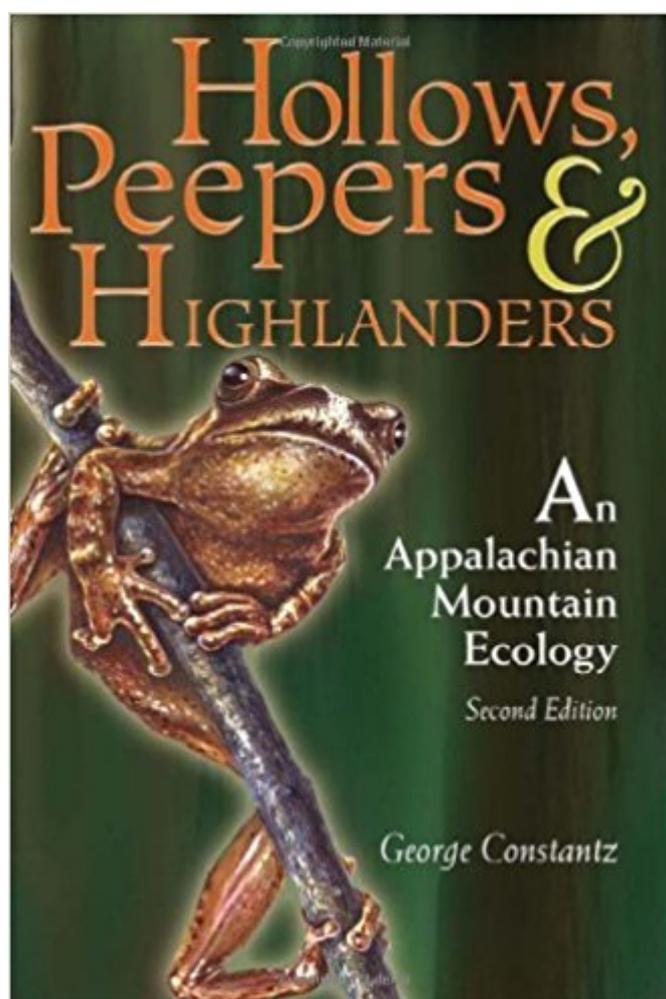


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HOLLOWS, PEEPERS, AND HIGHLANDERS: AN APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN ECOLOGY



Synopsis

In this revised and expanded edition of *Hollows, Peepers, and Highlanders*, author George Constantz, a biologist and naturalist, writes about the beauty and nature of the Appalachian landscape. While the information is scientific in nature, Constantz's accessible descriptions of the adaptation of various organisms to their environment enable the reader to enjoy learning about the Appalachian ecosystem. The book is divided into three sections: "Stage and Theater," "The Players," and "Seasonal Act." Each section sets the scene and describes the events occurring in nature. "Stage and Theatre" is comprised of chapters that describe the origins of the Appalachia region. "The Players" is an interesting and in-depth look into the ecology of animals, such as the mating rituals of different species, and the evolutionary explanation for the adaptation of Appalachian wildlife. The last section, "Seasonal Act," makes note of the changes in Appalachian weather each season and its effect on the inhabitants.

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Customer Reviews

This book will make you look at your Appalachian surroundings like you never have before. With some information about the broad mountain vistas (forest canopy, common large animal species,

etc), this book specializes on intimate looks at the amazing flora and fauna details of the woods (Jack in the Pulpits, wild Orchids, Salamanders, Fireflies, etc.) It is an interesting and intriguing study of Appalachian ecology. This isn't a textbook, but it does involve a bit of scientific jargon, some detailed scientific concepts, and a rather impressive vocabulary. However, each chapter is a short vignette and the author is careful to summarize major themes in the final paragraph of each story. You are guaranteed to take away some new concept and to look at the world around you a bit more carefully.

After reading this book, I had a new appreciation for the Appalachian ecosystem. Every tree, every bird, every insect holds secrets of its adaptation within this ecosystem. Every chapter of this book summarizes studies pertaining to a topic, such as the politics of mixed-species bird flocks or the demographics of box turtles. Everyone who lives in, visits, or conducts business in the Appalachian system should read this book.

“Hollows, Peepers and Highlanders”: An Appalachian Mountain Ecology, (2nd edition) by George Constantz Constantz begins the book with a brief but good explanation of the Appalachians, how they got here and how they function in general. That serves as an effective and unifying backdrop for the rest of the book. The “crest of the book” is a collection of entertaining vignettes that provide the reader with “close focus” views of a varied roster of Appalachian plants and creatures and their often unique adaptations to, and relations with, the mountain ecological niches they inhabit. If you enjoy turning over rocks in the creek, peeking into birds’ nests, and wondering how ducks and geese can stroll contentedly around on the surface of an ice-covered pond, you’ll probably enjoy this book a lot. But it isn’t all story-telling. Constantz includes a lot of interesting (sometimes fascinating), understandable ecological science and theory. Definitely a “High-5” on this one.

My husband, a retired horticulturalist, consistently recommends this book to friends and colleagues. Our latest purchase of the book were two copies to give away. The book is especially interesting to those living in the Appalachian regions of West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

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