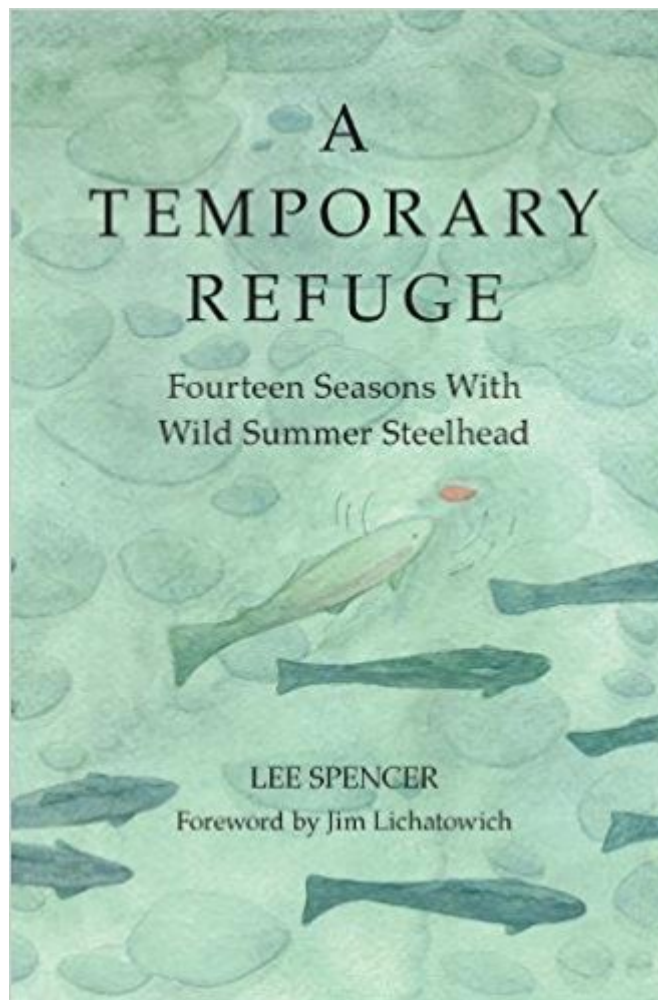




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Temporary Refuge, A: Fourteen Seasons With Wild Summer Steelhead



Synopsis

As featured in the documentary, DamNation (Patagonia, 2014).

Book Information

Hardcover: 320 pages

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Customer Reviews

“This is strong nature writing—descriptive and thorough, and helped by Spencer’s obvious devotion to his task.” —[Foreword Reviews \(STARRED REVIEW\)](#) “One of the best outdoor books of the summer.” —[Adventure Journal](#) “A Temporary Refuge succeeds on multiple levels. It effectively documents regional wildlife and the perilous annual migration of the wild fish. It puts the interaction between man and nature into important context, and shows why the wild population is so important, even as hatcheries breed more and more salmon. And it’s also a meaningful memoir about a man and his dog who were devoted to helping protect part of our shared natural heritage, year after year.” —[Foreword Reviews \(STARRED REVIEW\)](#) This is strong nature writing—descriptive and thorough, and helped by Spencer’s obvious devotion to his task. For years, from May to November, Lee Spencer stood guard over the population of wild steelhead salmon in the same northwestern waters, helping protect the fish from the poaching and dynamite fishing that had threatened their numbers for at least half a century. In A Temporary Refuge, he consolidates his years of experience into a calendar year of anecdotes, taking readers through the steelheads’ annual cycle via his memories and observations. What makes the book so effective is that Spencer’s approach to conservation is firsthand, on-the-ground work. Though he incorporates plenty of facts and history about the fish to satisfy the most clinically

minded readers, his writing is never clinical. This is strong nature writing—descriptive and thorough, and helped by Spencer’s obvious devotion to his task. He shares anecdotes of conversations with other visitors to the area, describes the various human threats to the steelheads’ environment, and even tracks the impact of humans on the area, from prehistory to today. While it is steelhead that specifically drew the author in, he relates plenty of stories about the area’s other wildlife and includes lovely illustrations by Cathy Eliot of several species. He writes about the merganser ducks that use the same waters, the otters who play in them, and the beavers who build dams there. Spencer also movingly bookends his observations with tributes to Sis, his beloved dog, who accompanied him for ten of the fourteen seasons chronicled and acts as a major character in her own right. *A Temporary Refuge* succeeds on multiple levels. It effectively documents regional wildlife (the specific spot is never named, to avoid encouraging more visitors) and the perilous annual migration of the wild fish. It puts the interaction between man and nature into important context, and shows why the wild population is so important, even as hatcheries breed more and more salmon. And it’s also a meaningful memoir about a man and his dog who were devoted to helping protect part of our shared natural heritage, year after year.

—JEFF FLEISCHER (July/August 2017)

“Spencer is a keen observer of everything around him: plants, weather, trees, birds, lizards, even the few people that visit him and his dog Sis on their little fish perch. It’s a beautiful tour of his little slice of Oregon and an inspiration to simply find a quiet, pretty place to sit and watch.”

—Adventure Journal

“[*A Temporary Refuge*] is proof that personal observation, practiced with dedication and openness to wonder, can produce extraordinary insights.”

—MidCurrent <http://midcurrent.com/books/book-excerpt-a-temporary-refuge/>

“From these pages flows the elusive beauty that compels the defense of wild rivers.”

—Matt Stoecker, Ecologist and producer of the documentary *DamNation* (Patagonia, 2014)

As an intricate tapestry of aquatic and riparian life is revealed to him, year after year, season by season, Lee Spencer’s pool becomes not just a refuge but a sanctuary. What is the holiness we glimpse there? —Laotse calls it “the Mysterious Female.” The tribes 600 miles north call it “Creek Woman.” —Aldo Leopold calls it, “a vast pulsing harmony, its score inscribed on a thousand hills, its notes the lives and deaths of plants and animals, its rhythms spanning the seconds and the centuries.” —Lee, echoing Rainer Maria Rilke, calls it “the Open that lies so deep in an animal’s face, free from death, and never tires of revealing the warp and weft of all that the Open weaves.”

Temporary Refuge is an incandescent work of natural history, an Oregon cultural treasure, and a sanctuary for aching hearts in a dark time. David James Duncan, author of *The River Why* and *My Story as Told by Water*

This is a well-written book about the steelhead of the North Umpqua River drainage in Oregon. It is packed with useful information and a bit of levity. The information isn't gathered by staring at a computer screen for days, Lee Spencer has spent years on the banks of a spawning ground for these amazing fish, studying and learning, while helping to deter poachers. "A Temporary Refuge" is a must-read for anyone who loves to fish or enjoys the studies of nature.

this book is the most precise and informative documentation regarding the life cycle of the Steelhead and Salmon species and their environment that can be understood and appreciated by us all..... I plan to purchase more books and use as gifts for those interested

I am one of the fortunate ones that call Lee a friend. My family has been visiting Lee at the "temporary refuge" for almost 20 years, so I'm very familiar with the area that he describes so intimately. I'm so grateful to have this book in my library and can't wait to share it with family and friends, especially my granddaughters who have grown up in this amazingly beautiful part of the Pacific Northwest. If you are interested in the Pacific Salmon, fly fishing, or just love the outdoors I highly recommend that you read this book. Thanks Lee!

Validation for the importance of wild fish and healthy rivers

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