



Florida: A Fire Survey (To the Last Smoke)

Stephen J. Pyne

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In Florida, fire season is plural, and it is most often a verb. Something can always burn. Fires burn longleaf, slash, and sand pine. They burn wiregrass, sawgrass, and palmetto. The lush growth, the dry winters, the widely cast sparks—Florida is built to burn.

In this important new collection of essays on the region, Stephen J. Pyne colorfully explores the ways the region has approached fire management. Florida has long resisted national models of fire suppression in favor of prescribed burning, for which it has ideal environmental conditions and a robust culture. Out of this heritage the fire community has created institutions to match. The Tallahassee region became the ignition point for the national fire revolution of the 1960s. Today, it remains the Silicon Valley of prescription burning. How and why this happened is the topic of a fire reconnaissance that begins in the panhandle and follows Floridian fire south to the Everglades.

Florida is the first book in a multivolume series describing the nation's fire scene region by region. The volumes in *To the Last Smoke* will also cover California, the Northern Rockies, the Great Plains, the Southwest, and several other critical fire regions. The series serves as an important punctuation point to Pyne's fifty-year career with wildland fire—both as a firefighter and a fire scholar. These unique surveys of regional pyrogeography are Pyne's way of "keeping with it to the end," encompassing the directive from his rookie season to stay with every fire "to the last smoke."

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