



Footsteps in the Jungle: Adventures in the Scientific Exploration of American Tropics

Jonathan Maslow

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Jonathan Maslow here portrays thirteen scientists whom he calls “the luckiest men and women of all time”—the explorers who first mapped the tropical regions of the Americas and discovered the glorious biological orgy that is nature in the tropics. They were the first to color the chorus of tropical birds; the first to know the swiftness of the jaguar; the first to learn the loves of the orchid family and to collect the daunting variety of moths and butterflies and beetles; the first to run the rivers of the Amazon, to climb the Andes, and to dive the coral reefs of the Caribbean; and the first to unearth the ruins of America's pre-Columbian civilizations. “They were and are,” Mr. Maslow writes, “the Indiana Joneses of science, plunging ahead often recklessly on the path to discovery—and emerging with fabulous tales of scientific adventure...an antidote to the dismal late-twentieth-century image of bloodless scientists separated from nature.” From Alexander von Humboldt to Daniel Janzen, Mr. Maslow invites you to tag along into the field as he follows the explorers on their voyages and expeditions, offering a companion guide to their discoveries and a context for their imaginative quests.

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