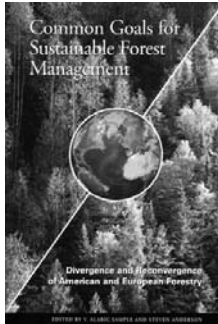


BOOKS OF INTEREST

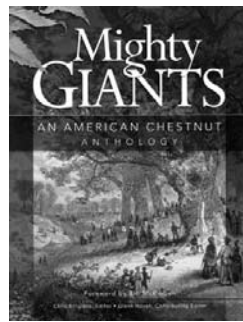
By Eben Lehman



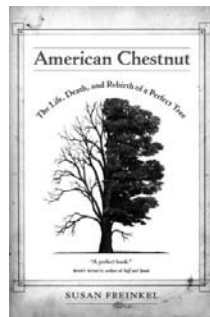
In 2005, two colloquia were convened in commemoration of the centennial of the United States Forest Service that brought together European and American forest managers, researchers, and policymakers. They gathered to explore the common roots the two continents share in forest management and in the institutional, legal, and policy frameworks that form the basis for sustainable forest management. After spending much of the twentieth century developing policy frameworks and social conditions for forestry along distinctly different lines, European and American institutions are focusing on many of the same concerns, such as sustainable wood production, biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and sustainable economic development in rural communities. This reconvergence is resulting in new strategic alliances among forestry institutions on both continents and beyond. Twenty of the presentations presented at the colloquia, which examined the roots, divergence, and reconvergence of European and American forestry, have been edited by Steven Anderson and V. Alaric Sample in *Common Goals of Sustainable Forest Management: Divergence and Reconvergence of American and European Forestry* (Durham, NC: Forest History Society, and Washington, DC: Pinchot Institute for Conservation, 2008). This collection will be of interest to forest practitioners and students alike.

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed the gradual yet thorough destruction of an iconic American sym-

bol. The American chestnut tree was the dominant tree in eastern U.S. forests as well as an essential component of American commerce and life prior to its decline from chestnut blight. Two new books look at the American chestnut, examining the long history of the tree, its symbolic importance, and the current efforts to bring the species back from the brink of extinction. *Mighty Giants: An*

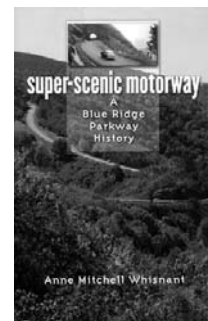


American Chestnut Anthology (Bennington, VT: Images from the Past and The American Chestnut Foundation, 2007), edited by Chris Bolgiano, collects historical and scientific essays, newspaper articles, personal narratives, historic photos, art, and poetry that explores the historical, cultural, and symbolic importance of the chestnut in American life, and the crucial work done by those fighting to restore the species. In *American Chestnut: The Life, Death, and Rebirth of a Perfect Tree* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), Susan Freinkel traces the history of the blight from its first appearances in America through its quick spread and catastrophic results. It is, though, far from an ecological eulogy. The author exam-



ines the individuals battling to save chestnuts from extinction, their breeding methods for traditional plant breeding to cutting-edge biotechnology and genetic engineering, and their passion for fighting against a disease that killed four billion trees in less than forty years. Together, both books preserve the historical legacy of this great tree, and offer hope for the future recovery of this once dominant American tree.

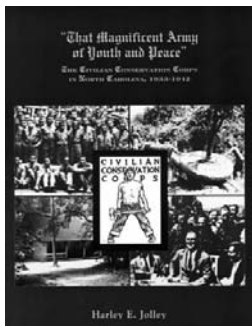
A manmade portion of the American landscape is the subject of Anne Mitchell Whisnant's *Super-Scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Whisnant's history of the creation and development of the Blue Ridge Parkway, a scenic highway along the ridges of the Appalachian Mountains connecting the Great Smoky Mountains and Shenandoah National Parks, departs from romantic views of the parkway as a popular



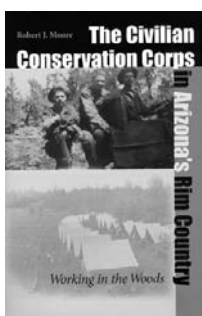
Depression-era project built with a uniform vision through natural landscapes, and instead explores political disputes surrounding the project, conflicts among local landowners, effects on business interests, and the highway's environmental impact. This new perspective includes looking at the individuals and businesses affected by government land acquisition, documenting the conflict between North Carolina and Tennessee over route selection, as well as many other little-known components of the parkway's development. Whisnant's thoroughly researched and detailed historical analysis offers provocative insight

into the conflicts and controversies that created this lasting popular American treasure.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is just one of many work projects built by the Civilian Conservation Corps featured in Harley E. Jolley's "*That Magnificent Army of Youth and Peace*": *The Civilian Conservation Corps in North Carolina, 1933–1942* (Raleigh: North Carolina Office of Archives

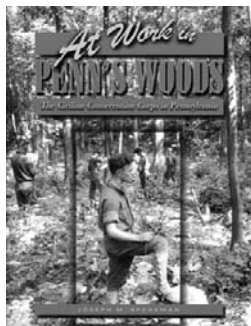


and History, 2007). The author looks at the corps' role in establishing and improving many enduring North Carolina recreational resources, which also include the Great Smokey Mountains National Park, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, and various national forests and state parks. The book offers detailed accounts of CCC camp life, and brings to light the involvement of African Americans and Cherokee Indians in the CCC. Two other works look at the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in other regions of the country. *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona's Rim Country: Working in the Woods* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006) examines the CCC's work along Arizona's



Mogollon Rim, a rugged escarpment that forms the southern limit of the Colorado Plateau and stretches across two-thirds of the state. Robert J. Moore uses interviews and photographs from workers' personal collections and provides accounts of the work done building roads, public campsites, hiking trails, fire lookout towers, and

administration buildings, in addition to fighting fires, eliminating vermin, erosion control, and soil restoration projects. A comprehensive history of Pennsylvania's CCC program is offered by Joseph M. Speakman in *At Work in Penn's Woods: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Pennsylvania* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006). The Keystone State had the second-highest number of CCC workers and work camps in the nation.



This historic study looks at the administrative beginnings of the CCC in Pennsylvania, the experiences of the workers, and their numerous work projects. Of note is the CCC's involvement in forestry work due to the influence of the state's governor, Gifford Pinchot. The majority of CCC camps in the state were built in national and state forests, where the range of work included reforestation, seed harvesting, planting seedlings, eradicating tree diseases, and managing healthy growth in existing forest stands. Thoroughly researched and well written, Speakman provides an excellent account of the growth, life, and legacy of this CCC program. All three histories are richly illustrated with historic photos and each work effectively uses historic documents and engaging personal narratives to recreate life in the Civilian Conservation Corps. Although each book is regional in scope, they illuminate the lasting importance of CCC work projects to America's national forests, national and state parks, outdoor recreation areas, and historic sites.

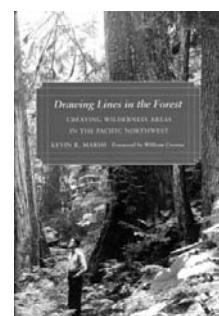
A new work of regional focus incorporating elements of ecology, history, and cultural identity is *Environment* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), edited by Martin V. Melosi. This work is Volume 8 of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, and features ninety-eight essays on various elements of the southern environment of the United

States. Included are both thematic overview entries on broad general topics, and specific topical entries on species, individuals, and places. The general thematic entry on forests provides a history of human impact on southern forests as well as evolving methods of forest management. Topical entries of interest include coverage of individual trees such as magnolia, live oak, cypress, and dogwood, as well as important regional plants such as



kudzu and Spanish moss. These entries combine ecological information together with historical background and the subject's lasting cultural importance. This volume effectively showcases the significance of various components of the southern environment in shaping the greater culture and character of the American South.

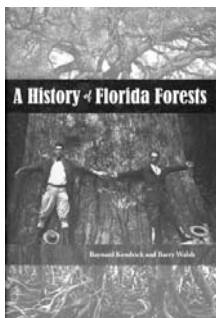
Also featuring a regional focus is *Drawing Lines in the Forest: Creating Wilderness Areas in the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), by Kevin R. Marsh, which examines the issues surrounding the creation of federally protected wilderness areas in the Cascade Mountains region of Oregon and



Washington. Marsh looks at the history of the decision-making process behind the creation of the wilderness areas there, including Three Sisters, North Cascades, Mount Jefferson, and Alpine Lakes. Marsh argues that groups with competing and conflicting agendas such as the U.S. Forest Service, environmentalists, and the timber

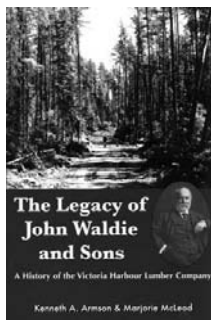
industry all desired fixed wilderness boundaries in order to eliminate uncertainty and permanently define where certain activities could take place on forestlands. This work's greater themes concerning public land management and conservation go beyond the Pacific Northwest region, and provide relevant information on the concepts of wilderness areas that prove applicable throughout the entire United States.

State-level forest history may be found in Baynard Kendrick and Barry Walsh's *A History of Florida Forests* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007). Part one of this volume, a previously unpublished



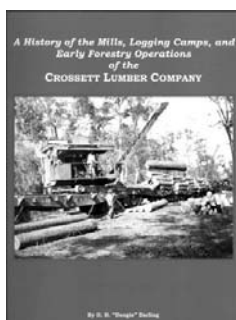
1967 manuscript by Kendrick, provides a comprehensive history of human-forest interactions in Florida from Spanish explorers of the sixteenth century through forestry practices of the middle of the twentieth century. Kendrick relies on first-person accounts to enhance the history, featuring personal narratives from such individuals as early settlers, African-American turpentine workers, modern lumber company employees, and U.S. Forest Service rangers. In the second part, Walsh documents Florida forestry and forest industry from the 1960s through 2007 and discusses environmental concerns and new government regulations pertaining to forests, as well as other topics such as modern forestry research, education, and issues surrounding private forestland owners.

Business histories can be found in three new publications documenting the corporate histories of lumber companies. *The Legacy of John Waldie and Sons: A History of the Victoria Harbour Lumber Company* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2007), by Kenneth A. Armson and Marjorie McLeod, looks at the life and family of Canadian businessman and politician John Waldie and the lumber company he founded in 1886. The Victoria Harbour

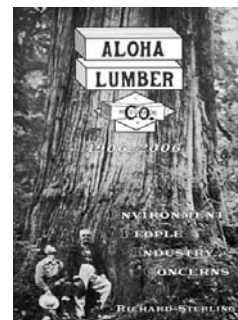


Lumber Company grew to become one of the largest lumber operators in Canada by the beginning of the twentieth century. In addition to following the growth of the company, this work provides an excellent background on Canadian timber production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Sources like account books, agents' ledgers, and property claims provide details such as the costs of forest land, types of trees harvested, and the volumes and sizes of logs obtained and sold. Along with illustrations and maps, appendices featuring complete versions of the primary data cited throughout the text are provided.

Author O. H. Darling's *A History of the Mills, Logging Camps, and Early Forestry Operations of the Crossett Lumber Company* (Sherwood, AR: ERIDU Press, 2006) provides a thorough history of a southern logging company. Darling traces the logging operations of the Crossett Company in Arkansas and Louisiana from 1899 through the 1940s, providing the reader with both a management perspective as well as a view of life in a logging crew. This work is further enhanced by

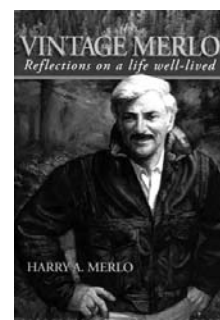


the inclusion of numerous historical maps and photographs. A similarly thorough examination of a Pacific northwest lumber company is found in *Aloha Lumber Co., 1906–2006: Environment, People, Industry, Concerns* (Olympia, WA: Aloha Lumber Corporation, 2007) by Richard Sterling. The first hundred years of the



Aloha Lumber Company of Grays Harbor County, Washington, is presented, along with a full environmental history of the region. Profiles of the company's founders, such as Wilfred Dole of the Dole Pineapple Company of Hawaii, are also included. Like the other two books of company history, the text is supplemented by historic photographs, maps, and other primary source materials. Overall, each of these books showcases the corporate impact on local history, and provides unique insight into the role played by industrial institutions in shaping local life, culture, and economics.

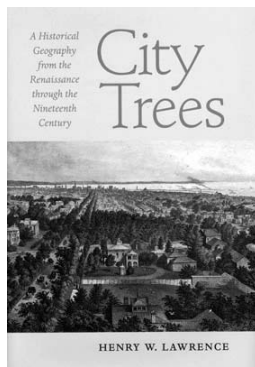
A personal perspective on the forest products industry can be found in Harry A. Merlo's new memoir, *Vintage Merlo: Reflections on a Life Well-Lived* (Portland, OR: Harry A. Merlo Foundation, 2008). This autobiography traces the life of Merlo from his humble beginnings as the child of immigrant parents growing up in poverty alongside the lumberyards of Stirling City, California, through his eventual rise to Chief Executive Officer of the Louisiana-Pacific Corporation. Merlo's story provides a revealing look into the



executive suite of a major American corporation, and includes new observations into crucial decisions that affected the entire forest products industry. Other stories from his corporate life such as involvement in the world of professional tennis, personal relationships with presidents and celebrities, and philanthropic outreach

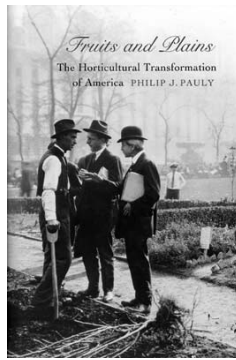
activities are also highlighted. Merlo goes well beyond simply recounting these events from his life, though, by also sharing with the reader his personal values and philosophies of leadership, connecting them all back to advice and lessons learned from his mother at a young age. Merlo's inspiring account of his own life offers an insider's look into the world of business, but more importantly pays tribute to the people and places that guided him along his Horatio Alger-esque journey.

Trees found in the urban environment are the focus of Henry W. Lawrence's *City Trees: A Historical Geography from the Renaissance through the Nineteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006). This work serves as a comprehensive guide to the history of trees in the urban landscapes of Europe and America, from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Lawrence examines the levels of decision-making behind the existence of trees within the city landscapes



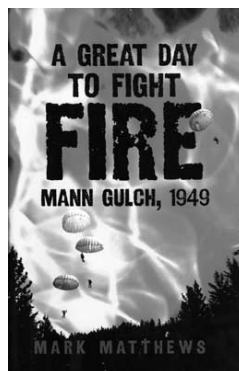
of Europe, and follows the spread of urban tree planting around the world through European colonization. One unique aspect of the author's analysis is the discussion of trees as symbols of social power and control, such as the historical placement of city trees in proximity to wealthy social classes. The book also looks at the ecological aspects of urban landscaping, with an examination of what tree species were easily adapted to the city environment. Lawrence's scholarly research is presented in an engaging format, bringing together for the reader important aspects of urban design, landscaping, cultural history, silviculture, and geography.

The influence of horticulture on the transformation of the American ecological landscape over the past 250 years is the subject of *Fruits and Plains: The*



Horticultural Transformation of America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), by Philip J. Pauly. Pauly explores how aspects of horticulture, such as foreign species introduction, grafting, cloning, hybridizing, and domestic distribution, from the eighteenth century to the present have impacted the American environment. A wide range of primary source materials are drawn upon to examine a variety of topics such as personal gardening, the Hessian fly, Florida's citrus industry, and the Concord grape. One chapter of note examines in detail the nineteenth-century tree planting initiatives throughout the grass prairies of the Midwest. Pauly argues that not only have these actions altered the natural environment, but they have also shaped the fundamental identity and experience of Americans through their ecological impact on the national population, geography, culture, and economy.

On August 5, 1949, near Helena, Montana, the sighting of a large wildfire set into motion a series of devastating and tragic events, the aftermath of which would affect fire policy and fire fighting for decades. In *A Great Day to Fight Fire: Mann Gulch, 1949* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), Mark Matthews revisits the Mann Gulch fire in his retelling of the catastrophic fire, which



burned for five days, destroyed almost 5,000 acres of land, and claimed the lives of thirteen of the sixteen firefighters trapped in the ravine. Matthews uses previously unavailable material, including testimony from the three survivors and interviews with friends, family members, and co-workers of the victims, to provide a moving account of the day's events from a first-hand perspective. The book also details the life of U.S. Forest Service smokejumpers during the postwar era, as well as documenting the changes made in safety equipment and professional training following the Mann Gulch events. He ends with a brief look at what happened to the survivors.

Don't let the title mislead you: *Good Birders Don't Wear White: 50 Tips from North America's Top Birders* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007) will be of interest to more than birders and birdwatchers. In these fifty original essays, the biggest names in birding dispense advice



to birders of every level, on topics ranging from feeding birds and cleaning binoculars to pishing and pelagic birding. Whether satirizing bird snobs or relating the traditions and taboos of the birding culture, each essay is equal parts helpful information for birders and entertainment for all. The book will fit nicely in a backpack for a birding excursion and will help pass the time while waiting for the Mangrove Cuckoo to appear—if it ever does, as one author experienced. The essays are nicely complemented with artwork by Robert Braunfield, whose black-and-white line drawings add the right amount of whimsy to this light-hearted approach to a serious passion. A portion of the proceeds of the book will be donated to the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, whose mission is to promote the teaching and study of nature. □