

the Missouri Ozarks) and the work done by Wes Jackson (with perennial agricultural crops) have served as models. One minor criticism of the book is that I wish the authors would have included an index, so the reader could determine if individual species (e.g., invasive species) or topics are addressed. Overall, this book is of interest to those of us who are ecologists, those who love natural areas, and also readers new to forest conservation, as the weaving of both science and cultural discussions makes for a welcome introduction.

In one chapter, they describe a hike in which they saw 60 tree species while only walking for one hour and how those trees are the results of evolutionary journeys up to millions of years long. Perhaps that serves as another analogy for our own journey with restoration—there are ecological winners and losers during these projects, and the work is not often quick, but it is worthwhile and beneficial to all life.

## Reference

Braun E.L. 1950. *The Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America*. Philadelphia, PA: The Blackiston Company.

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## ***The Natural Heritage of Illinois: Essays on Its Lands, Waters, Flora, and Fauna***

John E. Schwegman. 2016. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press. \$24.50 paperback. ISBN: 978-0-80-933484-1. 256 pages.

This book features 93 articles that originally appeared between 1992 and 1996 as a series of newspaper columns. The author's goal was to develop public appreciation for Illinois lands, waters, plants, and animals by pointing out interesting facts that are little known to the general public.

In keeping with the original newspaper format they have no source citations, which makes the essays accessible to a wide audience, from beginning nature enthusiasts to experts. The essays are dense with information and

well thought out, even as the writing style is approachable and straightforward. The author has spent countless hours in the field, but he has also dug into the research on these topics. The end result condenses some 50 years of experience into short 1–3 page vignettes that illuminate the region's natural history—not an easy feat. A nice feature of the book is that each chapter stands alone. Readers could just as well skip around to different topics and not miss a beat (as I did), or focus on the themes they are organized under (Water, Soils, and Geology; Historical Accounts of Early Nature; Plants; Animals; Conservation; Habitats Types; etc.).

As the essays were written some 20 years ago, most have short postscript updates on their topic. This is both helpful and interesting as it provides a glimpse into what has happened to the featured plants or animals since the original article. Readers will be surprised to find out how predictions have, or haven't panned out.

As the title implies, this book focuses on Illinois, however, most of the essays would be of interest to people throughout eastern North America. This contrasts with more local treatments by Greenberg in *A Natural History of the Chicago Region*. Or, for readers interested in exploring and learning more about specific Illinois sites, habitats, and natural areas, *Exploring Nature in Illinois: A field guide to the Prairie State* by Jeffords and Post, and *Illinois Wilds* by Jeffords, Post, and Robertson are fine choices. Or, for readers looking for more technical and detailed works on the conservation topics covered in the book, choices like *Conservation in Highly Fragmented Landscape* by Schwartz, *The Vanishing Present* by Waller and Rooney, and *Canaries in the Catbird Seat* by Taylor, Taft, and Warwick are the best treatments. But, for brief essays with a large general appeal Schwegman's book is an excellent choice.

The only criticism I have is the photographs. Although the author has included some very nice shots, their printing is no better than what a cheap desktop printer would do. Given the price (around \$25), the small, dull photos were disappointing. All and all, however, this is a minor point because the information is so interesting. Hopefully subsequent editions or printings will correct this weakness.

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