



Chiricahua Mountains: Bridging the Borders of Wildness (Desert Places)

Ken Lamberton

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Chiricahua Mountains: Bridging the Borders of Wildness (Desert Places) Ken Lamberton For many, these mountains represent the Apache stronghold of Geronimo. For others, they are a birdwatcher's paradise. But the Chiricahua Mountains of southeastern Arizona are more than this. They are a classic "sky island" of the desert, a rich storehouse of biologic diversity. On a journey undertaken in search of a pair of rare short-tailed hawks, Ken Lamberton takes readers on an excursion through these mountains, from their riparian canyons to their highest peaks. The Chiricahuas comprise the largest single range in southern Arizona, crisscrossed by more than 300 miles of trails. Lamberton is your guide along these trails, and his knowledge of the mountains and their natural history makes him a perfect hiking companion while Jeff Garton's stunning photographs enrich your visit.

Lamberton shares insights about the geology, habitats, and diversity of wildlife in a place of such isolation that species must either adapt or become extinct. The Chiricahuas are one link in a chain of mountains connecting the Rockies to the Sierra Madre Occidental in Mexico, and some Madrean species reach the northernmost extension of their ranges here: birds like sulphur-bellied flycatchers, mammals like jaguarundis, and trees like the Apache pine. But this is not an untraveled wilderness. We learn why the Chiricahuas are so popular with birders, who flock to these mountains from around the world in the hopes of spotting some of the nearly four hundred avian species found here. We also learn something of the Chiricahua's rich human culture, from Apache warriors to European settlers.

Gracing the text are more than a dozen black-and-white photographs by Jeff Garton that offer views of the Chiricahuas different from those usually found in tourist brochures: landscapes and riparian settings, rock formations and plant studies that give readers a lasting impression of the beauty and tranquility of this wilderness. Together words and images convey an intimate view of one of the Southwest's most exotic locations—stronghold, paradise, and everlasting island in the vast and rolling desert.



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