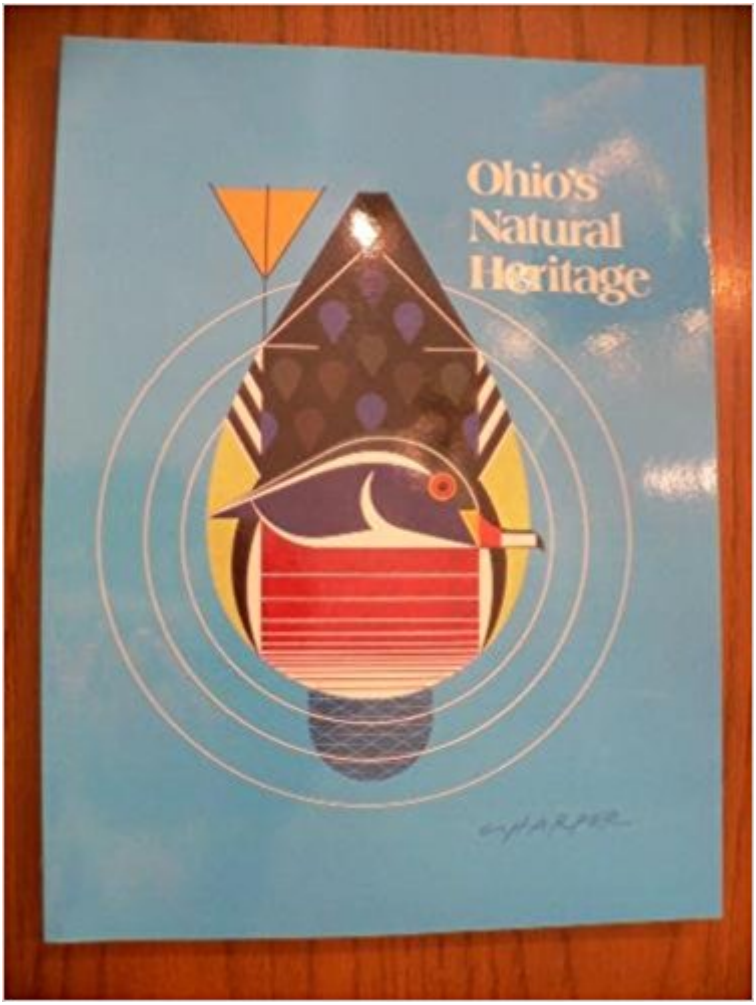
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Synopsis

Ohio’s Natural Heritage

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ohio’s Natural Heritage

The best book on Ohio’s natural history ever written.

Ordered it for a class. It has a lot of really useful information.

Great book!

A delight to look at and, for the most part, a pleasure to read, "Ohio’s Natural Heritage" provides a stunning view of the existing remnants of Ohio’s natural heritage. Twenty-eight experts have contributed essays on the land they know and love, to form a beautiful compilation of information on the natural history of Ohio. It is almost as if the Sierra Club were to "do" the state. Published by The Ohio Academy of Science and produced jointlly by it and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the volume belongs in every Ohio school library as well as the private collection of anyone interested in the natural history of Ohio.Design and graphics are the outstanding feature of the book, beginning with the eye-catching wood duck and beaver dust jacket illustrations Virtually every page bears at least one illustration, and there are many full page color photographs of superb

quality. Most of Ohio’s outstanding elements of the flora and fauna receive their due, although walking fern, rhododendron, and the gentians are notable omissions. For the most part, illustrations are well-integrated with the text and are of high quality. There are some jarring exceptions, however, such as the garish drawing of a Rome Beauty apple and the sketches of various geologists clearly based upon existing photographs; the originals would have been much preferable.Quality of the text varies considerably with the ability of the writers, but all have attempted to present a maximum amount of information in a clear and direct style. Occasionally, as in the chapers on the various natural regions of the state, this results in repetitious enumerations of plant and animal species that provide rather bleak reading unless one is already familiar with the individual taxa listed.The volume is free of typogrpahical errors and is well indexed, but more careful technical editing and review might have eliminated a number of embarrassing errors of fact. Elk and turkey far outrank bear as a food source of prehistoric Indians (p. 11); fossilized Carboniferous tree trunks containing the remains of amphibians have been found in Nova Scotia but not in Ohio (p. 29); no remains of the saber-toothed tiger have ever been found within the state (p 38 and 39); the Chagrin shale does not outcrop at or even near Chagrin Falls (p. 184). Minor errors such as the confounding of tick trefoil with beggar’s ticks (p. 167) are of little moment, but the fanciful suggestion that the Adams County Serpent Mound was built by prehistoric Indians to commemorate the meteorite that may have been responsible for the Serpent Mound cryptovolcanic structure is extremely unfortunate. As science, this preposterous notion would be more at home across the Ohio River at Kentucky’s Creationism Museum. Since part of the Serpent Mound cryptovolcanic bedrock structure is covered by glacial moraine and outwash, the structure clearly predates the Illinoian glaciation 125,000 years ago. Aside from this being rather early for man to be on the North American continent, archaeologists generally agree that the Serpent Mound dates to Adena times, approximatley 2,000 years ago, or even much later.The book is well organized, in three major sections: "The Land" contains generalized chapters on the geology, physiography, and climatology of Ohio, as well as chapters on soil, the ecology of Ohio’s forests and waters, prairie and bog remnants, and caves. A second section consists of individual chapters on each of the natural physiographic subdivisions of the state-- the glaciated and unclaciated Allegheny Plateau, the Till Plains, Lake Erie and its islands, the Lake Plain, and the little wedge of The Bluegrass in Adams and adjacent counties. A third section of the book, "The Impact of Man," includes a chapter on Ohio archaeology, as well as casual chapters on changing land use and conservation and a brief history of Ohio naturalists. Needless to say, there is no mention of "fracking." An all too brief and somewhat uneven selection of additional readings is provided."Ohio’s Natural Heritage" is not intended to be a textbook but rather a popular

summary or, better, an "appreciation" of the natural history of the state, written for the layman. It is an excellent introduction to the subject and displays the natural beauty of Ohio in all of its nearly infinite variety. Somewhat similar in concept to George W. Knepper's "An Ohio Portrait," this book forms a nice companion volume to that coffee-table history of Ohio. Caleb Atwater, author of "A History fo the State of Ohio, Natural and Civil" (1838) might well be astonished at the beautiful desgn and quality of such latter-day counterparts of his pioneering effort.

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