



## LANDSCAPE WITH REPTILE: Rattlesnakes in an Urban World

*By Thomas C. Palmer*

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A look at a community of timber rattlesnakes examines their ecology, evolution, New England history, and American culture and offers a defense of this outlaw species. 10,000 first printing.

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## **LANDSCAPE WITH REPTILE: Rattlesnakes in an Urban World** By Thomas C. Palmer **Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From Library Journal

Palmer's book is a rarity--fascinating nature writing that includes human history and sociology along with ecology and evolution. Palmer takes that unloveable creature, the timber rattlesnake, and uses it to discuss an incredible variety of topics related to our relationships with the natural world, especially rattlesnakes. He emphasizes the area of the Blue Hills just south of Boston, probably the last remaining habitat for the timber rattlesnake in New England. He shows us the world and its history from a perspective we seldom even imagine. *Landscape with Reptile* is essential for herpetological and regional New England collections and is an excellent selection for general natural history collections.

-*Katharine Galloway Gartska, Intergraph Corp., Huntsville, Ala.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Highly engrossing account of a small group of rattlesnakes just south of Boston. The Blue Hills, within sight of the Boston statehouse, are deep in mixed pine and hardwood, with miles of southern-facing rocky outcrops, ideal for coldblooded creatures to sun themselves. Here, Palmer takes us for long rambles and reveries: How, for instance, does it feel to be the victim of *Crotalus horridus*? In a strikingly original and sympathetic passage, he puts us inside a chipmunk's mind as the animal is bitten by a rattler and dies. The rattlesnakes of the Blue Hills are so reclusive that Palmer tramped the woods for years, never seeing one until he went in May to their stony lairs, where they were emerging from hibernation. Rattlesnakes are rare there for one reason only: ruthless extermination. Palmer has traced this history back to the Massachusetts Bay Company. He quotes Cotton Mather: "Our Trained Bands in some of our Countrey towns...carry on a War with the Snakes...." The 18th century saw bounties for all sorts of creatures (including 100 pounds for the scalp of an adult male Maine Indian, and 50 for the same of a woman or child). By examining which towns had higher bounties, Palmer is able to estimate where rattlesnakes were most prevalent. Among a great number of interesting essays, Palmer gives a complete history of bite treatment (including such 19th-century methods as a "half pint of bourbon every 5 minutes, until a quart had been taken"); visits with writers who defended *Crotalus*, from Thoreau to Oliver Wendell Holmes; and offers introductions to the rattlesnakes' silent US relatives--the pit vipers--which include the widely dreaded fer-de-lance. Prime nature writing, capably focused through multiple views of natural history, ecology, medicine, history, evolution, and anthropology. -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

From the Back Cover

In this marvelously original and authoritative book, Thomas Palmer introduces us to a community of rattlesnakes nestled in the heart of the urban Northeast, one of several such enclaves found across the country. From this unusual springboard, Palmer plunges into an examination not only of *Crotalus horridus*, but also of ecology, evolution, folklore, New England history, and American culture.

Just south of Boston, within view of the State House, a range of low, rugged hills interrupts the suburbs. In these Blue Hills lives one of the last populations of timber rattlesnakes - easy enough to find if you know where, and how, to look. *Landscape with Reptile* celebrates their survival with a kaleidoscopic journey through nature, literature, and history guided and informed by the snake's own serpentine passage through time. It includes a spirited defense of an outlaw species, a glance at the hazards of snakebite, an account of a multi-million-dollar development project halted by *Crotalus*, a travelogue, a collection of tall tales, and a meditation on the spectacle of life on earth. Like the best nature writers, Palmer lives and breathes with his

landscape, but unlike them, he finds his landscape is his own backyard.

Rarely has a book of natural history moved out in such a manner from a focus so uniquely unexpected. A master craftsman, Thomas Palmer serves up a story with the authentic flavor of the woodlands it comes from, telling us everything we ever wanted to know about rattlesnakes - and much more we would never dream to ask.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Alfred Cox:**

Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or even goal; it means that e-book has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. These are reading whatever they consider because their hobby will be reading a book. Consider the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book if they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you'll have this LANDSCAPE WITH REPTILE: Rattlesnakes in an Urban World.

#### **Regina Laporte:**

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#### **Celeste Silver:**

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#### **Willie Dominguez:**

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