

Only those who love trees should cut them, writes forester Ethan Tapper. In *How to Love a Forest*, he asks what it means to live in a time in which ecosystems are in retreat and extinctions rattle the bones of the earth. How do we respond to the harmful legacies of the past? How do we use our species' incredible power to heal rather than to harm?

Tapper walks us through the fragile and resilient community that is a forest. He helps us reimagine what forests are and what it means to care for them. This world, Tapper writes, is degraded by people who do too much and by those who do nothing. As the ecosystems that sustain all life struggle, we straddle two worlds: a status quo that treats them as commodities, and opposing claims that the only true expression of love for the natural world is to leave it alone.

Proffering a more complex vision, Tapper argues that the actions we must take to protect ecosystems are often counterintuitive, uncomfortable, even heartbreaking. With striking prose, he shows how bittersweet acts—like loving deer and hunting them, loving trees and felling them—can be expressions of compassion. Tapper weaves a new land ethic for the modern world, reminding us that what is simple is rarely true, and what is necessary is rarely easy.

Forests are communities, defined by connection and sustained by death as much as by life. What if we could understand them while letting them remain exquisite mysteries?

ETHAN TAPPER is a forester and writer based in Vermont. Since 2012, he has worked as a consulting forester and service forester, managing public and private forestlands and advising thousands of landowners. Tapper leads dozens of public events each year, maintains an active social media presence, and writes a column in newspapers and a quarterly column in *Northern Woodlands* magazine. He has received numerous awards and distinctions, including being named Forester of the Year by the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance in 2021. Tapper manages Bear Island, his 175-acre forest and homestead in Bolton, Vermont, and plays in a punk band.

READ BY EVAN SIBLEY

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The Playaway format is recommended for children ages 5 and up.



AUDIO



HOW TO LOVE A FOREST

TAPPER

Adult



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