken up into three sections. “Torch” begins with the ice of the



last continental glacier and looks at fire in indigenous Canada, a period where human control was limited to ignition. “Axe” examines the period of European settlement over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, looking at the impacts of forest clearing. “Engine” follows the growth of industrialization, also focusing on the formation and evolution of fire management and government protection policies. An epilogue brings the narrative into the twenty-first century, examining issues such as the impact of global warming on Canadian wildfires. The breadth and scope of this work as a whole will position it as the definitive volume on the subject of fire in Canada. The historical connections made within the volume should also serve to make it an important resource for general historians, geographers, anthropologists, and ecologists alike.

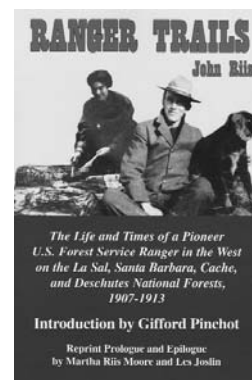
Continuing with the focus on the forests of Canada, Gerry Burch and John Parminter’s *Frederick Davison Mulholland: The Father of Sustained Yield Forestry in British Columbia* (Victoria: Forest History Association of B.C.), presents a biography of Mulholland (1888–1957), who served as Chief of the Forest Surveys Division of the British Columbia Forest Service, Chief

Forester for the Canadian Western Lumber Company, and advisor to the second Royal Commission on Forestry. Utilizing Mulholland’s reports, published articles, and speeches, this work provides insights into his life and work, especially his efforts towards implementing sustained yield forest management policies in Canada. Mulholland’s forestry work in both the government and business sectors led him to ultimately advocate for a mixed approach of public and private ownership and management of Canada’s forests, in order to best facilitate sustained yield prac-



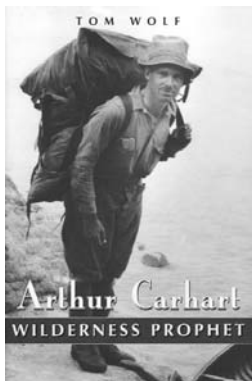
tices. A half-century after his death, Mulholland is still greatly influencing forest management practices in British Columbia.

The work of early U.S. Forest Service rangers is well documented in the reissue of a memoir by John Riis, *Ranger Trails: The Life and Times of a Pioneer U.S. Forest Service Ranger in the West on the La Sal, Santa Barbara, Cache, and Deschutes National Forests, 1907–1913* (Bend Oregon: Wilderness Associates, 2008). Originally published in 1937, Riis provides revealing insights into the work done by forest rangers in the western United States one hundred years ago. Riis joined the Forest Service in 1907, the year that the forest



reserves patrolled by the rangers were renamed national forests. He worked as a ranger on national forests in Utah, California, and Oregon over the next seven years before following in his famous father's footsteps and becoming a full-time reporter and journalist. The memoir features accounts of fighting forest fires, dealing with the harsh frontier, and his interactions with pioneers, Native Americans, Mormon settlers, and others. This reprint edition includes the original introduction by Gifford Pinchot, as well as a new prologue and epilogue, along with historic photos and a list of the descendants of John Riis.

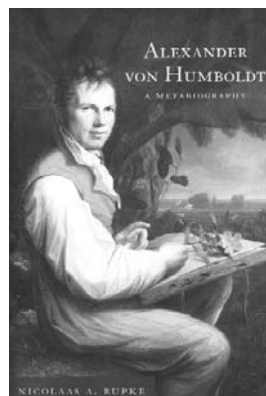
Another biographical work with U.S. Forest Service connections is Tom Wolf's *Arthur Carhart: Wilderness Prophet* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2008). Carhart, a U.S. Forest Service landscape architect and author, was an early champion of wilderness protection in the United States, advocating for the creation of the first federally-protected wilderness preserve at Trapper Lake, Colorado, in 1919. This first major biographical study of Carhart, though, reveals a more complex subject. Carhart, a lifelong moderate Republican, championed wilderness protection efforts yet opposed the Wilderness Act of 1964. He viewed the act as favoring special interest groups operating on a national level at the expense of local public interests. Carhart held a lifelong disdain for lobbyists and federal government bureaucracies, instead championing decisionmaking on the local



level. These feelings would ultimately cause Carhart to leave the U.S. Forest Service in 1922, as he believed the federal agency was not meeting the public good because of its failure to support Carhart's plans for adequate recreational facilities.

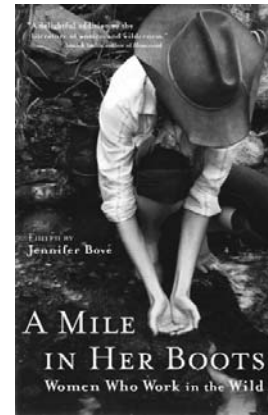
Taken as a whole, this comprehensive view of Carhart's life and work reveals a complex and sometimes contradictory individual who stands as one of the most significant, yet oftentimes overlooked, figures of the twentieth-century American conservation movement.

A crucial figure of nineteenth-century science and botanical geography is the subject of Nicolaas A. Rupke's *Alexander von Humboldt: A Metabiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). Humboldt (1769–1859), a celebrated German scientist, naturalist, and explorer, is presented in this work through his portrayals in the biographical literature by



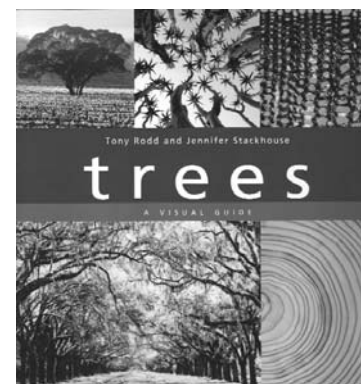
German authors written between the mid-1800s and the end of the twentieth century. The metabiographical approach looks at the imagery of Humboldt in the existing body of historic literature, which stands at over five thousand biographical accounts, from which the author draws different historical portrayals of his subject. These varying portrayals showcase the shifting attitudes of German self-identity over this time period, as Humboldt is presented through different and evolving political and cultural frameworks. While a more traditional biographical account would be more useful for those looking for an overview of Humboldt's life and work, the information and detailed analysis presented here shows the many complexities in dealing with portraits and accounts of important historical figures.

Those interested in biographical accounts may also enjoy *A Mile in Her Boots: Women Who Work in the Wild* (Palo Alto: Solas House, 2006), an anthology collection by women who make their living in wilderness work and various outdoor professions edited by Jennifer Bové. Occupations



include forest ranger, outdoor guide, scientist, smokejumper, and fire lookout. Each story is a personal account of meeting the many challenges and demands of working in the outdoor environment. Tales include a winter wilderness rescue, an Alaska salmon fishing season, researching whales in the Pacific Ocean, smoke-jumping soon after childbirth, tracking armed and dangerous fugitives through mountain terrain, and many others. The very personal narratives are filled with excitement, humor, insightfulness, and tragedy, with each clearly demonstrating the author's love for the outdoors. The short-story style maintained by each author makes this an easy volume to pick up and start reading at any point in the book.

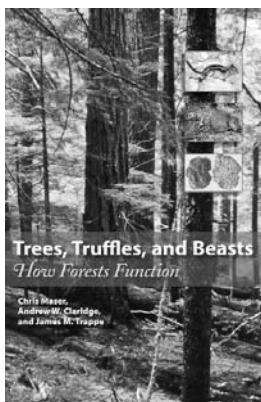
The beauty of the natural world can be clearly seen in a new stunningly visual as well as surprisingly comprehensive look at trees throughout the world, *Trees: A Visual Guide* (Berkeley: University of



California Press, 2008), by Tony Rodd and Jennifer Stackhouse. This book, featuring large full-color photographs and illustrations on every page, covers such topics as the architecture of trees, the many different types of trees, the importance of trees

to the earth's ecosystems, their ornamental and symbolic value, and the many ways in which humans utilize trees in daily life, from building materials to paper, food, pharmaceuticals, transportation, and energy. A large section of the book profiles 99 individual species of notable trees from around the world. With diagrams, illustrations, and amazing photographs accompanying every topic, this work is uniquely effective in delivering a large amount of valuable information in an easily accessible format. Either as a heavily-used resource or as a coffee table display, this book provides the reader with crucial knowledge on the world's trees and forests in a beautiful and absorbing format.

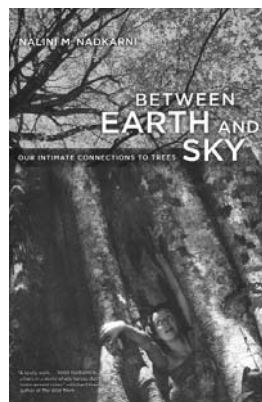
The interdependency of species within forest ecosystems of the world is the focus of *Trees, Truffles, and Beasts: How Forests Function* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008), by Chris Maser, Andrew W. Claridge, and James M. Trappe. The authors use two very different geographical areas as case stud-



ies—the forests of the Pacific Northwest United States and Southeastern Australia—in order to demonstrate how the forest ecosystems of disparate areas still function in similar ways. The focus of this work is on the interactions between the living parts of these forest ecosystems. The interconnections between all parts of the forest, large and small, are revealed by looking in detail at subjects from microscopic organisms in the soil, to fungi, and larger animal and tree species. Also examined are the effects of natural disturbances, such as

fire, on the forest ecosystem as a whole. Of interest to both forest professionals as well as the general public, this work demonstrates the complex system of constantly evolving interactions that make up forest environments throughout the world.

Connections are again the focus in Nalini M. Nadkarni's *Between Earth and Sky: Our Intimate Connections to Trees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), which focuses on the relationships between humans and trees throughout the world. Nadkarni, an experienced canopy biologist and tropical forest ecologist, shifts away from her usual scientific writing and uses a personal approach to examine humankind's affinity for forests and trees. The author seeks to reveal people's perceptions of trees in different areas of the world, as well as showcase the importance of trees in society and commerce, and also their role in culture and spiritual life. Nadkarni's engaging narrative effectively covers a



wide range of subjects, including unique topics of interest such as the history of wood products in sports, briefly looking at the history and production of baseball bats, tennis racquets, golf clubs, skis, gym flooring, and similar items from the world of sports. Other topics include the appearance of trees in religious texts, the use of trees as national symbols, medicinal trees in tropical forests, and much more. This wide variety of topics would produce a disjointed text in the hands of a less effective author. Nadkarni, though, produces a compelling and accessible

narrative which demonstrates the enduring links between humans and the natural world, as well as the surprisingly diverse aspects of our lives affected by trees.

The birth of the modern environmental movement is often attributed to the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962. A new volume puts Carson's work in its complete historical context by examining the use of DDT prior to 1962, as well as looking at reactions to Carson's work in the aftermath of its publication. *DDT, Silent Spring, and the Rise of Environmentalism: Classic Texts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), edited by Thomas R. Dunlap and with a foreword by William Cronon, presents a collection of primary sources documenting the evolving attitudes towards DDT and toxic insecticides in the United States from the beginning of the twentieth century. The book offers a chronological presentation of the included writings, following the early use of pesticides, the



importance of DDT in World War II, DDT as a miracle chemical, rising concerns over its effects on fish and wildlife, and the public alarm produced by *Silent Spring*. More recent sources look at the legacy of *Silent Spring*, as well as current debates over the use of DDT to combat malaria in Africa. Collectively, these readings provide new perspectives on the history of this environmental controversy, as well as unique insights into the development of the modern American environmental movement. □