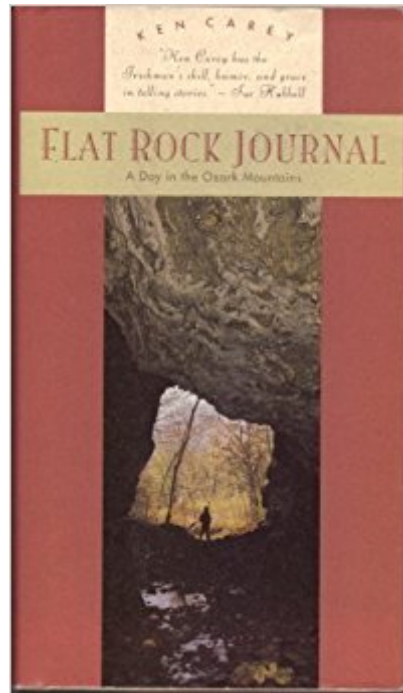


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# Flat Rock Journal: A Day In The Ozark Mountains



## Synopsis

Shares a day-long spiritual journey through the natural world of the Missouri Ozarks, where the author and his wife have lived for twenty years.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

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## Customer Reviews

Ken Carey's book packs half a lifetime of good living--years of raising children and learning the ways of the Arkansas backwoods--into a mere 160 pages. There, on his 80-acre patch of ground, Carey studies the ways of the mountain people, campaigns against the forestry industry's clear-cutting practices, raises vegetables, and comes to grips with the realities of the place--such as venomous snakes outnumbering people by a wide margin up in the mountains. This fact prompts Carey to examine his leanings toward Buddhism: the kill-nothing philosophy is sublime. But in the Ozarks anyone exhibiting so pacific a temperament during summer months would soon be compost. Carey seems to have found a real home in this neglected corner of America, and he's given us a terrific book. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Every spring Carey ( *The Return of the Bird Tribes* ) takes a ritual solitary walk--dawn to dusk--during which he meditates, reminisces and renews himself. A child of the '60s, he acted on dreams of going back to the land and found an 80-acre farm at the end of a dirt road in the Missouri Ozarks. He and his wife Sherry have made a rewarding life for their family in this heavily forested region with its limestone caves, waterfalls and more than 1000 species of plants. On the "day" reported here, Carey absorbs the splendors of nature. He climbs a huge oak to survey the

countryside and gets caught in a violent thunderstorm. He recalls a fight to preserve a local forest, his family's learning to co-exist with copperheads and the competition between two dowsers to locate his well. This charming memoir reflects Carey's love of nature and his commitment to preserving the environment. \$25,000 ad/promo; author tour. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

book arrived quickly. great read. i try to buy anything ever put out by Ken Carey. Definitely recommended. Hope he puts out more.

A whimsical book with excellent descriptions of the area. In reading, one feels one experiences the environment along with the author. My favorite parts are: spending a storm in a tree and frog symphonies...

One of the best books ever! Spiritual and deep!

'[T]his little cliff here is the exposed heart of a mountain that has seen the suns, felt the winds, and known the rains of 450 million years!' Ken Carey has a talent for bringing the most breathtaking of observations into the context of a walk through the woods. He is a storyteller who knows how to weave exactly the right tapestry of earthy humanity, self-effacing humor, grand sentiment and ineffable mystery - all in the space of a singular day. Not since our childhoods have we had days as rich in adventure as the one Ken takes us on along a path into wild springtime near his family's home in the Missouri Ozarks. Though there is plenty to see and do along route (including most memorably wordless conversations with birds, a climb to the top of a tree in a storm, and jamming with frogs), he free-associates these discoveries with fascinating revelations and reminisces about his life and those of the colorful characters that have peopled it. I read this book when I first came to live in the forest community that arose out of the love Ken and his wife Sherry share for this place. Re-reading it five years later, I am even more enchanted and inspired. Ken writes: 'This forest is built not upon the struggle that many still associate with concept of evolution. It is built upon the genius of cooperation.' And I'm grateful to know what he means. Here I have come to understand the value of listening to trees. A water person, I have also delighted in Ken's poetic descriptions of the hidden ways of water. There is more packed into this book and this day than many are blessed to experience. Thank you friend Ken!

It was a gift and they were thrilled with it.

Haven't finished the book; however, what have read is beautiful. If anyone is feeling out of sorts and is choosing a peaceful heart again, read this book.

Flat Rock Journal is a kind of autobiography, and it is indeed about the author and his life-history, so those readers who want to learn about Ozark ecology will be frustrated or find the author egocentric. But "person in the woods" tales are not natural history, they are stories that begin from Thoreau's "Most people live lives of quiet desperation" and proceed to show how the author escapes from this. The trees, birds and frogs - indeed the whole landscape of Flat Rock - is a kind of prop for this, however lovingly described. Carey is aware enough of this at his best, as in the chapter where he tries to get frogs to sing Handel. His life isn't meant as a model for everyone's, except insofar as he definitely escapes quiet desperation, and wants the rest of us to do so too.

I enjoyed the read. I enjoyed it much more after I decided not to project my own experiences and attitudes (I have spent most of my life living in the Ozarks), onto the author's work. There were parts of the book which were truly good. Other parts made me worry. Setting in a tree during a storm is not my cup of tea, but hey, if it rang Carey's bell....who am I to throw rocks. All in all, I would recommend the read, it was interesting and it is always good to look inside another person's world. I do admire the author's stick-to-it-ness. So many of the "back-to-the-land-folks" who come there depart so quickly.

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