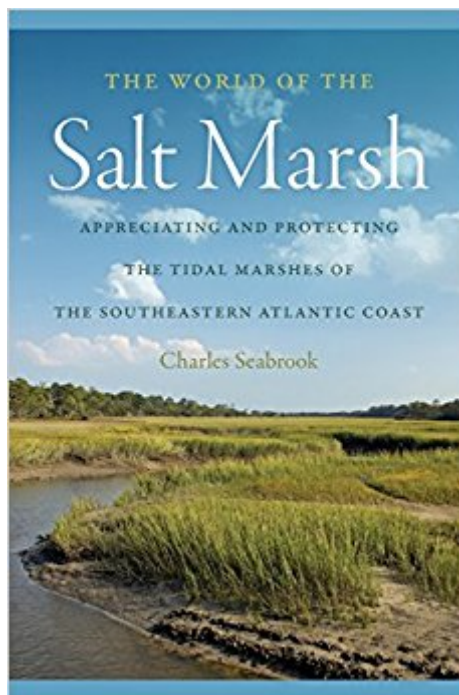


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# The World Of The Salt Marsh: Appreciating And Protecting The Tidal Marshes Of The Southeastern Atlantic Coast (Wormsloe Foundation Nature Book Ser.)



## Synopsis

The World of the Salt Marsh is a wide-ranging exploration of the southeastern coast—its natural history, its people and their way of life, and the historic and ongoing threats to its ecological survival. Focusing on areas from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, to Cape Canaveral, Florida, Charles Seabrook examines the ecological importance of the salt marsh, calling it “a biological factory without equal.” Twice-daily tides carry in a supply of nutrients that nourish vast meadows of spartina (*Spartina alterniflora*)—a crucial habitat for creatures ranging from tiny marine invertebrates to wading birds. The meadows provide vital nurseries for 80 percent of the seafood species, including oysters, crabs, shrimp, and a variety of finfish, and they are invaluable for storm protection, erosion prevention, and pollution filtration. Seabrook is also concerned with the plight of the people who make their living from the coast’s bounty and who carry on its unique culture. Among them are Charlie Phillips, a fishmonger whose livelihood is threatened by development in McIntosh County, Georgia, and Vera Manigault of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, a basket maker of Gullah-Geechee descent, who says that the sweetgrass needed to make her culturally significant wares is becoming scarcer. For all of the biodiversity and cultural history of the salt marshes, many still view them as vast wastelands to be drained, diked, or “improved” for development into highways and subdivisions. If people can better understand and appreciate these ecosystems, Seabrook contends, they are more likely to join the growing chorus of scientists, conservationists, fishermen, and coastal visitors and residents calling for protection of these truly amazing places.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The potential impact of *The World of the Salt Marsh* on society will be similar to the impact *Silent Spring* and *A Sand County Almanac* had in their time. Seabrook is a natural storyteller, and the book should be enjoyed by anyone with an interest in life along our coasts. (Fred Holland former director of NOAA's Hollings Marine Laboratory) Charles Seabrook spent his childhood next to a marsh, and in this marvelous and insightful book he shares his intimate knowledge and his love of these unique green meadows that fill the sounds and bays behind barrier islands. With numerous interviews of scientists and colorful local characters and with Seabrook as our guide, we envision the geologic history of the lower coastal plain of the southeastern U.S., see the sights, observe the plants and animals, hear the sounds, and even smell the smells of the marshes. Irrevocably intertwined with nature here is the fascinating cultural history from Native Americans through the slave culture of the plantations right up to the environmental impact of today's human rush to the shore. Breathtaking in its scope and highly readable, this book is a must-read for those interested in coasts and concerned for their future. (Orrin H. Pilkey coauthor of *The World's Beaches: A Global Guide to the Science of the Shoreline*) Told through the life experiences of his friends and colleagues—fisherman, crabbers, oystermen and other—the author's story frequently returns to his main theme: the destruction of this important environmental resource. . . . [Including] history, a summary of contemporary scientific research and current legislative initiatives. . . . [The World of the Salt Marsh is] another excellent wake-up call about the need to prevent the destruction of our natural environment. (Kirkus Reviews) You can read *The World of the Salt Marsh* cover to cover, or dip into it at random, but be prepared to get hooked at any point. The Wild Georgia columnist is a most entertaining and knowledgeable tour guide, whether nibbling a saltwort leaf that resembles a 'moist potato chip' and tastes 'great in stuffed crab'; teaching an impromptu lesson on how to wriggle out of quicksand-like 'pluff mud' by 'belly-crawling' across it; or in his description of the imperiled diamondbacked terrapin: 'Imagine a reptile with the dreamy eyes of a golden retriever and the unassuming face of a manatee. Add the docile temperament of a lamb and the beauty of a seashell.' (Gina Webb Atlanta Journal-Constitution) This book is highly recommended to anyone who shares our respect of the salt marsh and would like to learn about its biology and culture. (David Whitaker and Billy McCord Post and Courier) In this book, [Seabrook] takes a very personal—but still beautifully

reported a journey as he explores the Southeastern U.S. coast, from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, to Cape Canaveral, Florida. A native of Johns Island, South Carolina, Seabrook delves into natural history and ecological threats without letting the poetry of the marsh get lost in the science. (Teresa Weaver Atlanta Magazine) At first glance . . . The World of the Salt Marsh is the poignant story of the coast. On second glance, the richly woven layers of this compelling narrative blend coastal culture and natural history with saltwater ecosystem dynamics to educate and inform. . . . This book provides a clear snapshot of the life and times of a salt marsh in today's fast-paced world. Just as clearly, it illustrates the need for stewardship and education among people whose activities impact the ecosystem. Carefully researched and thoughtfully illustrated with 52 crisp black and white photos, The World of the Salt Marsh is a book for your keeper shelf. (Margaret Toussaint Darien News) In The World of the Salt Marsh, Charles Seabrook's masterful and comprehensive examination of what remains of these endangered and disappearing wetlands, the native of Johns Island, SC explains why we should be 'appreciating and protecting the tidal marshes of the southeastern coast.' (C. F. Foster Florida Times-Union)

CHARLES SEABROOK, a native of Johns Island, South Carolina, is a columnist and environmental writer for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He is the author of Cumberland Island: Strong Women, Wild Horses and, with Marcy Louza, Red Clay, Pink Cadillacs and White Gold: The Kaolin Chalk Wars.

Masterful style; blending history, lore, science, including current and future assessments into an excellent volume. I enjoyed this book and have learned new information about estuarine ecosystems by reading it. I also had read another Charles Seabrook work about Ossabaw Island. He does such a beautiful job describing these coastal areas. Highly recommended reading for anyone interested in the Southeast coast.

If you love the "Low Country" like I do you will undoubtedly enjoy Charles Seabrook's book. In this book he covers not only the natural side of this irreplaceable natural resource, but also the lifestyle and history of the people. The book is an excellent general resource for the region not too heavy in any one area, but does a good job of covering a little of everything.

I only wish that I had known what I know now having read this wonderful book. Growing up on John's Island, SC near the salt marshes along the Stono River, I often wondered what the names of

the sea animals and plants are, how they lived and interacted in the marsh environment, and how they survived hurricanes and pollution. This book, while replete with technical information, was easy to read, and answered all of these questions and much more. A must read for everyone living along the coast.

This book may be noted author Charles Seabrook's best effort yet - a combination of both a riveting story of personal experiences entwined with the natural beauty of the southeastern US coast, and, a field guide to all its flora and fauna. But be prepared: recent decisions by government and industry you may find shocking, as I did, that may portend a tragic ending to one of the richest ecosystems in the world. Only time will tell.

great book!

Using it as a book for my 8th grade Environmental Science class.

New to the Lowcountry, Seabrook's book has been instrumental in our understanding of life here and of living here. Not near finished with the work yet, but appreciative of the depth of his knowledge of the area and his skill in writing about it.

informative

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