



Wonders of the Indian Wilderness

By Erach Bharucha

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The veneration of nature has always been an integral part of Indian culture, but the country's wilderness is rapidly disappearing and only small fragments of it now remain. In the face of this ecological threat, *Wonders of the Indian Wilderness* provides a lavish celebration of India's unique natural treasure and a call to preserve it in the years to come. Over 800 pages in scope, the book devotes its first half to exploring "The Nature of Biodiversity in India," illustrating the incredible natural abundance of one of the twelve acknowledged mega-diversity nations of the world. Author Erach Bharucha describes the varied species and ecosystems of India, confronting the urgent need to conserve the country's biodiversity—a vital resource with immense economic potential—in the process. Among the hundreds of illustrations are a dazzling foldout review of Earth's geological and evolutionary history and an eight-page extravaganza on India's rich floral heritage. The second half of the volume focuses on "National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries of India," recounting the distinctive plants, animals, and habitats the author has encountered in his travels through more than eighty of these areas—as well as the sobering changes he has witnessed in them over the years. Featuring more than 2,000 stunning full-color images, *Wonders of the Indian Wilderness* is not only an indispensable guide for environmentalists, educators, and eco-tourists but also an outstanding visual feast for the connoisseur. It is the most comprehensive overview available of the richness and sheer beauty of life in the Indian wilderness.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. With gorgeous photography and welcoming but precise text, this thorough exploration of India's ecosystems is an endlessly satisfying volume. A physician who has spent almost 50 years exploring and photographing wild India, Bharucha is also the founder of the Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Environment Education and Research. After a complete explanation of ecology and the interconnectedness of ecosystems on both micro and macro scales, subsequent sections detail particular regions and their inhabitants. The breadth and diversity of Indian ecosystems make this book a primer on both ecological principles in general and the way geology and climate conflate to develop particular ecosystems. An in-depth guided tour explores each ecosystem of the Indian subcontinent—forests, deserts, mountains, coastlines, etc.—and each concept is defined in pullout boxes and beautiful photographs. The book's second half is devoted to brief descriptions and accompanying photos of India's many wildlife sanctuaries and refuges. In addition to his own photographs, Bharucha reproduces many lovely nineteenth century paintings and drawings, when many species were first described by naturalists. Bharucha also discusses deforestation and other hazardous human activities. This enormous, spectacularly beautiful volume may not be priced for everyone, but will be treasured by anybody interested in nature or India.

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Review

Web Pick of the Week. This enormous, spectacularly beautiful volume may not be priced for everyone, but will be treasured by anybody interested in nature or India. --Publishers Weekly, November 17, 2008

About the Author

Erach Bharucha has been active in wildlife and nature conservation for nearly fifty years. A well-known wildlife photographer, he has traveled and studied Indian National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries extensively over the last three decades. He has been a member and executive of such conservation institutions as the Bombay Natural History Society, Worldwide Fund for Nature, and Wildlife Institute of India. In 1993 he began developing the Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Environment Education and Research (BVIEER). A surgeon by profession, he works in Pune, India. His previous publications include The Biodiversity of India (CD-ROM and book).

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