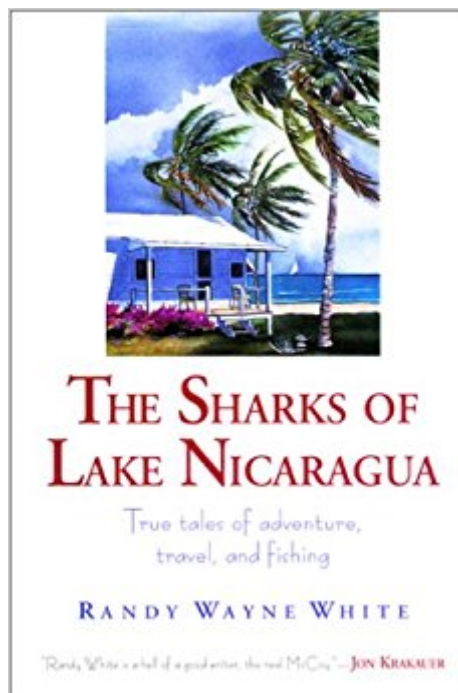




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The Sharks Of Lake Nicaragua: True Tales Of Adventure, Travel, And Fishing



Synopsis

Whether he's engaging in aerial combat or riding an Iddarod sled, Randy Wayne White is one of America's most adventurous travelers. He studies antiterrorist driving techniques, dives for golf balls in a pond at a country club, hunts his fellow man with a paint gun, ice fishes for walleye with X-ray-stunned nightcrawlers, and poaches Panamanian crocodiles or goes pig shooting in the Australian outback. With self-effacing optimism, White captures the joys and fears of wandering the earth's surface with an eclectic cast of weirdo fellow travelers a frog that won't jump, a group of expatriate Brits who've developed an interesting cure for road jaundice, and even a mad Australian scientist. Though he rarely finds what he's looking for such as the legendary landlocked bull sharks of Nicaragua, or the secret to successful winter fishing on a Minnesota lake he develops a Zenlike passion for the means and a rare ability to revel in the rib-aching humor of each exotic trip. In the end, White leaves the reader mesmerized by the potential of undiscovered places and the promise of endless adventure in unfamiliar territory, from Florida to Bangkok to Borneo, and everywhere in between. An icon to the new breed of thick-skinned, high-endurance adventure travelers of the 1990s, Randy White uniquely extols the pleasures of being alone and on the move.

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Customer Reviews

For exciting adventures in feral pig-hunting, salt-water fly-fishing or crocodile poaching, it's hard to imagine a better guide than White. In these stories, originally published in different forms in Outside magazine, White (Batfishing in the Rainforest) proves his mettle as an incisive humorist and a first-rate travel journalist. A "desire not to be whacked" leads him to an antiterrorist driving school,

where, with hilarious effect, he learns the ins and outs of avoiding bullets, rockets and bombs while operating a motor vehicle. In fighter-pilot training, he overcomes "sympathetic ocular/auditory response" ("If bounced around in an airplane, my eyes begin to water, so it appears as if I am weeping while I upchuck") and smokes his opponent with imaginary 20mm. cannons. White has a knack for the unexpected adventure. An innocent search for Pepto-Bismol in Panama City ends in a crocodile-hunting expedition. But it isn't until the book's final (and title) piece that White showcases the full range of his abilities as a writer. During his quixotic search for freshwater sharks, he becomes as immersed in the culture of the country as a 220-lb. American driving a Toyota Land Cruiser can be. He chases a pig into a sacred vestry, disrupting a wedding ceremony, and later gives shining new baseballs to children whose love of the game rivals his own. The portrait of Nicaragua and its people that emerges is a refreshingly unpoliticized history, skillfully interwoven with personal experience. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Novelist White (The Mangrove Coast, 1998, etc.) skimmed the cream off his Outside magazine adventure-travel column for this collection of stouthearted, amusing essays. White is one game hombre who has for years stumbled forth over the boundaries of the day-to-day. Yes, he is paid to get scared witless, to go peer over the last edge and report back. Still, to make a horse's ass of himself in dangerous, or at least compromising, circumstances that takes moxie, and to survive, be it physically, or in terms of self-respect, takes a state of grace. Here he finds himself in 16 hard or strange places, with the usual supporting cast of international low-rent odd fellows. The lunacies for which his editors have volunteered him include dog-fighting in an F-16, dog mushing in Alaska ("I was being dragged by five speed-crazy sled dogs, dragged over hill and dale, maybe being dragged to death or worse, to Nome"), and antiterrorist driving school ("If we don't rally the nerve to explore our automotive limits . . . They'll stop us, box us, then smoke us like cheap cigars"). There are fishing stories, though for White "some people travel to fish, but I fish to travel," and there are a couple of more reflective essays, the goofiness of the assignment a pretext for taking the political pulse of Nicaragua or triggering memories of his mother so pungent your eyes burn. White often makes a reach for his gags rather than nesting them in his stories, but then that is part of his charm: he's not just capable of being a buffoon, he can be a bit of a jerk too, a good trick on the audience-identification front. And he's also worldly, informed, decent, a slap-up writer, and ready as he'll ever be. First-class entertainments, just outrageous enough that when White comes to spin them to his grandchildren, they won't believe a word. -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Randy Wayne White is an authentic character. I suspected as much from reading his fiction efforts, usually involving Doc Ford. But in this collection of essays about his travels, you can see that he does not subscribe to Travel & Leisure or Conde Nast Traveler. He picks the damndest places to go, the damndest things to do when he gets there and writes about his experiences in a completely entertaining and very informative fashion. These are not your traditional outings and Mr. White would have it no other way. Hunting crocs with some authentic, although somewhat legal poachers, chasing pigs through cathedrals, exploring the seldom traveled parts of Australia, or fishing for fresh water sharks in Nicaragua (legend has it they exist), he is seldom far from disaster and you perversely kind of wish you were there..but not totally. He shows another side of himself with the gifts he brings to share with unknown Nicaraguan youngsters. I won't spoil the fun of finding out what it is...but it shows a softer side of the author, which is as welcome as his normal persona.

Randy Wayne White, what can I say. I am a true fan of this author. The Sharks of Lake Nicaragua , like Mr. Whites other books, captivates you from the moment you open the front cover until you close the back cover. Another tale knocked out of the ball park for Mr. White. The only thing I can say is I hate to finish his books because I have to immediately go on a search for another one. You can not read his books without being totally transported to the point of action. LOVE IT ... what a wonderful means of escape at the end of a day. Thank you

Excellent book, except p148 was missing. The conclusion of one of the stories. Still worthwhile.

This book contains some of the best writing on the world outdoors -- and the people and creatures there -- that I have ever encountered. Ranks among Nick Lyons, Edwin Way Teale, John Muir, Teddy Roosevelt and Ernest Hemingway.

A very quick read. Somewhat entertaining, but not much substance for prospective travelers to Nicaragua or elsewhere. The cover, or dust cover, of this book I bought via in May of 2000 looks nothing like the artwork on the web page I bought it from. Recommend you get this book in the library, read it and put it back on the shelf, as this is easily accomplished in a short library visit.-John

Some dated material does not detract from the fine writing.

Once again, Randy Wayne White turns in a virtuoso appearance as the author of this intensely enjoyable collection of stories chronicling his life as a self-described professional adventurer. A former fishing guide turned author, Mr. White's beautifully evocative prose masks a rock-hard sensibility towards the irony, pathos and joy of the human experience. He sees the world with a child's sense of wonder and curiosity, and then brilliantly writes about it from the wry and reflective viewpoint of a man who prides himself on living large. A present day Everyman, the author takes us places we weren't sure we wanted to go, until we experience them through his eyes. Whether chasing a runaway pig through a wedding scene in Nicaragua, dodging alligators in a clandestine nighttime raid on a Florida island golf course lake, or being dragged through icy snow on an overturned dog sled in Alaska, Randy White has the enviable ability to cross geographical and psychological boundaries with ease. Frequently (and justifiably) compared to John D McDonald, the author is also Joseph Conrad with a keen sense of humor. He acknowledges the heart of darkness we all share, but finds light, joy and laughter in abundance along the way. The reader is always in good hands with Captain White at the helm!

If you like your writing vivid and flush with the kind of humor that severely tests internal organs, look no further. This collection of pieces written initially for Outside magazine takes the reader off the beaten track to a world of radioactive night crawlers, illegally salvaged golf balls and pigs of prey, among other delights. Randy Wayne White has a wonderful talent for observation which, meshed with a finely honed sense of the absurd, has produced some of the most original travel writing anywhere. Take a trip with him; you won't regret it.

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