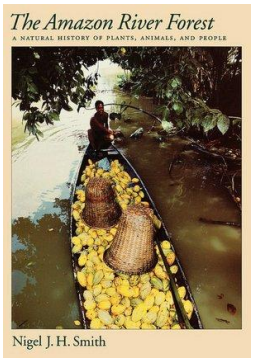
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The Amazon River Forest: A Natural History of Plants, Animals, and People

Smith, Nigel J. H.



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Smith, Nigel J. H. *The Amazon River Forest: A Natural History of Plants, Animals, and People.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. The Amazonian floodplain forest is a unique habitat, inundated in some places to a depth of thirty feet a year. It contains a marvelous variety of plant and animal resources that inhabitants have long reaped—fruit, nuts, building materials, fuel wood, and medicinal plants. While the floodplain has great potential for food production, its natural resource base is increasingly threatened by ranching and agricultural expansion, and impaired by inappropriate land-use practices. Nigel Smith demonstrates that knowledge possessed by area dwellers offers vital insights for promoting the sound economic development of the floodplain. He argues for the importance of balance between land-use systems, and suggests that research and development should be realigned to incorporate both modern science and traditional systems. Illustrated with the author's own photographs, this authoritative volume explores a broad range of ecological, historical, cultural, and socioeconomic issues, and offers practical suggestions for developing the floodplain that enhance, rather than destroy, biodiversity. (Text adapted from OUP website .) **Nigel J. H. Smith** is professor of geography, University of Florida, Gainesville.

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- H-Environment, H-Net Reviews, reviewed by Jose Augusto Drummond
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