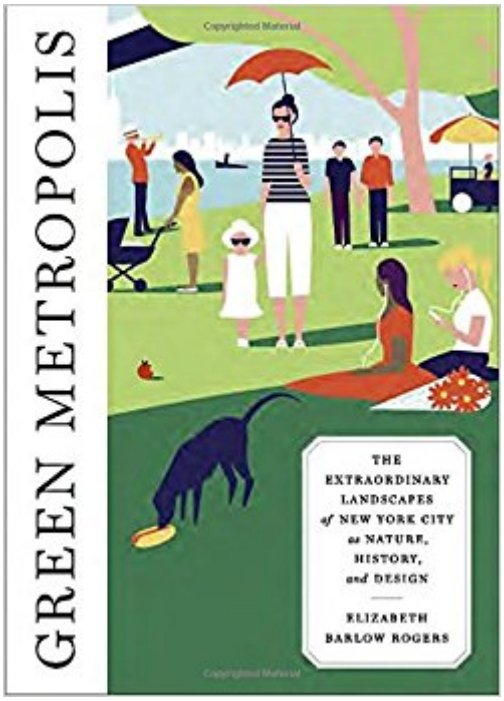
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Green Metropolis: The Extraordinary Landscapes Of New York City As Nature, History, And Design



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Synopsis

Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, the woman who launched the restoration of Central Park in the 1980s, now introduces us to seven remarkable green spaces in and around New York City, giving us the historyÃ¢â ¬â •both natural and humanÃ¢â ¬â •of how they have been transformed over time.Here we find: The greenbelt and nature refuge that runs along the spine of Staten Island on land once intended for a highway, where mushrooms can be gathered and, at the right moment, seventeen-year locusts viewed. Jamaica Bay, near John F. Kennedy International Airport, whose mosaic of fragile, endangered marshes has been preserved as a bird sanctuary on the Atlantic Flyway, full of egrets, terns, and horseshoe crabs. Inwood Hill, in upper Manhattan, whose forest once sheltered Native Americans and Revolutionary soldiers before it became a site for wealthy estates and subsequently a public park. The Central Park Ramble, an artfully designed wilderness in the middle of the city, with native and imported flora, magnificent rock outcrops, and numerous species of resident and migrating birds. Roosevelt Island, formerly Welfare Island, in the East River, where urban planners built a Ã¢â ¬Å“new town in townÃ¢â ¬Â• in the 1970s and whose southern tip is the dramatic setting for the Louis KahnÃ¢â ¬â œdesigned memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Freshkills, the unusual twenty-two-hundred-acre park on Staten Island that is being created out of what was once the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s largest landfill. The High Line, in ManhattanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Chelsea and West Village neighborhoods, an aerial promenade built on an abandoned elevated rail spur with its native grasses and panoramic views of the Hudson River and the downtown cityscape.Full of the natural history of the parks along with interesting historical facts and interviews with caretakers, guides, local residents, guardians, and visitors, this beautifully illustrated book is a treasure trove of information about the varied and pleasurable green spaces that grace New York City.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages
Publisher: Knopf (April 19, 2016)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 1101875534
ISBN-13: 978-1101875537
Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.9 x 8.5 inches
Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #175,735 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #72 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > History & Criticism > Themes > Landscapes & Seascapes #76 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Painting > Landscape #86 inÃ Â Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historical Geography

Customer Reviews

"Easy and enjoyable to read . . . One of the aspects of Green Metropolis is how the author integrates so manyÃ Â interesting details from so many different fields of study in each green space discussed. . . . I recommend it highly for anyone interested in New York City or in the natural environment of urban areas." Ã¢â ¬â •Richard Weigel, Bowling Green Daily News"Whether mushroom-hunting on Staten Island or admiring outcrops of schist in Manhattan, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers turns her knowing and loving eye on what she calls the "palimpsest" of the city. . . . Wherever she visits, she brings her particular point of view toward urban environments, seeing them not as alternatives to natureÃ¢â ¬â„¢s story but as new texts traced over the older natural narrative, which remains visible to those who know how to read it." Ã¢â ¬â •Gerard Helferich, The Wall Street Journal"New York may seem the archetypal cityscape, but nature thrums through this concrete jungle. So reports landscape preservationist Elizabeth Barlow Rogers in her erudite study of seven of the city's green spaces. Summoning geology, biology and history, Barlow witnesses stridulating 17-year cicadas at Staten Island's High Rock Nature Center, walks through the 14.5-hectare of 'self-generating wildwood' of Central Park's Ramble, strolls the evocative garden promenade of reclaimed rail spur the High Line, and more." Ã¢â ¬â •Nature"A gem . . . Distilling a lifetimeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s worth of knowledge and insight, Rogers describes the history and development of seven landscapes, including the High Line, the F.D.R. memorial on Roosevelt Island, the woodlands of Inwood Hill Park, the capped garbage mountain in Freshkills, Staten Island, and her beloved Ramble area inÃ Â Central Park." Ã¢â ¬â •Phillip Lopate, Vanity Fair

ELIZABETH BARLOW ROGERSÃ Â is the president of the Foundation for Landscape Studies and the author of eight previous books about the design of cities, parks, and gardens as expressions of place. She has long been involved in historic landscape preservation and was the first person to hold the title of Central Park administrator, a position created in 1979. In 1980, she was instrumental in founding the Central Park Conservancy, a public-private partnership supporting the restoration and management of the park. She served in both positions until 1996. A native of San Antonio, Texas, she has made New York her home since 1964.www.elizabethbarlowrogers.com

This lyrical account takes you throughout New York, opening the eyes of those who think they know the city and those who are yet to discover it. A gracefully written book that deserves to be savored. It is also beautifully produced.

This is a very well written personal description of several NYC parks, some well known and others not so well known, to me anyway. The book itself is made of high quality, sturdy paper and is a joy to hold and read for those of us who still like paper. It has several maps and lots of pictures, and has enhanced my enjoyment of the High Line and the Ramble already. I look forward to exploring the other parks with this book in hand.

Elizabeth Barlow Rogers has published yet another fine and incredible book on the rich and varied landscapes of New York City. When reading the book, one cannot help but feel that the author is taking the reader on a uniquely curated tour.

Loved this book. Clara J

Do you like the fantastic parks and open spaces of New York City? Do you love the parks where you live? Do you think parks and open spaces in general are a good thing? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you owe a profound vote of thanks to Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, who is today possibly AmericaÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s foremost philosopher of parks and the role they play in modern human communities. Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux created Central Park, and in the 20th Century Robert Moses was the ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“master builderÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• who rebuilt the city in a semblance of its modern form. But it was Rogers who inspired the Central Park Conservancy to save and rehabilitate the park in the 1980s. She is the author of numerous books on parks and landscape design, and she is the president of The Foundation for Landscape Studies as well (please check out their wonderful site at [...]). Her erudition, passion, and tireless energy have earned her admiration and pre-eminence in this field. And now comes this beautiful new book about the parks of the great city, which anyone will want to read who cares about the livability of our cities and their open spaces that refresh and bring us together as communities. Physically, this is a very beautiful book. It is bound with bright, kelly-green covers, with gold lettering on the spine. The dust jacket is an eye-catching homage to Georges SeuratÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s famous 1884 masterpiece, A Sunday on La Grande Jatte. The text is sharp and easy to read, and it is printed on

glossy stock, the better to accommodate the numerous maps and photographs that add to illustrate RogersÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ guided tour. The book is divided into seven gem-like chapters; the first is brilliant scene-setter that lays out how the New York City landscape was created by powerful geological and meteorological forces, and the six remaining chapters are each a dazzlingly guided tour of one of the outstanding park areas of the great metropolis. In his foreword to this volume, Tony Hiss calls Rogers ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“an urban trailblazerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •a pusher of the envelope, a seer into the beyondÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and that is surely accurate. Her great theme, as she announces in her preface, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦is that nature is ubiquitous, a dynamic force that, historically and now, makes New York City intrinsically a green metropolis.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Her sensitivity to this ubiquity of nature and its transcendent quality is very captivating. She spent a lot of time with people who are the daily habituÃƒÂ©s of the cityÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s natural areas. Some of her story is told through their passionate voices. Listen to Mike Feller, who formerly held the official title of naturalist in the New York City Department of Parks: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“A lot of science people are uncomfortable with the spiritual, but nature is where we touch the mystery of life. Look at Emerson and ThoreauÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •they were Romantics. Then thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Wordsworth, and Gerard Manley Hopkins, as well as the contemporary poets Wendell Berry and Gary Snyder. I donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t think everything has to be super-clinical, nor does everything have to be Sturm und Drang. There is something nice about being in the middle.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Each chapter is a marvelous gem and each tells a brilliant and compelling story. My two favorites were the long chapter on the Central Park Ramble and the next-to-last chapter on the elevated High Line. I liked the former because it comprises a wonderful history of a part of Central Park where I have logged countless miles running while on business trips to the metropolis; and I liked the latter because that space is such a beautiful and creative solution, and I am an enormous admirer of one of its great designer geniuses, Piet Oudolf. Oudolf was brought in to the project by its chief landscape architect, James Corner of Field Operations, along with the architectural firm of Diller Scofidio + Renfro. Rogers brings considerable scholarship and erudition to this and all her books, and yet she manages never to be sterile and academic, but is instead always accessible and interesting. For anyone who enjoys parks their contribution to social living, this is a worthy and fascinating read.

Read free at the New York Society Library, a paid subscription library.This beautifully produced book describes in loving and real clarity the history and the pleasures of seven important parks in New York City.Two are on Staten Island, the Staten Island Greenway along a planned highway and

the Fresh Kill Park, built on top of a gigantic 2,200 acre former landfill.One is in Queens, Jamaica Bay near JFK, and a marshy wonder land filled with birds and other aquatic life.Four are in Manhattan: Inwood where reported many trees older than the United States still grow, the Ramble in Central Park, the Highline in lower Manhattan, and the Roosevelt memorial on the southern end of Roosevelt Island.It would have been politic to add at least one for Brooklyn and The Bronx -- Brooklyn Bridge Park or perhaps Prospect Park in Brooklyn, the 718 acres Bronx Park along the Bronx River or Pehlam Bay Park, three times the size of Central Park, in the Bronx.We can hope that Ms Rogers, a tremendous force in the park world might consider a similar book covering some or all of those possibilities.But what we have here is a wonderful coffee table book filled with inspiration and beauty, all beautifully presented. Tony Hiss's spoiler sets the stage: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Individually these adventures are vivid; cumulatively, they can rearrange your mind so thoroughly you never look at things the same way again.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•Robert C. RossDecember 2016

As Central Park Administrator and advocate for historic landscape preservation, Elizabeth Barlow Rogers presents a dynamically vivid narrative describing how the terrain of the city has changed over the eons. Starting with the basic geology and the climatic transformations the original topography has evolved with adaptation. With the influx of populations and the erosion of natural settings, we are fortunate that enlightened city planners have foreseen the need to promote and protect natural preserves within the urban environs. In addition to the iconic Central Park of Manhattan, and BrooklynÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s luxuriant Prospect Park, the author introduces us to seven special sites: High Rock Park and Freshkills Park in Staten Island; Inwood Hill Park, Roosevelt Island, The High Line, Central Park Ramble in Manhattan; and Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Each of these sites has its own unique history, caretakers, and specific flora and fauna. Travel to these sites with the author and learn about the first explorers, its champions, the politics involved in its inception, the indigenous flora and fauna, the views visible from the site, and most especially the pleasure shared by the participants. As a tenement child of immigrant parents, I still recall the magic of gamboling through the fairyland of Prospect Park nearly 80 years past. This is a resource that should be treasured by city dwellers.

Extraordinary work

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