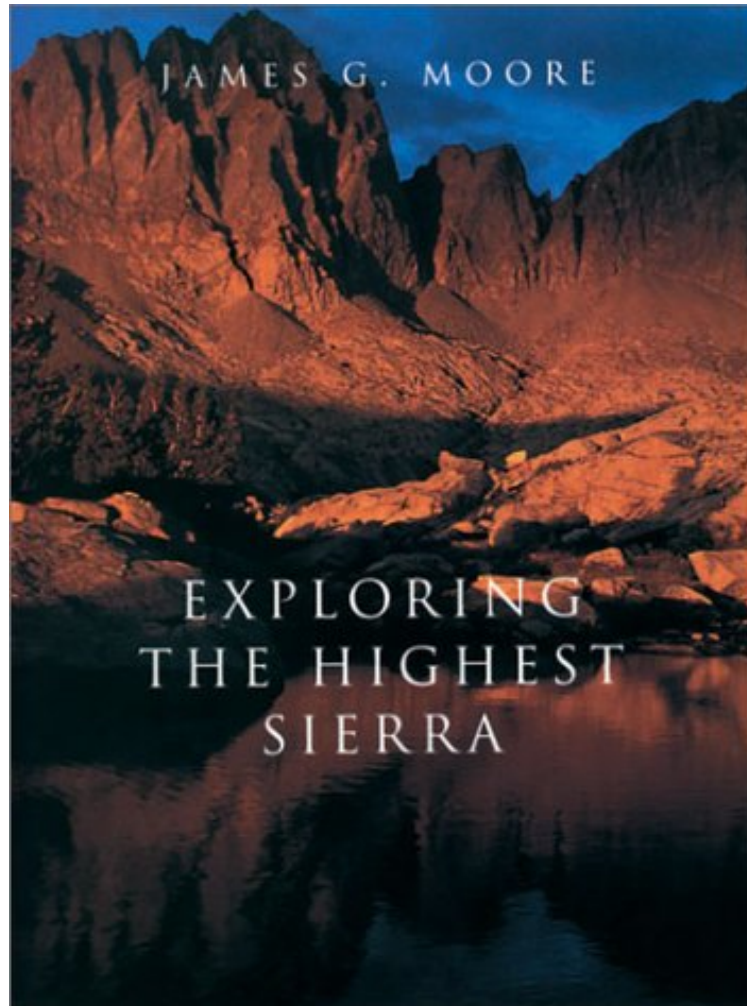


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Exploring the Highest Sierra

James G. Moore

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James G. Moore : Exploring the Highest Sierra before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Exploring the Highest Sierra:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A successor to Francois MatthesBy GeorgeMoore's book is the result of a lifetime spent studying and mapping the geologic structures of the Sierra. It is an incredible achievement and an important contribution to a detailed understanding of the geology of the Sierra for the amateur naturalist. As literature and science, it's a worthy successor to Matthes's Geologic History of the Yosemite Valley (USGS Prof. Paper #160). He includes terrific chapters on the work of the first scientists to study the range and then describes current knowledge about the creation of the Sierra: from the collision of tectonic plates to the retreat of the last glaciers.As an added bonus, Moore includes an appendix with detailed geologic comments for stopping points along several roads and trails in the Sequoia-Kings area: Highway 180 from Clovis to Cedar Grove; Highway 198 from Visalia and over

the Generals Highway; the Mineral King road; the High Sierra Trail from Lodgepole to its intersection with the John Muir Trail near Mt. Whitney; and, the John Muir Trail from Mt. Whitney to where it leaves Kings Canyon in the Evolution Valley region, 100 miles north. Although Moore concentrates his narrative mostly to the area of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (where, as luck would have it, I work as a ranger), anyone interested in the geology of the Sierra would find this book useful for its explanation of the major granitic and metamorphic structures we see throughout the range. Its large format makes it unlikely you'd want to slip it into your backpack as a field guide. It's also probably of interest only to the serious amateur, though I think its photos and organization make it accessible to a beginner who might just want to skim some of the detailed sections.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.
One to Keep and Refer to For the Rest of Your Life
By Greg James Moore has compiled a fantastic account of the earliest history, exploration, mapping, mining, politics and geology of the Sequoia - Kings Canyon National Parks area. This book, more so than any other that I have read on the Sierra, provides insights into the people, the origin of geographic names and the forces and interests that drove the people into the high Sierra region. A fascinating look at the barometric and surveying tools that were lugged to the top of the highest peaks is given and a historical account of the ever increasing accuracy of the maps and just how close the original estimates were. True to his profession, Moore then goes into an in-depth discussion of the current understanding of the geologic history of the region. This discussion will be a great interest to those with a casual to serious interest in geology and will provide a greater awareness for your next trip into the area. It held me, a retired geologist, captive and will remain on my shelf as one of my most treasured references.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Extremely thorough, specific, and interesting.
By Eric While not a book for those only casually interested in the Sierra, this book is fascinating for those seeking an in-depth understanding of the geology of the Sierra Nevada. It manages to be specific, extremely thorough and in-depth, and extremely interesting. It has all the accuracy and detail of a dry textbook as well as the entertainment value of a novel. You will never look at the Sierra - or any area of geologic interest - the same way again.

Written for the general reader with an interest in geology, natural history, and the early explorations of the highest part of California's Sierra Nevada range, this book is also an indispensable guide for visitors to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and adjacent areas. Maps, photographs, and geologic guides help visitors understand the formation of the awesome natural features before them. The region was one of the last parts of the United States to be explored, and it was only during the Civil War that the first scientific party attempted a reconnaissance map of the region. They discovered, in the process, that it included the highest mountain then in the United States, Mount Whitney. The book describes the arduous travels of the early explorers, including John C. Fremont and John Muir, and weaves the history of exploration together with modern geologic concepts to show the early naturalists' contributions to geologic thought. Throughout, all terms that may be unfamiliar to non-geologists are simply and succinctly defined, and the book is richly punctuated with anecdotes, tales, myths, and biographical sketches of colorful characters associated with the region.

'As a geologist who has worked extensively on the Sierra Nevada, I can say that Moore's book stunned me with its masterful treatment of much that I knew about this mountain range but so much more that I didn't know. It has no competition and will be a bible to the specialist and visitor to the region alike. With so much material to organize, I am amazed at how well Moore has been able to put it all together in a wonderfully readable fashion.' Garniss Curtis, University of California, Berkeley