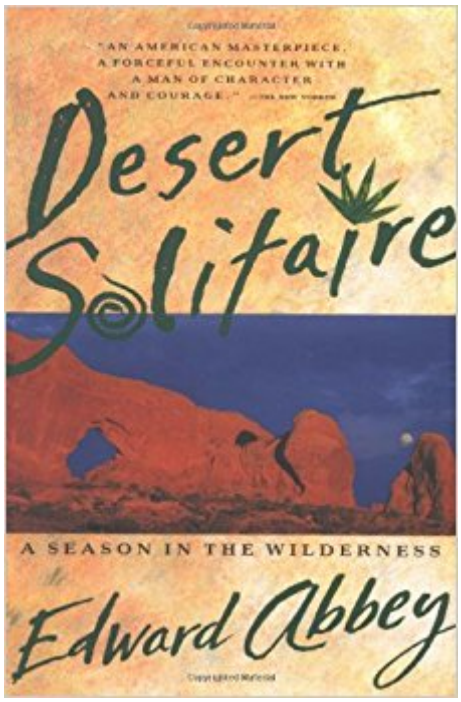
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Desert Solitaire



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Synopsis

Hailed by >as a passionately felt, deeply poetic book, the moving autobiographical work of Edward Abbey, considered the Thoreau of the American West, and his passion for the southwestern wilderness.Desert Solitaire is a collection of vignettes about life in the wilderness and the nature of the desert itself by park ranger and conservationist, Edward Abbey. The book details the unique adventures and conflicts the author faces, from dealing with the damage caused by development of the land or excessive tourism, to discovering a dead body. However Desert Solitaire is not just a collection of one man s stories, the book is also a philosophical memoir, full of Abbey s reflections on the desert as a paradox, at once beautiful and liberating, but also isolating and cruel. Often compared to Thoreau s Walden, Desert Solitaire is a powerful discussion of life s mysteries set against the stirring backdrop of the American southwestern wilderness.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 576 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #6,955 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 inÃ Â Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Ecosystems > Deserts #5 inÃ Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Environmentalists & Naturalists #8 inÃ Â Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Conservation

Customer Reviews

Edward Abbey’s Desert Solitaire, the noted author’s most enduring nonfiction work, is an account of Abbey’s seasons as a ranger at Arches National Park outside Moab, Utah. Abbey reflects on the nature of the Colorado Plateau desert, on the condition of our remaining wilderness, and on the future of a civilization that cannot reconcile itself to living in the natural world. He also recounts adventures with scorpions and snakes, obstinate tourists and entrenched bureaucrats, and, most powerful of all, with his own mortality. Abbey’s account of getting stranded in a rock pool down a side branch of the Grand Canyon is at once hilarious and terrifying.

An American Masterpiece. A Forceful Encounter with a Man of Character and Courage.The New York Times Book Review Like a ride on a bucking bronco...rough, tough, combative. The author is a rebel and an eloquent loner. His is a passionately felt, deeply poetic book...set down in a lean, racing prose, in a close-knit style of power and beauty. --The New Yorker

One of Abbey's best- a collection of his nature essays from all the time he spent working outdoors- often mentioned as the most influential writer in the field of conservation since Henry David Thoreau. Recommended more than his straight-out fiction. Even more relevant in some areas than when it was first printed.

With ever increasing population, development and climate change, this is undoubtedly the most important book for our times. It should be mandatory reading for every politician, developer, teacher and student. We should strive to create a society that values conservation, demonizes development in our nature areas, and gives tax incentives to have 0 - 1 or 2 children.I wish we had more Edward Abbeys and less Donald Trumps in our world (it feels surreal, a casino, condo and golf course developer running for president whose arch nemesis is the environmental movement). Why do the good ones always seem to go first?

A beautifully written book. The author's prose is poetic in its description of the desert, but doesn't leave the reader to wonder his meaning. Mr. Abbey is not a pretentious writer. He is an outdoorsman expressing himself in a folksy manner.For anyone who has visited the desert, e.g. Grand Canyon, Zion, the Eastern Sierra, you will soon visualize Edward Abbey's words and feelings. He describes the desert and its inhabitants (animal and plant life) in such a way that the reader will soon find himself walking along with him. You will also realize the time of year you are exploring the desert and canyons, watching the cloud formations, feeling the touch of the rain or snow, and experiencing the bitter cold or extreme heat.Mr. Abbey can also get crusty at times, especially when he expresses his philosophy about the protection of the wilderness. He is especially negative about the presence of an abundance of automobiles invading the National Parks and other wilderness areas. Justifiably so!My only regret is that I purchased this book as an e-book to be read on my Kindle. I have only myself to blame! This is the kind of book that should be shared with others, which is difficult to do with a Kindle. I would also like to go back and re-read certain sections of the book or locate certain quotes, which is not impossible, but again difficult. Gosh, I

miss a Table of Contents. I highly recommend buying the print edition.

This book is not only for those of us who have ventured off the pavement in the American West, tasted the dust and the sweet spring water and wondered at a 360 degree sunset; it’s especially for those who haven’t, but would love to. I have read it twice and after a failure to obtain it again from my Naples, Florida library, I decided to just order a copy for myself. Such a classic needs to be easily available, but I suppose some people have better things to read. For anyone indeed interested in the preservation of diminishing wild places, read this book. For those who truly don’t care, stay on the pavement and off the trails with your noise making things.

OK. To fully appreciate this accumulation of experiences and stories... you need to plan a trip to Southern Utah. (Go during a "shoulder" season so you will not have too many crowds). You really need to actually be there. To see the horizons and stirring landscapes. And you will need to let go of any preconceived attitudes about deserts - any requirements for 5-Star anything. Take this book along and read a few chapters each evening. And you will need to allow yourself enough time to just sit... listen.. and reflect. Visit Moab and the Arches N.P. and imagine how it once was not too long ago. Head off to Dead Horse Point and then down to the Needles area - both in Canyonlands N.P. If you can, camp for a night or two. Look for the La Sal Range on the eastern horizon. In this way, I think you will develop a better appreciation for Mr. Abbey’s world. A couple of chapters might be considered a bit off point, but that’s all part of the experience. So --- get the book, plan your adventure... and, if the Southwest is a new experience for you, I believe you will come back home with some remarkable impressions. All enhanced by "Desert Solitude".

Wow! ... I cannot say Abbey and I are kindred spirits. But I surely do appreciate his thoughtful pros and philosophical bent. Much that he feels about the desert I have myself felt while hiking in the ancient eastern mountains of the Virginia’s or Carolina’s or while canoeing the many lakes of boundary waters in northern Minnesota. Abbey’s spirit was/is clearly drawn by the dessert southwest. Mine is similarly touched by the far more watered regions of the East and upper Midwest.To me at least Abbey’s pros are a wonderful adventure in verse and tone and thought. He makes the desert come alive. However, I wish I had half the knowledge of plants that he seems to posses. I felt like I needed a botanical field guide with me as I read these pages. But the color and texture he brings to the desert is almost breathtaking. God! What I would give to be this descriptive in my writing.It seems a bit odd to me that the other reviews for this book are either very good like

mine or present the feeling that this book was a waste of the reviewerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s time. Clearly, few people are hardly affected at all by these writings. It seems to stir either extreme appreciation or an extreme lack thereof. While I cannot appreciate the reason for the latter emotions perhaps this is because these writings are so philosophical in nature. In fact, another book that I compare this writing with, Pirsig's "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance", has a similar dichotomy of reviews and I suspect for similar reasons.For me this is a work that I am likely to read again. In fact, as I read this on my Kindle and I now think I want a physical copy to hold and caress as I peruse it one more time.Enjoy!

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