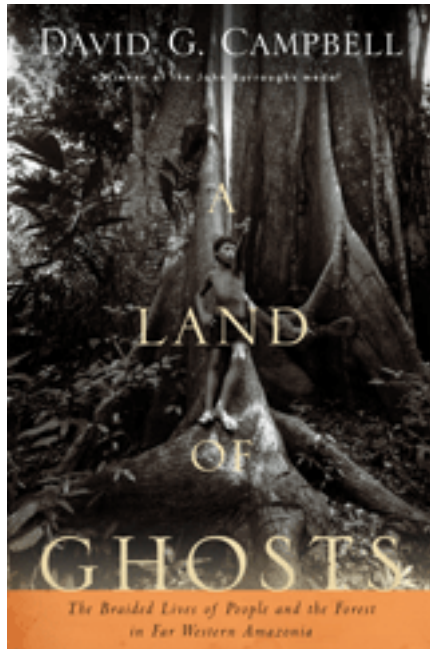


Press Release



[A Land of Ghosts](#)

by [David Campbell](#)

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"Only very rarely are [reviewers] sent something so obviously a work of real quality that all they can do is say: 'Buy this book!' David G. Campbell's *A Land of Ghosts* falls into this category . . . It is an instant classic." — Toby Green, *The Independent*

About the Book

The western Amazon is the last frontier, the wildest west the Earth has ever known. For thirty years David G. Campbell has been exploring this lush wilderness, where more species live than have ever existed anywhere else at any time in the four-billion-year history of life on our planet.

In *A Land of Ghosts: The Braided Lives of People and the Forest in Far Western Amazonia* (Houghton Mifflin; publication date: March 8, 2005), Campbell takes us with him as he travels to the town of Cruzeiro do Sul, 2,800 miles from the mouth of the Amazon. Here he collects three old friends: Tarzan, a street urchin brought up in a bordello; Arito, a caiman hunter turned paleontologist; and Pimentel, a master canoe pilot. They travel together even farther into the rain forest, set up camp, and survey every living plant in a land so rich that an area of less than fifty acres contains three times as many tree species as all of North America.

Campbell knows the trees individually, has watched them grow from seedling to death. He also knows the people of the Amazon: the recently arrived colonists with their failing farms; the mixed-blood Caboclos, masters of hunting, fishing, and survival; and the refugee Native Americans. Campbell introduces us to two remarkable women, Dona Cabocla, a widow who raised six children on that lonely frontier, and Dona Ausira, a Nokini Native American who is the last speaker of her tribe's ages-old language. These people live in a land whose original

inhabitants were wiped out by centuries of disease, slavery, and genocide, taking their traditions and languages with them — a land of ghosts.

About the Author

David G. Campbell is the author of the prizewinning *Crystal Desert: Summers in Antarctica*. He is a professor of biology at Grinnell College.

Praise for *A Land of Ghosts*

"A magical odyssey . . . Campbell's prose is poetic, and his painterly eye for detail makes you feel you are right there in the boat trying to avoid the wrath of a female caiman protecting her young . . . I hope this masterpiece of a book will help to show Earth's 'matricidal children' the error of their ways." — Peter de Groot, *New Scientist*

"A sizzling pilgrimage — a rodeo of breath-catching details, kingdoms of fauna and flora and riverine skylines — haunted by trenchant foreboding that this topmost cream of creation will soon be destroyed." — Edward Hoagland

"[*A Land of Ghosts*] brilliantly evokes the beauty of the river basin, the plants and animals, and, most of all, the people. There's more, too: the terrible underside of beauty, an environment disrupted and partly broken by human insensitivity and greed." — Chet Raymo

"A staggering elegy for peoples and other species broken on the rack of dubious progress, a travelogue of the most engaging sort, and a testament to the acute sensibilities of one of our greatest scientist-writers." — Robert Michael Pyle