

The Naturalist on the River Amazons

Henry Walter Bates

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#5294809 in Books 2002-06-28Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .79 x 6.00l, #File Name:
1404321152348 pages | File size: 36.Mb

Henry Walter Bates : The Naturalist on the River Amazons before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Naturalist on the River Amazons:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Amazing adventures along the in the 1850'sBy Robert J. SchaeferBates spent many years along the , collecting natural history specimens of every living thing, especially insects. He gives fascinating accounts of the lives of the ants and other insects. But the interesting material in this book is not confined to the entomological, for he also describes the lives and habits of the many ethnic groups who inhabit the banks of the , and tells of their life styles and his interactions with them. While ready to generalize about the

virtues and vices of the various groups to an extent that would be politically incorrect today, he seems to get along splendidly with all of them, and to face any unfavorable interactions with good humor. Throughout, he expresses his passion for the beauties of the tropical forest, and never seems greatly deterred by the numerous insect pests (mosquitoes, fire ants, gnats, etc.) which most of us would find unbearable. His stay on the was long enough that while his book starts with accounts of ascending the under the force of sail and paddle, it ends with travel by steamboat. This book will appeal especially to those interested in the natural history of tropical forests, but also to those who are interested in the human settlement of the . 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Lost sBy Sylvia A. Kelso Anything you want to know about the flora, fauna, human inhabitants, landscape, breakdown of population in towns and villages WITH racial proportions in the pop., plus endless stories of incidents while sailing in canoes and every other form of available water transport on the from Belem up to Manaus and beyond, around the middle of the 19th century, is in here. For a writer contemplating something set in the 19th C along the , it's a treasure-trove. As a look at the life of a modest but evidently highly intelligent, diplomatic and kindly tempered white man who managed his solitary voyages with an astonishing amount of co-operation and raising very little antagonism, it's a window on someone you'd almost like to know. As a picture of an that by the end of his voyages was already beginning to disappear, it's a painful reminder to anybody with an environmental consciousness of how much natural treasure we have already thrown away. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A very interesting read By Jack Baxter The old fashioned language is a bit of a struggle to get through some times, but once you get into the book it is a fascinating account of the (appropriate) when most people knew very little about it. I thoroughly enjoyed reading about the various species of butterflies, ants, snakes and the Orangs. People today might be slightly appalled at how Mr Bates shot pretty much anything that moved, but many of those species weren't endangered in those days (or weren't known to be endangered) and besides, it was for Science! It was quite amusing to hear of his troubles preventing the locals (whom he described as the most lazy, indolent people on the face of the planet) from drinking the alcohol he used to preserve specimens. One thing that stood out to me is the way he would say "lighted up", whereas today we say "lit up." For some reason this small sign of how language has changed over the last century and a half always made me smile.

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About the Author Henry Walter Bates was an English naturalist and explorer who gave the first scientific account of mimicry in animals. He was most famous for his expedition to the with Alfred Russel Wallace in 1848.