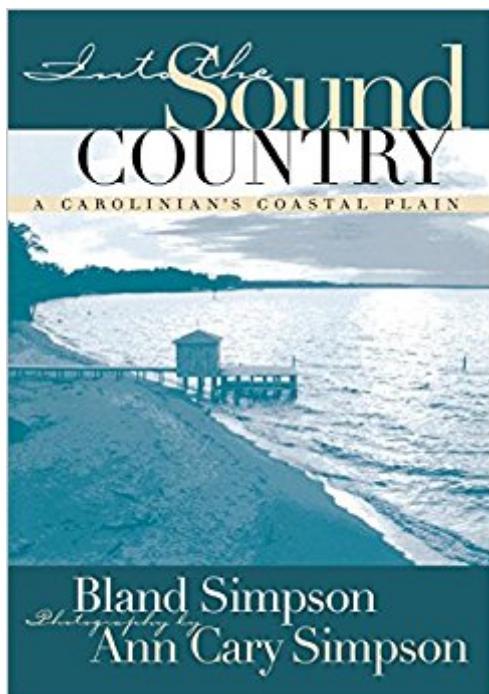


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# Into The Sound Country: A Carolinian's Coastal Plain



## **Synopsis**

Into the Sound Country is a story of rediscovery--of two North Carolinians returning to seek their roots in the state's eastern provinces. It is an affectionate, impressionistic, and personal portrait of the coastal plain by two natives of the region, writer Bland Simpson and photographer Ann Cary Simpson. Here Bland Simpson tours his old waterfront haunts in Elizabeth City, explores scuppernong vineyards from Hertford to Southport, tramps through Pasquotank swamps and Croatan pine savannas, and visits Roanoke River oyster bars and Core Banks fishing shanties. Ann Simpson's original photographs capture both the broad vistas of the sounds and rivers and the quieter corners of mossy creeks and country churchyards. Her selection of archival illustrations ranges from the informative to the humorous, from a turpentine scraper at work in the 1850s to a pair of little girls playing with a horseshoe crab on a Beaufort porch at the turn of the century. A memorable journey into eastern Carolina's richly varied natural world, Into the Sound Country is for anyone who would spend a while in one of America's most intriguing and underexplored areas.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Simpson will introduce you to a North Carolina you've never experienced."Coastwatch"An insightful and rich glance at an under-appreciated and under-explored region."Coaster"Simpson brings the natural world so close that the reader can almost smell the rivers."Virginia Explorer""[A] memorable journey into Eastern North Carolina's varied natural world, a reading of this volume should prove gratifying."Our State""AfÃ•AÃ " memorable journey into Eastern North Carolina's varied natural

world, a reading of this volume should prove gratifying."Our State"•Observations and anecdotes" form an amiable pastiche with Simpson's own family history and that of eastern North Carolina."Preservation Magazine"[A] memorable journey into Eastern North Carolina's varied natural world, a reading of this volume should prove gratifying."Our State"[Observations and anecdotes] form an amiable pastiche with Simpson's own family history and that of eastern North Carolina."Preservation Magazine" --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Into the Sound Country is an artfully illustrated love story about the tidal pull of a home place, told with passion and grace. Part history, part geography, and part memoir, it has a satisfying feel--like marsh mud between the toes, like the sound of familiar voices on the porch telling old-time stories at twilight.--Philip Gerard, author of *Cape Fear Rising*From wooden boats and salt marshes to pines and tar kettles, from colonists and pirates to crabbers and country folks, Bland Simpson tells the many-colored, many-voiced stories of a region that has--till now--been overlooked and unheard. The details are fine-drawn, the talk rings true, the humor is lively. Better yet, the book is a love letter, written straight from the heart of lifelong experience.--Janet Lembke, author of *Skinny-Dipping: And Other Immersions in Water, Myth, and Being Human*This son of the South has created a very entertaining read. . . . Into the Sound Country is a lark through a neglected but fascinating region of North Carolina.--Greensboro News and RecordSimpson is clearly a talented writer, and many of the sections about the coastal plain's natural areas contain beautiful passages. . . . Like coffee and beer, the sound country, with its jumbled forests and sulfurous waters, is something for which you have to develop a taste. Most people never bother. Together the Simpsons succeed in showing us why the region is worth taking some adventurous sips.--Raleigh News & ObserverThis is a wonderful book for anyone seeking a memorable journey into Eastern North Carolina's varied natural world without venturing outside your den.--Winston-Salem Journal For anyone seeking a memorable journey into Eastern North Carolina's varied natural world, a reading of this volume should prove gratifying.--Our StateAn insightful and rich glance at an under-appreciated and under-explored region.--Coaster[A] lyrical and passionate portrayal of eastern North Carolina. . . . Part autobiography, memoir, travelogue, history, fisherman's guide and environmentalist's goad, Into the Sound Country is an important work. . . . Beautifully written and intelligently produced.--Charlotte Observer If you've lived the city life all your years or visited only the prime tourist spots on the coast, Simpson will introduce you to a North Carolina you've never experienced.--CoastwatchWith the ease of an old storyteller and the knowledge of a naturalist, Simpson writes eloquently of coastal history, combining it with personal anecdotes.--Creative

LoafingI love reading this book. It captures the sights and sounds and smells of the North Carolina coast better than any book I've ever read.--Pat ConroyA very personal account of the people, scenes, and events from the region.--Fayetteville Observer-TimesSimpson brings the natural world so close that the reader can almost smell the rivers; the pine tar from the trees that gave North Carolina its nickname as the 'Tar Heel' state; and the sweet juniper water of the swamps.--Virginia ExplorerA highly personal and impressionistic ramble through a 200-mile swath of North Carolina's coastal plain, from the Great Dismal Swamp south to the Cape Fear River. The sights, sounds, and smells of this region, along with his observations of nature and the anecdotes of the natives he meets, form an amiable pastiche with Simpson's own family history and that of eastern North Carolina.--Preservation MagazineA special portrait of a special region.--Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk, VA

I don't know how I missed discovery of this book until now June2015. I have read many of Bland Simpson's books, and he is a gifted storyteller as well as a "Creative Writing Professor".I am a native DownEaster from Davis Shore and Corebanks, and I have read almost everything that's ever been written about the "Sound Country" but this is the best I've ever read and spoke to me in almost every sentence.I did not know that Bland Simpson's knowledge and memory about things here in our coasts and buried in our saltmarshes exceeded my own knowledge and exceeded anyone I've ever read.

I received Bland Simpson's "Into the Sound Country" as a gift. I've had it by the bed for my night reading. It's an unlikely book for me to read -- no plot, no tight narrative, no famous folks or... well, it's different.You walk into it rather slowly. I kept thinking of John Parker quoting White's description of Roanoke Island (site of the "Lost Colony") as "the goodliest land under the cope of heaven." "I got no respect for a man with judgment like that," Parker said.Simpson takes on this swamp filled, brackish, mosquito plagued, twisted tree, run-down and Godforsaken part of the world (except for the beaches) that he and his ancestors grew up in, and Suffering Cats! You can't put the book down. You want to go there. Hell, you want to LIVE there. Remarkable.I read until I couldn't keep awake last night and then for some reason -- perhaps my wife being away baby sitting in Charlottesville -- I woke up this morning a bit! before five and finished the book. Hated for it to end. That kind of book.Simpson teaches Creative Writing at Chapel Hill. His long ago past was at one time my present, the forties and fifties on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. It's a funny book to recommend. Who the hell has time for a book that is so... leisurely. And such good company. I read passages to Jutta. Long passages. That kind of book.Very quietly in a sort of sneaky way, you get a

picture of this guy and his family. Not a bad life. Not bad at all. You'll be glad you got to know him and them. His wife takes pictures. Good ones. You'll like her too.

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