



A Sand County Almanac: With Other Essays on Conservation from Round River

By Aldo Leopold

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"There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot. These essays are the delights and dilemmas of one who cannot."--Aldo Leopold. 2 cassettes.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Published in 1949, shortly after the author's death, *A Sand County Almanac* is a classic of nature writing, widely cited as one of the most influential nature books ever published. Writing from the vantage of his summer shack along the banks of the Wisconsin River, Leopold mixes essay, polemic, and memoir in his book's pages. In one famous episode, he writes of killing a female wolf early in his career as a forest ranger, coming upon his victim just as she was dying, "in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes.... I was young then, and full of trigger-itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view." Leopold's road-to-Damascus change of view would find its fruit some years later in his so-called land ethic, in which he held that nothing that disturbs the balance of nature is right. Much of *Almanac* elaborates on this basic premise, as well as on Leopold's view that it is something of a human duty to preserve as much wild land as possible, as a kind of bank for the biological future of all species.

Beautifully written, quiet, and elegant, Leopold's book deserves continued study and discussion today. --

Gregory McNamee

From Publishers Weekly

These original essays on the natural environment by renowned conservationist Leopold (1887-1948) were first published posthumously in 1949. In this edition, more than 80 lush photographs shot by nature photographer Sewell on Leopold's former Wisconsin farm accompany the text. Following the seasons, Leopold, whose seminal work in the U.S. Forest Service and in books and magazines helped shape the conservation movement in this country, shared his perceptive and carefully observed portraits of nature month by month. In April, he watched the "sky dance" of the woodcock, who flew upward in a series of spirals. As he hunted partridges in October, his way was lit by "red lanterns," the blackberry leaves that shone in the sun. A November rumination details how the products of tree diseases provide wooded shelters for woodpeckers, hives for wild bees and food for chickadees. Included also is an appreciative essay on wild marshland and several pieces stressing the importance of protecting the natural environment. Leopold sadly observed, "there is yet no ethic dealing with man's relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it." His hope that society would develop an "ecological conscience" by placing what should be preserved above what is economically expedient remains relevant today. These evocative essays about the farm Leopold loved will again be enjoyed by nature lovers and preservationists alike. Though the book has been continuously in print, this beautiful illustrated edition, with its introduction by nature writer Brower (The Starship and the Canoe) will attract fans and newcomers and will make a great gift book this holiday season.

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Review

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Emily Meredith:

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