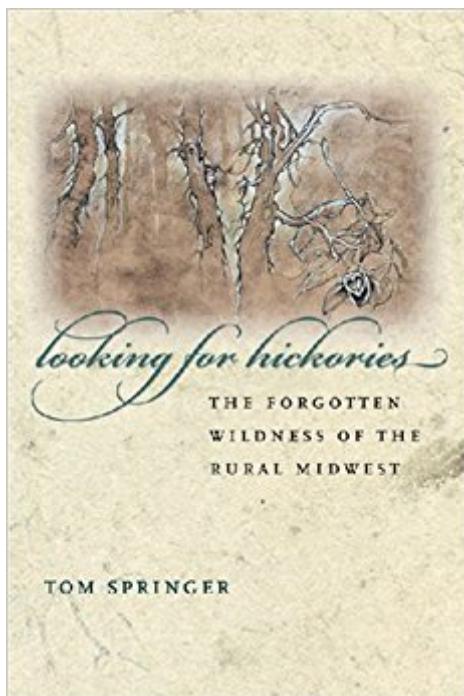


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# Looking For Hickories: The Forgotten Wildness Of The Rural Midwest



## **Synopsis**

A new voice reveals the unique character of the upper MidwestIn the spirit of other writers who share an affinity for the natural world---authors such as Robert Frost, Emerson, and Bill Bryson---Looking for Hickories is Tom Springer's ode to the people, natural beauty, and lore of the Midwest, a place where bustling communities neighbor a fragile mosaic of quiet woods, fertile meadows, and miles of farmland.Touching and humorous by turns, Looking for Hickories captures the essence of the upper Midwest's character with subjects particular to the region yet often universal in theme, from barn building to land preservation to the neglected importance of various trees in the landscape.Like Frost's best poems, Springer's essays often begin with delight and end in wisdom. They mingle a generosity of spirit and the childlike pleasure of discovery with a grown-up sense of a time and a place, if not lost, then in danger of disappearing altogether---things to treasure and preserve for today and tomorrow.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Tom Springer works full time as a senior editor at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan. For the foundation, he wrote the books *Blessed With Children*, and *How to Unravel Science Mysteries for Young Minds Without Unraveling*. On his own, Tom's written about nature and outdoor travel for newspapers and magazines such as *Backpacker*, *Michigan Out-Of-Doors*, and *Notre Dame*, and his nature-themed commentaries have aired on several National Public Radio programs. He retired as a master sergeant from the Michigan Army National Guard, and holds a master's degree in environmental journalism from Michigan State University. He lives with his wife

and two daughters near Three Rivers, Michigan.

Looking for Hickories is a personal narrative interwoven with Michigan history and information about native flora and fauna, especially trees. The author found a sort of redemption through the Michigan forest, not in a New-Age way, but in a very straightforward, Michigan way. As an active member of a land conservancy, I particularly enjoyed his chapters on land trusts and on handling invasive species. He points out what seems to have escaped many otherwise gentle people: for millenia, the land has survived many disasters and flourished, without man's help burning, poisoning, and bulldozing vast tracts in the name of ecological purity. I took this book out of the library and then bought a copy, so I could pass it around to members of the conservancy. My only reservation is that the book tries to be several things at once: a memoir of personal development, a personal history of his family, a compendium of Michigan trees and their uses in pioneer days, the remnants of these old days still visible in the Michigan countryside; the problems that face land conservation today; various sick people who burn old barns or forests; and his own young family. While he handles many of these quite well, they might have held together better as the subject matter of several books. All in all, a worthwhile read, especially to anyone who knows and loves the woods and waters of Michigan.

Delightful essays.

I should have bought two = one for me and one as gift. Love the area it was written about - Great!

I've heard the author speak on a couple occasions and he is a great story teller. The book is very enjoyable.

The inspirational depth of "Looking for Hickories" is rare in my extensive collection of books devoted to nature themes. I compare Tom Springer's ability to convey the importance of embracing the natural elements of life to Annie Dillard and her classic of nature writing, "Pilgrim at Tinker Creek." *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (Harper Perennial Modern Classics) Tom Springer's "Looking for Hickories" affirmed a multitude of thoughts and feelings in me that I thought to be unknown or unvalued by most others. It fed my soul and made me feel more complete in my yearnings to connect with the natural world. Tom Springer managed to educate me, inspire me, humor me, affirm me, and move me to tears. "Looking for Hickories" is a true work of art that resonated deeply with

this reader and enriched my life. I anticipate re-reading it for inspirational, meditative, and devotional purposes. I have also purchased multiple copies of it to give as gifts to like-minded friends. They are in for a treat.

A wonderful, intelligent, interesting, informative, wry collection of essays on life and learning in the rural Midwest. After reading it, I immediately ordered a second copy for a friend and I plan to order more as Christmas gifts for other friends and family members. If you enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty and wonder of the rural heartland, you'll enjoy and appreciate this book. And you'll learn a surprising amount about the world just outside your door.

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