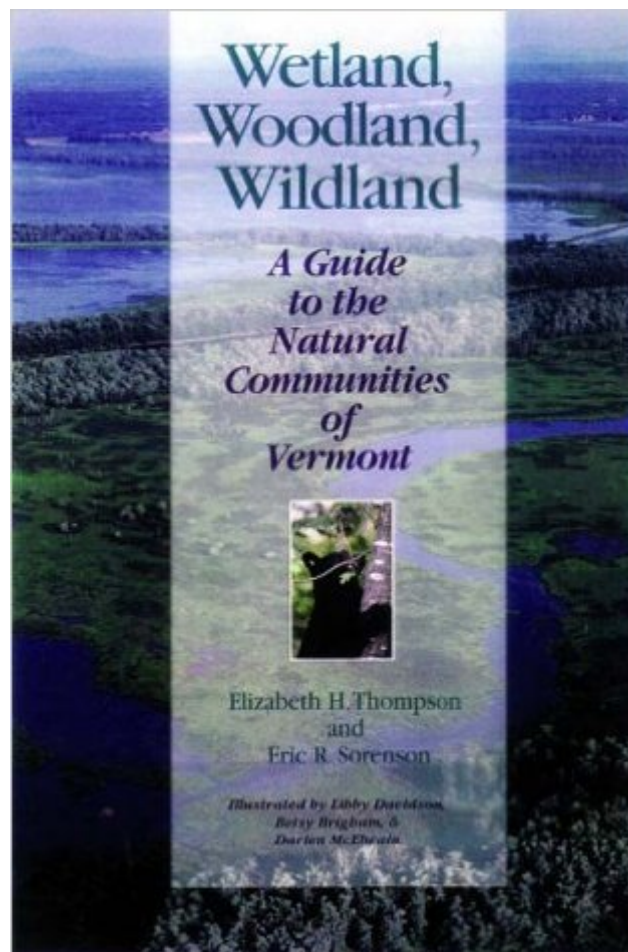


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Wetland, Woodland, Wildland: A Guide To The Natural Communities Of Vermont (Middlebury Bicentennial Series In Environmental Studies)



Synopsis

Vermont's natural communities -- its northern hardwood forests, dry oak woodlands, alpine tundra, red maple swamps, bogs, and marshes -- are described in this comprehensive book. Richly illustrated with beautiful line drawings and color photographs, the guide describes each of Vermont's 80 upland and wetland natural communities. Ecological settings, including geology, soils, climate, and natural disturbance processes, are described for each community, along with complete lists of characteristic plants and animals, and public lands readers may visit. Wetland, Woodland, Wildland contains detailed information on natural communities that is not available elsewhere, and practical information for naturalists, teachers, students, landowners, land managers, foresters, conservation planners, and all those with a love of the outdoors who want to learn more about their surroundings.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I came to this book as a relative beginner in nature observation, I could pick out the major tree species, but not much more than that. This guide was of tremendous help to me in learning to see relationships between tree types and the soil, exposure, water, and other plants. The text is focused on Vermont, but I found it very helpful in New Hampshire, and I am sure it would be useful in Maine and New York as well as some of the Great Lakes areas. It is also very beautiful to look at, though somewhat difficult to read straight through from cover to cover. Take it with you on a hike, or during fly season look at it when you get back. I hope there are or will be additional books of this type for

other areas of the country / world. The authors and artist have set a high standard.

As a resident of Vermont, I found this book to be one of the definitive works about Vermont's natural habitat. It is quite the eyeopener. The interactions of all the natural wonders of the state are completely explained, as well as the definitions of the specific ecosystems found everywhere. With this book I was able to map vernal pools, hemlock swamps and other sensitive habitats around me. Absolutely invaluable.

Being new to Vermont I had a lot to learn of the structure and contents of the natural communities here. This book is well organized and packed with information not only for VT but for the surrounding states as well because the habitats may exist in NY, NH, MA, CT and even Canada. As Tom Vechten pointed out it may be difficult to read from cover to cover but if you read most of the beginning chapters I think it is safe to venture to the regions that interest or concern you. Nice pictures and great line drawings help with visualization. The maps for each section are also useful but it will still be up to you to figure out which habitat you are actually standing in at any given moment, however, the book will guide you to narrow the decision. I think this is an outstanding guide to the region and I recommend it to biologists, naturalists, ecologists, hikers, campers, hunters, outdoorsman, foragers and anyone interested in learning about the history to structure of Vermonts amazing landscape. A big THANK YOU to the authors for compiling this much needed resourceful guide and it's worth every penny!

This is a beautiful book. I don't mean pretty or delightfully literate, though it's those as well. I mean it's intelligent. It condenses, codifies and communicates a carefully considered catalogue of Vermont's natural communities. In a world of intuitive opinion and idle speculation this is a sober, empiric, bright-cut jewel. Liz Thompson has crisscrossed the state evaluating sites for The Nature Conservancy. She's more familiar with Vermont than I am with my front yard. Eric Sorenson is Natural Communities Ecologist for the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Natural Heritage Program. He might know as much as she does, if that's humanly possible. Between them they've parsed our landscape into precisely described biologic community types. How finely have they defined? Click the picture to look inside. Check out the table of contents. Examine the densely packed information and consistent organization. Read some of the unpretentious but supple and cogent expository prose. ~80 communities are described, grouped and explained: what defines them, what generated and still sustains them, how they are related, where to find them. There is no essay component. A huge

amount of information is distilled to be searchable (it's color coded!) and disciplined to be readable. Concise to the point of being wiry, it's still substantial, with exhaustive appendices to explain and cross-reference any technical details in the main text. Included are diagnostic flora lists, implacably factual descriptions, and precise place designations, all in plain English. Anyone can read and understand this book. After the introductory first 75 pages its entertainment value diminishes and reference character emerges - it is a guide book after all - but who can fail to be entranced by a guide so pregnant with information you practically absorb it through your fingertips? Every paragraph is educational, demonstrating both how much some of us know and how much none of us yet knows. You'll know more, and have a fuller framework for understanding what you already knew, every time you delve into this book. "Wetland, Woodland, Wildland" focuses on a small state, but everyone in Vermont should own a copy. Anyone else interested in the dramatic variety of Vermont's remarkable landscape and the stellar quality of Vermont's scholarship should consider owning a copy. The index is good, the bibliography outstanding. Common specific names are incorporated in the text, scientific equivalents supplied by an appendix. Diagnostic lists include specific common names whenever they exist. There is a glossary but the few technical terms employed are also defined in context. Most individual plant and animal images are photographic; most landscape and habitat images are line drawings. All are created and scaled to their task with only I think 4 pages of primarily decorative full bleed pictures. Fully coated stock makes every line sharp. Range maps are all on the same outline. Especially gratifying to me is that page design and typography, while complex and compact, is clear and consistent. Proofreading appears to be perfect. This is a well-crafted work. It feels good, looks good, reads easily and will make you smarter about where you live. That's a beautiful thing.

I had the pleasure of taking a graduate level field botany course co-taught by one of the authors, Liz Thompson. This book is essential for anyone who is doing ecological work in the Northeast. So much work went into this - it is a gem of a book.

This book is a must-have for any ecologist or plant-minded person in Vermont. It is easy to read, formatted well, and contains lots of useful information on the natural communities of Vermont.

good book, great for class

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