



Returning North with the Spring

John R. Harris

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“Harris’s thrilling revisit is a powerful addition to nature-writing in its own right.”—Janisse Ray, author of *Drifting into Darien: A Personal and Natural History of the Altamaha River*

“A highly engaging narrative of adventure amid wild beauty. Harris describes not only what has been lost but also what remains, and merits our protection, today.”—John Elder, author of *Pilgrimage to Vallombrosa: From Vermont to Italy in the Footsteps of George Perkins Marsh*

“Captures the connection between humans and the landscape in order to ask essential questions: How do we cope with loss? How do we hope for recovery in the face of such devastation as species extinction and climate change?”—A. James Wohlpart, author of *Walking in the Land of Many Gods: Remembering Sacred Reason in Contemporary Environmental Literature*

“Following in the footsteps of one [of] the sweetest adventures any American ever took, John Harris demonstrates that the beauty of the American East, even on a warming planet, is still hauntingly deep.”—Bill McKibben, author of *Wandering Home: A Long Walk Across America’s Most Hopeful Landscapes*

At winter’s end in 1947, driven by the devastating loss of a son killed in World War II, naturalist Edwin Way Teale and his wife Nellie followed the dawning spring season northward in an amazing 17,000 mile odyssey from the Everglades to Maine. He wrote about the adventure in the best-selling book *North with the Spring*. Its sequel *Wandering Through Winter* won the Pulitzer Prize, and Teale became the most recognized nature writer of his day.

Retracing Teale’s route, writer John Harris reveals a vastly changed natural world. In *Returning North with the Spring*, he stops at the very places where Teale once stood, paddling through Everglades National Park, the Okefenokee wildlife refuge, the Great Dismal Swamp, and trekking across the Great Smoky Mountains, the New Jersey Pine Barrens, and Cape Cod. He is stunned to see how climate change, invasive species, and other factors have affected the landscapes and wildlife in the years since Teale saw them.

Yet Harris also discovers that many of the vulnerable sites Teale described have been newly “rewilded” or permanently protected by the government. He looks at current restoration projects, models of sustainable residential development, efforts to control invasive species, and environmental success stories such as the alligator, the bald eagle, and the black bear. Along the way, he meets an array of ecologists, naturalists, and beloved authors who join in his adventure by sharing their memories and experiences of the natural environment in Eastern North America.

Homage to the past, report on the present, glimpse into the future—this book honors what has been lost in the years since Teale’s famous journey and finds hope in the small tenacities of nature.

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