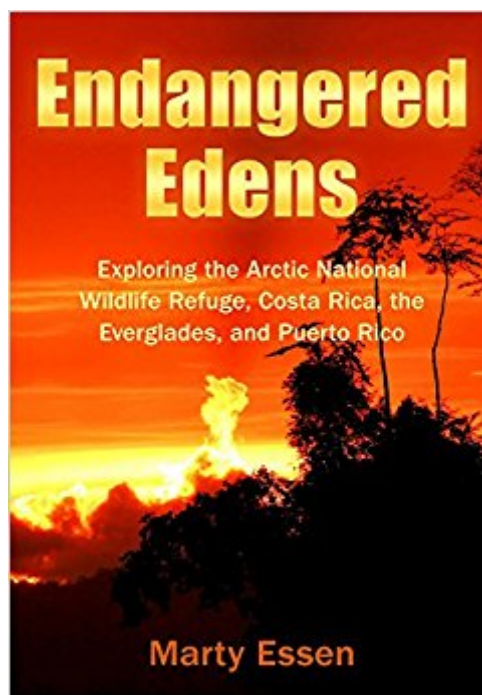




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Endangered Edens: Exploring The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Costa Rica, The Everglades, And Puerto Rico



Synopsis

Winner, Silver Nautilus Award for Animals & Nature Winner, Silver Nautilus Award for Middle Grades Non-Fiction Winner, National Indie Excellence Award in Nature Winner, Readers' Favorite Book Award in Environment Endangered Edens is the long-awaited follow-up to Marty Essen's six-time award-winning book, Cool Creatures, Hot Planet: Exploring the Seven Continents. Whether traveling with Marty and his wife, Deb, in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico, or going solo with Marty in the Everglades, readers will experience nature's Endangered Edens in a way few others have—all while laughing and learning along the way. In addition to Marty's entertaining stories, Endangered Edens also features more than 180 stunning color pictures—merging the genres of wildlife photography, adventure travelogues, and environmental education into one unforgettable book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A magical, fun journey through some of the world's hidden and not so hidden Edens, as seen through the eyes of a true wildlife aficionado and author whose writing makes the pages come alive and vibrate with the sound and pulse of nature. A book that once started is impossible to put down."—Dr. M. Sanjayan, senior scientist, Conservation International, television host, EARTH: A New Wild "I highly recommend that everyone join author Marty Essen and his wife, Deb, as they explore our planet's Endangered Edens. After reading about these last great wild places, you will surely be tempted to visit them and more importantly protect them for future generations to enjoy."—Cindy Shogan,

executive director, Alaska Wilderness League

“Endangered Edens: Exploring the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Costa Rica, the Everglades, and Puerto Rico is impressively informative and a lot of fun. Ideal for the armchair traveler and certain to be an enduringly popular addition to community library collections.”

•Midwest Book Review

“Join photographer extraordinaire Marty Essen and his intrepid wife Deb on their adventures through four endangered Edens. You’ll be treated to funny stories, unforgettable characters, and striking images. But most of all, you’ll come away with new appreciation for special places, and their wild inhabitants, under threat today.”

•Sy Montgomery, author, *The Soul of an Octopus*

Marty Essen is the author of the six-time award-winning book, *Cool Creatures, Hot Planet: Exploring the Seven Continents*. He is also a frequently booked college speaker. His college program, *Around the World in 90 Minutes*, has become one of the most popular slide shows of all-time.

Marty Essen has done a superb job of both describing and photographing four very interesting locations. The text wraps the photographs that they describe in a way that almost makes one feel that they have shared the experience - the blue of the sky and water against the golden hues of the landscape on the Fago river made me almost believe that I could feel the cool wind on my face. And yes, Marty really does owe Deb for her help in the Bat house. You will enjoy this book.

The photography was phenomenal and the accompanying story lines brought a chuckle now and then. Enjoyed it and would recommend it for anyone with a desire to travel...I would LOVE to go to the Arctic myself! Having been to Costa Rica on a working vacation for a capuchin count long ago, I appreciated the conditions described by the author...and I live in S.W. Florida so his descriptions were spot on!

very good.

Marty Essen once again dazzles the reader, arm chair traveler, and wannabe explorer who accompanies the author to travels and explorations of four very different ecological areas of natural wonder and wildlife. The reader is given a first hand experience of the sights, sounds, and awe inspiring landscapes described by the best tour guide anyone could ask for, fully enhanced by photographs, on a journey which is very real and personal. Part of the magic in this book is the

humor Marty injects into his very vivid descriptions, making them all the more memorable and unforgettable. The colorful and delightful photographs add an extraordinary sense of wonder and excitement to an already highly anticipated adventure into some of the last remaining Edens on earth. What is most notable about this book is that it includes a balance of raw adventure, which is most evident in the visit and exploration on land and water of the Arctic coastal plain, and that of a civilized modern traveler, among which is the fascinating journey to San Juan, Puerto Rico. I totally enjoyed Marty's singular adventure into the Florida Everglades where he encountered numerous bird species, butterflies, alligators and managed to save a venomous cottonmouth snake with the help of two Russian tourists! Descriptions of a trip to any country in Central America grabs my immediate attention but when it is Costa Rica, a top ecotourism destination, full of wildlife and natural habitats, a country recognized as second best in the world for "environmental sustainability", this book will show you all this and more! The Puerto Rican trip started out very civilized and ended up exploring areas within Marty's unique scope of interest. The plans included a three day stay at the Ritz Carlton Hotel, visits to beaches, exploring the historical old city, and the sixteenth century fort of El Morro. The photographs of these areas are outstanding! Marty's descriptions of these areas are absolutely accurate as I personally experienced what he described. Only after that, did Marty and his wife move on to wildlife explorations in the rainforest, discovering boa constrictors in the Culebrones Caves and various amphibians in the Mata de Platano Field Station and Nature Reserve. I can attest to the accuracy of Marty's statement: "... if you're looking for an enjoyable mix of history, beaches, city life and wild life, Puerto Rico is a wonderful place to visit." Since the author has a passion for herpetology and herpetofauna, which means he loves to study reptiles and amphibians, the book includes visits to three very warm climates where there is an abundance and variety of these species: Puerto Rico, the Florida Everglades and Costa Rica. However, do not be put off, as these locales also contain an abundance of birds and other fascinating creatures such as butterflies, herons, ibis, toucans, howler monkeys, parakeets, pelicans, scarlet macaw, turtles and dolphin and more, all of which have been photographed by the author and included in this book! Puerto Rico, Florida (not necessarily the Everglades) and Costa Rica have often independently been described by visitors as "paradise on earth" for very good reasons, as anyone who reads this book will discover for his or herself. Last, but certainly not least, and in great contrast to their visits to three southern and much warmer climates, is the author and his wife's daring adventure to the far north called "the Arctic." Marty and Deb visited the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in June 2008 and it is actually the first story in this book. First, a description of why it is a controversial region, there is a section about one hundred miles long which is rich in oil, on the coastal plain fought over by the

two major U.S. political parties, each of which take opposing stands on achieving their personal goals. The area is home to moose, caribou, over two hundred migrating bird species, various bears, and many other species. Oil companies claim they can protect the environment by using new technology that does not threaten the wildlife and the pristine natural unspoiled habitat. However, Marty Essen cites statistics of over 1,500 oil spills larger than one barrel in Alaska's North Slope discovered by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management. Obviously, as an ecotraveler Marty Essen and his wife stand on the side of preserving the environment and to this end, they wanted to visit the area while it was still in its natural state of beauty. The area is vast and sparse, yet it developed an ecosystem uniquely adapted to the harsh conditions of the climate. They arranged for an eight day personalized tour which included the services of the tour guide, airplane trip between Fairbanks, Alaska and the Arctic Refuge, food and lodging. The adventure included an eight mile canoe trip down the Jago River, along the Arctic Ocean Coast to Barter Island. Needless to say, the descriptions of this life-risking journey are worth reading! There are jaw-dropping and awe-inspiring photographs: aerial, wildlife and landscapes which present the area in its raw natural state. The author presents the realities of visiting this remote region of the world both as a great attraction as well as a risky, challenging and potential dangerous adventure! Received as gift with option to review. The entire book is a treatise on preserving the remaining natural and wild habitats of the globe and anyone who reads this book can not but help feel it is a very worthy cause. Erika Borsos [pepper flower]

After an author has already written about *Exploring the Seven Continents* (the subtitle of Marty Essen's award-winning first book), one might wonder what is left, but Marty Essen and his wife Deb had not finished exploring, and Marty has not finished writing about it. For this book Marty chose four "paradisiacal locations that face an uncertain future because of human activity." The chapter titles aptly convey the tone as well as the subject matter: Puerto Rico Herpin or: I Thought This Was a Girl Trip Arctic Eyewitness! Got Cottonmouth with Two Russians in the Everglades, But I Swear I Didn't Inhale Bat an Eyelash and Monkey Around in Costa Rica The book jacket promises readers "laughing and learning", and the book is a mixture of travelogue and nature lore, about which Marty and Deb are impressively knowledgeable. Although the travel anecdotes were my favorite parts of Essen's first book, in *Endangered Edens* the natural history and the accompanying photos provided the high points. For example, there are two

WOW! photos of blue herons that attracted me at first for their sheer beauty and then even more when Essen revealed that they show the same bird. These herons have foldable necks, and they really do look like different species depending on whether their necks are pulled in or extended. There were other fascinating little insights like the explanation that dark-colored leaves absorb heat and help Arctic plants survive in the extreme weather. Essen's Cool Creatures, Hot Planet, was delightful, but I was afraid that a book called Endangered Edens could be a real downer. Fortunately, any such expectation couldn't be farther from the truth! You open to a full-page photo of a colorful Costa Rican wren. It made me smile, and my smile got even bigger on the next page in the introductory material on Animals, Photos, and Thanks. Its first paragraph reads: "I took liberties when determining the gender of some animals. If I knew their correct sex, I used it. If not, I took my best guess." Referring to animals I shared moments with as either "him" or "her" just seemed more appropriate than using a generic "it". That opening tells a lot about both the book and the author. Not that there was not a somber message about environmental danger, especially in the chapter on Alaska. Essen describes his visit to the oil-drilling region of Prudhoe Bay and includes a photo of people earning their Polar Bear Plunge certificates for frolicking in an Arctic Ocean whose shore seems to be bordered by oil sludge. Although the book is only 152 pages, about 1/3 of which are filled with photos, do not expect a quick read, as you will linger over the stunning photos and dream of future travel or relive your own explorations of nature's wonders. NOTE: Although I am a big Kindle fan, I recommend you buy this book in hard copy to get maximum benefit from the beautiful photos. DISCLOSURE: I received an advance copy of this book with a request for a fair review.

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