



With Broadax and Firebrand: The Destruction of the Brazilian Atlantic Forest (Centennial Book)

Warren Dean

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Warren Dean chronicles the chaotic path to what could be one of the greatest natural disasters of modern times: the disappearance of the Atlantic Forest. A quarter the size of the Amazon Forest, and the most densely populated region in Brazil, the Atlantic Forest is now the most endangered in the world. It contains a great diversity of life forms, some of them found nowhere else, as well as the country's largest cities, plantations, mines, and industries. Continual clearing is ravaging most of the forested remnants.

Dean opens his story with the hunter-gatherers of twelve thousand years ago and takes it up to the 1990s—through the invasion of Europeans in the sixteenth century; the ensuing devastation wrought by such developments as gold and diamond mining, slash-and-burn farming, coffee planting, and industrialization; and the desperate battles between conservationists and developers in the late twentieth century.

Based on a great range of documentary and scientific resources, *With Broadax and Firebrand* is an enormously ambitious book. More than a history of a tropical forest, or of the relationship between forest and humans, it is also a history of Brazil told from an environmental perspective. Dean writes passionately and movingly, in the fierce hope that the story of the Atlantic Forest will serve as a warning of the terrible costs of destroying its great neighbor to the west, the Amazon Forest.

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