



Forest Primeval: The Natural History of an Ancient Forest

Chris Maser

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In this classic work of ecology, Chris Maser traces the growth of an ancient forest in Oregon's Cascade Mountains from its fiery birth in the year 987 to the present. A unique biography of an ecosystem, Forest Primeval portrays a diverse fabric of plants, animals, and microorganisms working in unison. Maser offers precise yet evocative accounts of the lives and events within the burgeoning forest: the habits of deer mice who help reseed the burned earth, the seemingly accidental but vitally necessary symbiotic associations between fungus and tree root tips that stimulate growth, the constant predation among wildlife. He reveals how over the course of a millennium, microbes and fungi change a forest just as surely as a raging fire, only inconspicuously and more slowly. As the life cycles of the forest progress, Maser's minute scientific observations unfold against the backdrop of history, a chronology of human struggle and suffering that is paralleled in the life of . . . a single 1000-year-old Douglas fir. In taking this millennial view, Maser shows how the forest represents our spiritual and historical roots as human beings. Arguing that our survival is as intertwined with the forests as are the myriad interlocking life cycles that created them, Maser makes a plea for the immediate global implementation of restoration forestry.

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