



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN



Springer

Review: [untitled]

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Source: *Economic Botany*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1991), p. 139

Published by: Springer on behalf of New York Botanical Garden Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4255318>

Accessed: 12/08/2010 17:46

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BOOK REVIEWS

PETER BRETING, BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

The Tropical Rain Forest: A First Encounter. Marius Jacobs (ed. Remke Kruk et al.). Springer-Verlag, Berlin and New York, NY. 1988. xvi + 295 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 0-387-17996-8.

For anyone interested or working in our tropical rain forests, this volume is a must. The coverage is not only all-inclusive but is authoritative. This edition—a translation from the original Dutch edition of 1981—will long be an encyclopedia on the shelf of botanists, foresters, conservationists and other specialists whose prime thrust lies in the rain forests of the world.

The contents throughout are scientifically reliable. They were written by a tropical botanist, himself an avid conservationist and worker for preservation of genetic diversity. One of the outstanding characteristics of the book is its concentration on both the biological and human aspects of tropical rain forest studies.

This English version has a chapter contributed by Roelof A. A. Oldeman and a Foreword by Vernon H. Heywood. It is unfortunate that Dr. Jacobs could not have lived to see this book appear in English: he died in 1983. But it is indeed a worthy memorial to this outstanding tropical botanist.

The contents are divided into 19 sections: 1) Public Awareness; 2) How Rain Forests Are Studied; 3) Climate; 4) Soils and Cycles; 5) Trees; 6) Other Life Forms; 7) Composition; 8) Primary and Secondary Forests; 9) Tropical America; 10) Malesia; 11) Tropical Africa; 12) Relationships of Plants and Animals; 13) Evolution; 14) How Species are Formed; 15) Fringes of the Rain Forest; 16) Value of the Rain Forest; 17) Damage and Destruction; 18) Protection; and 19) Forest and Man. There follow an extraordinarily complete bibliography of 395 items and a detailed index that easily unlocks the immense amount of data in the foregoing pages.

It is, in a way, unfortunate that this edition was published in a heavy paper back, because the use that it will have warrants a hard cover.

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Farmers as Hunters: the Implications of Sedentism. Susan Kent (ed.). Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th St., New York, NY 10011. 1989. ix + 152 pp. \$44.50. ISBN 0-521-36217-2.

Ethnobotanists will find this collection of essays stimulating. It offers several novel suggestions concerning the influence of sedentism brought about in part by the domestication of plants and the role of hunting in cultures of developing societies that were increasingly dependent on agriculture.

The twelve contributors, all specialists in various fields of archeology, have approached the principal topics from a variety of viewpoints and from a wide geographic spectrum in the ten essays: 1) Perceptions of farmers as hunters; 2) Cashinahua hunting and male-dominance; 3) Hunting and horticulture in Papua New Guinea; 4) Farming and foraging in Amazonia; 5) Patterns of foraging and gardening in a semi-sedentary Amazonian community; 6) Hunting, farming and sedentism in a rain forest foraging society; 7) Horticulture and large mammal hunting; 8) Sedentism and prehistoric animal procurement in the American Southwest; 9) The myth of ecological determinism; 10) New directions for old studies.

The purposes of this thought-provoking selection of essays are “to employ different theoretical perspectives, different levels of analysis and different data bases from various parts of the world to study farmers as hunters and to explore the implications of sedentism.” The book has admirably fulfilled this aim and is highly to be recommended to all students of the role of hunters in farming groups in primitive societies.

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Natural Rubber Science and Technology. A. D. Roberts (ed.). Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. 1988. xx + 1136 pp. \$150.00. ISBN 0-19-855225-4

No plant has changed life more drastically in its century of domestication than has *Hevea brasiliensis*. This rubber tree is unique in being the only species of cultivated plant which is the almost exclusive source of its product: in this case, more than 98% of the world's natural rubber.

Much has been written about the chemistry, production and certain economic aspects of natural rubber. It would be difficult, probably impossible, to point to a more complete coverage of these topics. The product of 37 experts, the book is divided into 23 chapters: 1)