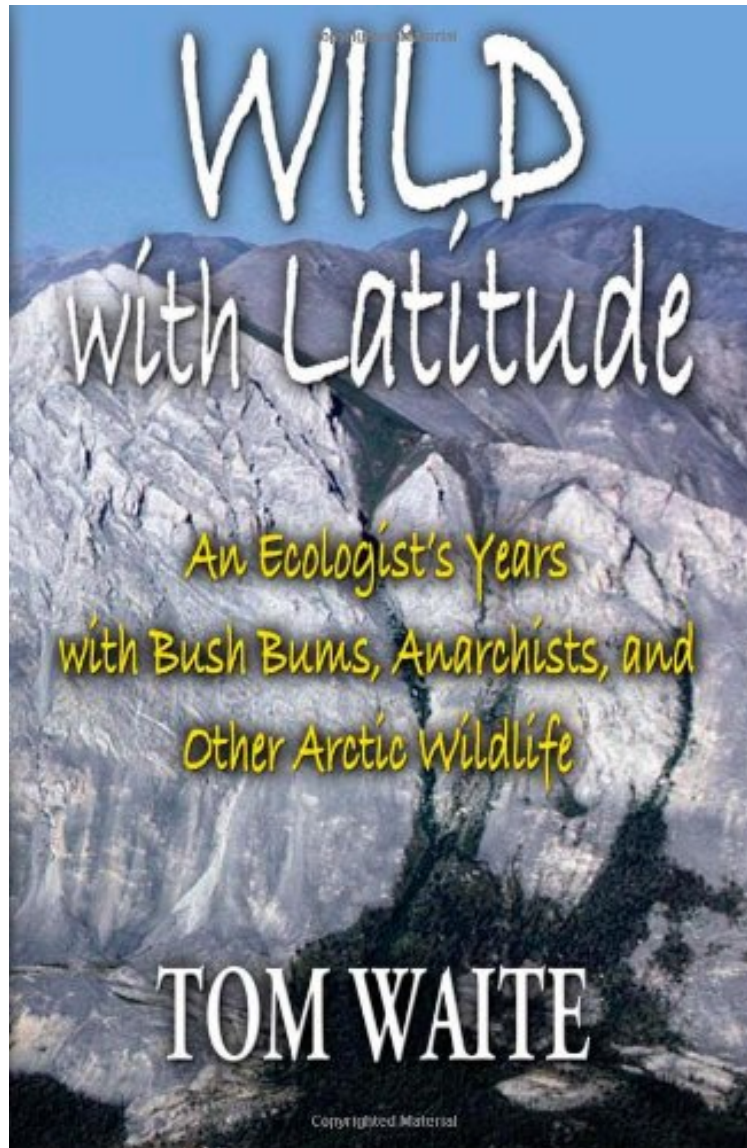


(Free read ebook) WILD with Latitude: An Ecologist's Years with Bush Bums, Anarchists, and Other Arctic Wildlife

WILD with Latitude: An Ecologist's Years with Bush Bums, Anarchists, and Other Arctic Wildlife

Tom Waite

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Tom Waite : WILD with Latitude: An Ecologist's Years with Bush Bums, Anarchists, and Other Arctic Wildlife before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised WILD with Latitude: An Ecologist's Years with Bush Bums, Anarchists, and Other Arctic Wildlife:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Alaska, Alaska, Alaska...By m'leeAlaska, Alaska, Alaska...to those of us in the "Lower Forty-eight" this word evokes visions of majestic mountains, salmon packed rivers, and animal filled tundras. This book shows us that, and so much more. I wasn't sure, I was a bit apprehensive, but a good friend recommended it and assured me it was a well worth read. Well, it was. It was full of quizzical info...but most of all, it was hilarious. Never will I look at baseball, Fourth of July antics, a meandering paddle, a walk in the woods or gray jays the same. It showed a side of Alaska that I never thought I'd know; the day to day, year to year escapades of those tundra loving Alaskans; imported or not, feathery or not, hairy or not (sometimes in various combinations!). Whether it was in the big city of Fairbanks at a ball game, waiting for the weekly mail drop in an outpost called Wiseman, or studying gray jays in the wiles of the Grizzly filled Brooks Range, the author brings the characters to life and make us appreciate and understand the friend and foe in all involved...and all with humor. Everybody has a gift, some find theirs and some don't, Tom has definitely found his - as a passionate adventurer and fun-loving raconteur. It is a heartfelt and humorous read.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. If you have the sense that God gave geese...By LEWRDM...you will read "Wild With Latitude: An Ecologist's Years with Bush Bums, Anarchists, and Other Wildlife" by Dr. Tom Waite. Tom Waite is, quite possibly, the only person on this planet who is currently and has always used 90% of his brain to analyze, evaluate, and ENJOY the world around him. Waite's perception of people and places has been honed over more than 50 years of experiencing life in the wilds of Maine, Alaska, southeast Asia, and even Ohio (not to mention the natural corridor of the Appalachian Trail, as chronicled in "The LAUGHalachian Trail," another of what I hope will be a series of not-so-serious true adventure tales he will tell in the years to come). Wild With Latitude is as much about the bizarre and intriguing people Waite has met during his life's journeys to Alaska as it is about Waite himself. That's a good thing. Waite is a brilliant scientist, but he also has a way with words that will quickly immerse the reader in Waite's adventures in the rugged wilderness of Alaska north of the Arctic Circle. In many ways, this book made me feel as if I were one of the select few companions that Waite employed to accompany him as he ventured *up* the Kanuti River, or watched secretly as he erected a log cabin using nothing but the most primitive of tools and his own know-how. The added thrill of this book is that all of the experiences that Waite has chronicled occurred in the name of science--of wanting to know more about the natural world--rather than being a mere (and rather commonplace) collection of stories about venturing into the wilderness "just because." Yes, Waite channels the spirits of Thoreau and Murie and Muir, along with the rugged individualism and fortitude of Richard Proenneke, in this collection of tales of Waite's own adventures in the land of the midnight sun. His experiences might parallel most closely those of Olaus Murie, but, whereas Murie wrote almost exclusively about the wildlife around him and his uniquely solitary existence in Alaska, Waite extends the definition of "wildlife" to include the humans (also known as primates or apes in this book) with whom he had contact while conducting field research in the far north. The reader will also learn a thing or two about the non-human wildlife of far north Alaska in "Wild With Latitude." Bears figure prominently, and moose and otters do, too. But, in one of my favorite chapters, Waite discusses (Socratically) the survival strategies of the "almighty Gray Jay"--the organism at the heart of Waite's doctoral research and subsequent field study. This chapter reveals the real purpose of Waite's expeditions to the Alaskan wilderness, but it does double duty as a novice's introduction to the complex topics of behavioral ecology and games theory. Unlike the theoretical ecology class that Tom and I both endured at Ohio State way back when, the book's explanation of such principles is thoroughly enjoyable and thought-provoking! The reader will never look at a Gray Jay (or chickadee or nuthatch) the same way, ever again. It's hard to find fault with "Wild With Latitude," especially if one appreciates wry humor coupled with plain-English science and tales of rugged wilderness adventure. That is to say that if you're looking for a book about only one of these things, you probably will wish that Waite had spent more time on your pet subject. But, if you can wrap your brain around the idea that a person can do science, trek across vast expanses of wilderness and emerge unscathed, engage in fruitful conversation with others, AND still write eloquently about all of the above, you will not be disappointed with "Wild With Latitude."

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Student's TakeBy kiwi_zkI first met Tom when he was my professor for an ecological stats class at my undergrad alma mater. I remember visiting office hours not only to get help on his insightful (yet nearly impossible) homework assignments, but also to weasel stories out of him. It seemed that every angle of Tom's life came with a set of ridiculous tales! When I sat down with Wild the Latitude, I thought I had heard most of his field work exploits and blunders. Not even close! Reading this book was like going back in time to the glory of stats class office hours without actually having to talk about stats! The characters he encountered and friendships he made in Alaska were comical and enlightening for me. I've recently had my own graduate fieldwork carry me to Alaska. Aside from packing many layers of fleece, Wild with Latitude was the best preparation for my own field work that I could have had. I've made it a point to seek out my own encounters with characters (which really didn't involve much seeking: they just sort of fell across my path of their own accord). Sitting in a coffee shop in SE AK at the moment, it's with nostalgia that I can reflect on the many endearing and memorable people and events during field season at Glacier Bay. I only hope that the memories I scribble down now in little notebooks will stand the test of time and be just as inspirational as Tom's memories have been for me.

WILD with Latitude tells the unfiltered tale of an ecologist AWOL in the far north. The author sought Thoreauvian wildness. He found it, while overwintering solo in northern Alaska. Along the way, he cavorted with extreme yet ordinary humans -- bush bums, townsfolk, and even fellow ecologists. And he confronted other charismatic creatures -- bears, muskoxen, wolves, moose, and "Earth's Best Bird." WILD celebrates his footloose, steroidal adventure.

From the Back Cover WILD with Latitude celebrates close encounters with Arctic beasts, human and otherwise. During 11 years of ecological field work in northern Alaska, the author mingled with wild apes -- bush bums, redneck renegades, sourdoughs, societal dropouts, homesteaders, end-of-the-roaders, crusaders, nudists, Arctic explorers, adventure racers, trappers, goldminers, baseball aficionados, mushers, bohemians, and even fellow ecologists. These diverse humans share a sense of bold adventure, a healthy disrespect for mainstream values, and an esthetic appreciation for the vast wild lands. Their grit, unconventional lifestyle, and worldview make them ideal characters. These Arctic apes are not just wacky and colorful. They're wild. When the author wasn't face to face with apes, he was having close encounters with other charismatic creatures, including bears, muskoxen, wolves, moose, and "Earth's Best Bird." Some of these encounters were of the adrenaline-spiking variety. All of them were thrilling. You're invited to tag along on a series of bumpy rides with a semi-feral ecologist. His stories convey the steroidal nature of the far north. They describe life in a bush village, the adventure of conducting field work in the Brooks Range, his solitary sojourn, and the lives of extreme yet ordinary Alaskans. About the Author Tom Waite is a graybeard (retiring) professor of ecology with a proclivity for reminiscing. As a fresh-faced (aspiring) ecologist, he went AWOL annually to Alaska, where he studied survival strategies of the gray jay. He sought adventure and Thoreauvian wildness. He found both aplenty -- while consorting with trappers and miners, while trekking across the Brooks Range, while watching circus-like baseball games in Fairbanks, and while overwintering solo. In WILD with Latitude, he shares unfiltered tales of his Arctic adventures. Waite is currently at work on a series of books on ecological sustainability and rationality.