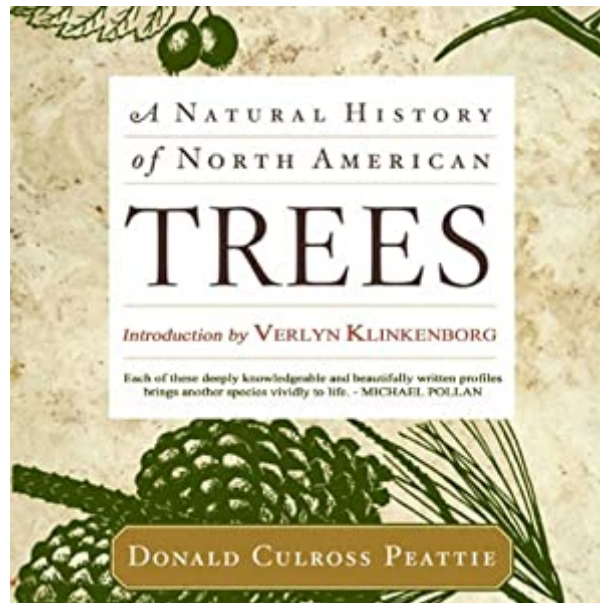


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A Natural History Of North American Trees



Synopsis

Donald Culross Peattie's two books about American trees were first published in the 1950s. In this edition, modern listeners are introduced to one of the best nature writers of the last century. As we listen to Peattie's descriptions, we catch glimpses of our country's history and past daily life that no textbook could ever illuminate so vividly. Here you'll learn about everything from how a species was discovered to the part it played in our country's history. Pioneers often stabled an animal in the hollow heart of an old sycamore, and the whole family might live there until they could build a log cabin. The tuliptree, the tallest native hardwood, is easier to work than most softwood trees; Daniel Boone carved a sixty-foot canoe from one tree to carry his family from Kentucky into Spanish territory. In the days before the Revolution, the British and the colonists waged an undeclared war over New England's white pines, which made the best tall masts for fighting ships. It's fascinating to learn about the commercial uses of various woods - for paper, fine furniture, fence posts, matchsticks, house framing, airplane wings, and dozens of other preplastic uses. But we cannot listen to this book without the occasional lump in our throats. The American elm was still alive when Peattie wrote, but as we listen to his account today we can see what caused its demise. Audubon's portrait of a pair of loving passenger pigeons in an American beech is considered by many to be his greatest painting. It certainly touched the poet in Donald Culross Peattie as he depicted the extinction of the passenger pigeon when the beech forest was destroyed. *A Natural History of North American Trees* gives us a picture of life in America from its earliest days to the middle of the last century. The information is always interesting, though often heartbreaking. While Peattie looks for the better side of man's nature, he reports sorrowfully on the greed and waste that have doomed so much of America's virgin forest.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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#23 in [Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Lifestyle & Home > Gardening](#) #120
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Customer Reviews

How horribly unfair for an earlier reviewer to give this book one star simply because it is an abridged version. Think of how many people will see that review and choose not to read what may be the most perfect book for neophyte dendrologists ever written! Nor is the book for inexperienced tree aficionados only. Even experts will be well served by the book's beautiful prose and unabashed emotion, even if only reminds them how best to inspire a love of trees in their students. I already know the Latin names of all the eastern trees in the book, and know how to identify each species by sight. Nonetheless, I was thrilled by the historical information in the descriptions, and was actually moved to tears by Peattie's description of what we have lost and will continue to lose as these trees disappear from our forests. Each species' unique characteristics are concisely described in the book, but each tree's character is lovingly explained, as well. Peattie writes so beautifully that you cannot help but be moved - and perhaps forever changed - by reading his descriptions. This book will make you gasp with wonder, stun you into speechlessness, make you laugh aloud with sheer joy, and probably move you to tears more than once. The few short pages about the Beech tree, for example, describe its characteristic bark and form, and explain how colonists knew a beech tree indicated good soil for planting crops. This is standard information, but how many field guides exclaim over the "gleam of its wondrously smooth bark," or remind us that the famous Beech carved into by Daniel Boone began its life fifty years before Shakespeare? You don't need any prior knowledge of silviculture or dendrology to learn from and love this volume. Field Guides may help you to distinguish between a red oak and a black oak, but no other book will make you fall in love with a tree. In fact, all the guidebooks in the world fail to do what this book does effortlessly and beautifully: turn your appreciation for trees into an educated passion for each and every tree in your backyard and beyond. I promise you will not regret reading this book; I virtually guarantee you will read it again and again. I only wish I could thank the author personally for the gift of this perfect book.

I recently found a wonderful little husband and wife lumber yard. One of their specialties is quartersawn Chestnut Oak, and I bought two beautiful boards. At home I eagerly opened the Kindle edition of this book to read up on the species, remembering that Peattie included Chestnut Oak in

his section on eastern oaks. But the article was not there! It is in my hard copy, but was stripped from this combined eastern/western mash-up, along with many other 'less important' species. You will have similar experiences if you try to use this book as a reference. Buy the two separate but complete books instead, while they are still available.

A Real classic. Well-narrated. I've read the book years ago, but the audio gives it a whole other dimension. This was highly recommended by a client of mine who has a high-end furniture making business. He's had his whole staff listen to the 6-7 chapters that describe the woods they use in their furniture.

This is an absolutely enchanting book, necessary reading, which I am going through very slowly and with great enjoyment. However, on my copy, p. 170 is followed by pages 168 and 169. Please ALERT the publisher, in case other copies have this same printer's error.

This book soars! Beattie is gifted with the imagination and background to bring trees to life. He sets them in context with historical and amusing antidotes. Paul Landacre's illustrations are beautiful and very helpful. Keep this book near hand and dip into it for lovely stories on your favorite trees. Beattie is unsurpassed for nature writing!

Peattie writes like he is commenting on his favorite child when he writes about each tree. If you love trees, you will love this book.

passionately written

My favorite book

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