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## The new tree book!!!!

Posted by NickfromWI - 04/16/2007 04:17pm

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Click to see

I noticed this book a while ago. I was slightly interested. Then I came to the TCI site today and noticed at the top that it said the tree was illustrated by our own Moss!!!!

Honestly, did you all know this?

So where do I see some illustrations? I found some here [http://www.richardpreston.net/books/wt\\_illustration.html](http://www.richardpreston.net/books/wt_illustration.html)

I'll have to get me a copy of this here book!

Moss- do you mind sharing how you got involved in the illustration of this book?

love  
nick

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Posted by moss - 04/16/2007 05:45pm

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Originally posted by NickfromWI  
Honestly, did you all know this?

Only a few new and they didn't know much. I kept it under my hat until the publication date 4/10, didn't want to preempt the Random House release publicity.

I was asked the question of how I become involved on the TCC board, I wrote up a quick answer (as quick as I could), it's a long story. I'm glad to answer further questions on the TCI board  
The Wild Trees thread

The TCI board played a pivotal role in my involvement in the book project. The author (Richard Preston) saw my drawings posted on TCI of the "spider rope" he'd described in his Feb. '05 New Yorker article (ironically this is the article that provoked me to start to learn about rec climbing). After a couple of iterations Preston (Gnar!) posted that I'd got it right. a few weeks later he contacted me to discuss working on the book. I still had a ways to go to prove that I could do it. I am not a professional illustrator. It wasn't till mid to late Summer 06 (I think) that I was finally approved as the illustrator by Random House.

It was very challenging, the maps (surprisingly) the most difficult though maps and drawings all had many iterations before final art was delivered.

It was great to get an inside view (as much as I could see) on how a book is written and produced. Preston is an amazingly hard worker who goes all the way to get the most factual detail to support his writing.

The amazing thing is that I feel I know redwoods inside and out and yet have never climbed one :-). My local tall white pines are keeping me happy for now. Looking forward to the Colorado ponderosa in September.  
-moss

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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/16/2007 05:50pm

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Very cool...i have more to say, but I see there is already a thread on it. I'll go there.

How did I miss this?

love  
nick

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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/16/2007 05:58pm

Now I get it...it's on the TCC website!

A Virginian friend of mine told me about this 6 minutes ago...

<http://www.wamu.org/programs/dr/>

love  
nick

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Posted by moss - 04/16/2007 06:06pm

I added a few more details to my post above.

Original TCI thread posted by Tree Tramp Dan:  
"Book Review"

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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/16/2007 06:24pm

The TCC site is loading SUUUUUUUUPER slow to me. I'll post the radio interview there in a little bit.

I just heard andrew's name on the radio! Moss is famous!!!

love  
nick

=====  
Posted by moss - 04/16/2007 07:11pm

Originally posted by NickfromWI  
The TCC site is loading SUUUUUUUUPER slow to me. I'll post the radio interview there in a little bit.

I just heard andrew's name on the radio! Moss is famous!!!

love  
nick

We have to convince Jungle Joe to get a better server for TCC, I think it can only handle one visitor at a time at present :-)

Hey, you've already had way more radio time than I've had! You're more famous, so there! Plus you can splice and I can't.

Another thread on Buzzboard

-moss  
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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/16/2007 08:12pm

You can draw and I can't....

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Posted by moss - 04/16/2007 09:01pm

Originally posted by NickfromWI  
You can draw and I can't....

We're going to have to have a "Drawing IN the Tree" workshop at the Rendezvous, just as long as it doesn't conflict with the splicing workshop, so you can attend...

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## Climbing with Famous People!

Posted by Oldtimer - 04/16/2007 09:10pm

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Do you guys mean that I actually have climbed with famous people! That is sooooo cool ! Peter Treman TCI Founder, Nick the Splicer Genius and Now Moss the tree drawings Master. That is just too much for me to handle! Congratulations Moss on a Job well done. I look forward to meet you officially at the 2007 TCI Rendezvous in Colorado.

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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/17/2007 10:51am

Originally posted by Oldtimer  
Congratulations Moss on a Job well done. I look forward to meet you officially at the 2007 TCI Rendezvous in Colorado.

Same here!!!!

love  
nick

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Posted by Ponderosa - 04/19/2007 11:24am

Moss, this looks like a great book. Congrats. I'll have to pick up a copy - It's now on sale on Amazon by the way.

In reading the reviews, it got me to thinking: Are we tree climbers all tortured souls, searching for more meaning out of life? Is that why we do this?

Whatever (as Joe would say). Great tree books make me want to saddle up and head out.

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Posted by moss - 04/19/2007 01:19pm

Originally posted by Ponderosa  
In reading the reviews, it got me to thinking: Are we tree climbers all tortured souls, searching for more meaning out of

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life? Is that why we do this?

The reviewer was a bit overdoing it with the "tortured souls" description. I don't know many (or any) people who have avoided difficult periods in their lives.

We might consider starting a tortured souls tree climbing club but I think it would be self-limiting since it's difficult to stay unhappy in a tree.  
-moss

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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/19/2007 06:32pm

I met Richard yesterday! I'll post a pic when I get home.

Karina and I went to a presentation at the downtown LA public library. It was very well presented. First a little interview by some lady that worked at the library, then he gave a slide show presentation showing his adventures in climbing a few of the BIG redwoods.

Then he gave a demonstration of some of the equipment used to climb. That part would not be interesting for anyone on this site, since it was so basic- but it was well recieved by the other attendees of the event.

I think moss must've told him about me being in LA. When I asked him if he wanted to go climbing, he goes, "You're Nick Araya!"

Seems like a nice guy to have representing the climbing world. Karina and I noticed that there was a lot of talk about the most dangerous aspects of climbing, but not much mention about how peaceful and safe it can be.

Other than that, very well presented and sure to drum up a little more interest in his book.

Nice pics, moss!

love  
nick

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**NY Times review**

Posted by moss - 04/19/2007 08:47pm

Thanks Nick, glad you made it to the book event.

NY Times published this review today:  
Where the Redwoods Grow, the Oddballs Also Flourish

I must be a treeclimbing oddball because I didn't think of any of the people in the book as oddballs :-)

Nice comment on the drawings in the review, I think she's the first reviewer to see the published book as opposed to the preview edition which the early reviewers looked at (didn't have final art).  
-moss

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**A pic**

Posted by NickfromWI - 04/21/2007 01:10am

Just thought I'd share.....

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Posted by moss - 04/23/2007 03:06pm

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The New York Times Book Review published a new review on 4/22, the review includes a photo of Genevieve Summers climbing a redwood, but doesn't mention her name in the caption. This is one of the photos shot for a Smithsonian article a few years back I think.

-moss

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Posted by tengu - 04/23/2007 10:21pm

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Hey Nick,

You must have made a great first impression with Preston. I just got off the phone with him. He said it was delightful talking with you and he'll be sending some splicing work your way.

Glad you met him, now if we can only get him to the rendezvous this year. I'm still working on it.

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Posted by NickfromWI - 04/23/2007 11:28pm

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Cool!

I would have loved the chance to chat with him more, but the library was closing up. Maybe the conversation can continue in Colorado!

I hope he sells trillions of his new book.

love  
nick

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Posted by Ponderosa - 04/27/2007 04:33pm

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Richard was in Colorado yesterday and today as part of his book tour. Thanks to Tengu, he and I were able to connect and I offered to take him up into one of our local trees - his choice of either a ponderosa or cottonwood. He really wanted to climb a pondie for the first time, so we went up Gramps, the tree I use for training at the TC Colorado home grove.

We had a great time. When you're used to climbing alone, it's a nice change to climb with anyone, let alone someone as literate and with the great stories to tell as Richard. Sorry there are no pictures, I'm not very good at that sort of record keeping.

Like any good climber, he had some equipment with him on his book tour - his Vi Special and split tails - I filled in the rest. While he DREC'd up, I lazily used my tag line set up to the top - I guess I could have been a better host and switched lines, but he seemed to be enjoying the activity.

He gave me an audio book version of the book, narrated by him, Steve and Marie, which he signed for me. Only bad thing is that the audiobook doesn't contain Moss' illustrations.

Jersey is now one more stop for me on that tree climbing tour I plan to take one of these days. But I don't think he's going to make it to the Rendezvous - he's got kids going back to school right at that time.

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Those of you who have read the book and/or know Steve Sillett might find this story amusing:

I'm from Washington state, and I grew up in love with trees and mountains and rivers and lakes and all things bucolic. I've long loved the Redwoods, and my wife and I were married in Humboldt Redwoods State Park. I saw Richard on The Daily Show, and I was so taken by the subject of his book I bought the book online as I watched the show.

The book arrived a few days later, and I tore into it immediately. It begins with the story of three college students driving in a dilapidated, light blue Honda Civic to see the Redwoods for the first time in October 1987. Two are Reed College students—Marwood Harris and Steve Sillett. I began laughing hysterically; I couldn't believe what I was reading.

You see, I went to Reed College, and Marwood (Marty) Harris and I were very close friends. I rode in that unregistered '70s Honda Civic that hadn't had an oil-change in over 20,000 miles many times, and it was every bit the deathtrap that Richard describes. Marty wouldn't let me drive it either.

I then realized the significance of an event from the summer of '87. The Lakers and Celtics were in the NBA finals, again, and I needed a television so I could watch the game. No self-respecting Reedie had a TV of one's own, so I called up Marty, who was housesitting for a professor for the summer (actually, I walked over to a pay-phone to call him, since I didn't have a phone either). Marty said, "Sure, come on over. I have beer and some clam chowder in the freezer. A friend is over visiting, someone I don't think you know. We can all hang and watch the game; then we can walk down to campus and I can show you our new hobby."

I walked the two miles to the house where Marty was staying, and we drank beer and ate clam chowder while watching the game. We got really stoned too, and Marty got the munchies so badly that he ate his chowder cold. He does things like that. He introduced me to his friend, whom I found extremely bright and intense—like just about all Reed students—but also a bit grouchy and unfocused when he wasn't doing exactly what he wanted to do or when the conversation turned away from a subject he wanted to discuss. I picked up a guitar and started playing and Marty listened. His friend wasn't amused, and he grew impatient. "Dude, come on; it's time to go climb." Marty explained that their new hobby was climbing the biggest Douglas-firs on the Reed campus, particularly one large second-growth tree that grew near the art building. I grew up climbing trees in the Northwest, but nobody I knew ever climbed Doug-firs: the branches are too high up and too far apart, and they're covered with pitch. Alders and maples, sure, but Douglas-firs? I thought they were nuts.

I knew they were nuts when I saw them starting to climb. "You guys are going to die this day," I laughed. "We've done this before," they said. "Then you've been rehearsing your own deaths," I replied. "Today you go on stage. Break a leg." "Relax," said Marty. "Just watch."

They started climbing up the tree. I couldn't believe what they were doing. His friend was a better climber than Marty, and he climbed more quickly. At about fifty feet Marty stopped climbing and sat on a branch, seemingly deep in thought. Then he started laughing, heartily but a little nervously. "Uh ... I'm stuck. Dude, I'm too stoned to climb. I'm just going to stay here and chill and try to get it together." "What's up, pussycat?" I teased. "Do I need to call the fire department?" "F\*ck you," he giggled. "Have it your way, Marty," I laughed back. I began to collect fircones.

The first one bounced off his chest and the second one hit him in the head. "F\*cker!" he yelled. His friend started laughing, and dropped a couple of cones on him from about fifty feet above him. "You guys suck," he yelled, but he was still laughing. I stopped tormenting him, and eventually Marty composed himself enough to climb down. His friend soon joined us after having climbed to the top.

Marty and I graduated, and his friend graduated a couple of years later. Marty moved to Japan; I moved to Tacoma. I never saw his friend again, and I pretty much forgot all about him until I began reading Richard's book.

His friend was Steve Sillett.

So there it is, my brush with arboreal fame. I emailed Marty to talk to him about the book, but he hasn't emailed me back, the bastard. While I'm waiting for a reply I'm going to learn how to climb big trees, and maybe some day I'll climb that big Douglas-fir on the east end of the Reed College campus near the art building. I'll remember not to get stoned first, and I'm going to be really pissed if someone comes along and starts throwing fircones at me.

Thank you for your patience.

The End.

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Posted by moss - 04/28/2007 12:58pm  
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Great story. I hope you get a chance to climb.  
-moss  
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Posted by NickfromWI - 05/03/2007 07:21pm  
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You should come the to Rendezvous in August/September!!!! You can take the beginners course there, then spend the weekend climbing trees with us!

love  
nick  
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Posted by rmbnxs - 05/04/2007 04:14pm  
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Originally posted by NickfromWI  
You should come the to Rendezvous in August/September!!!! You can take the beginners course there, then spend the weekend climbing trees with us!

love  
nick  
I just sent off the registration form—thanks for the tip. Anyone from L.A. looking to carpool?  
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## Marwood Harris/Steve Sillett story

Posted by gnarl - 05/04/2007 05:25pm  
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I love this story! It's consistent with everything I learned interviewing Marwood Harris ... Marwood actually told me a much briefer version of the story, if I remember correctly i.e., that he got scared sh\*\*less one day during a freeclimb with Steve, and got paralyzed. When I was in Portland last week I gave a talk at Powell's Bookstore, and retired Reed botany professor Bert Brehm showed up--the professor who warned Steve that Marwood or somebody could die climbing redwoods with him, and then got all interested in Steve's lichens collected in the top of a redwood. Anyway... cool story.:D  
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Posted by rmbnxs - 05/04/2007 09:30pm  
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Originally posted by gnarl  
I love this story! It's consistent with everything I learned interviewing Marwood Harris ... Marwood actually told me a much briefer version of the story, if I remember correctly i.e., that he got scared sh\*\*less one day during a freeclimb with Steve, and got paralyzed. When I was in Portland last week I gave a talk at Powell's Bookstore, and retired Reed botany professor Bert Brehm showed up--the professor who warned Steve that Marwood or somebody could die climbing redwoods with him, and then got all interested in Steve's lichens collected in the top of a redwood. Anyway... cool story.:D

Did Marty tell you why he freaked out in that tree? Heh. Obviously, he has a reckless streak. He once reached under a

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running lawnmower to remove some wet grass, and so also removed the last digit of one of his fingers. He also sounds a bit like Kermit the Frog. Good ol' Marwood.

And now you know ... the rest of the story.

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## Marwood, Nick Araya, & Ponderosa Harv

Posted by gnarl - 05/05/2007 03:24pm

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Yeah, I got the idea. Re some of the above postings: It was really pleasant meeting you Nick in LA. Nice photo -- well, you're better looking than I am ... Ponderosa Harv Teitelbaum took me up his "Gramps" ponderosa in Denver last week. There was snow on the ground but the air was warm. Climbing a tree with Harv was a whole lot nicer than schlepping around doing media interviews. Thanks Harv!  
Cheers, Gnarl (Richard Preston)

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## The New York Times on Moss

Posted by gnarl - 05/05/2007 03:27pm

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Hey, one other thought -- Moss got a real compliment from Janet Maslin, the notoriously tough and picky New York Times book reviewer. She obviously liked his drawings in The Wild Trees. She said that Andrew Joslin's (Moss's) "plain line drawings of redwood structure are astonishing."  
That doesn't happen every day with Janet Maslin.  
--cheers, Richard

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Posted by NickfromWI - 05/07/2007 12:11am

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Originally posted by gnarl

Yeah, I got the idea. Re some of the above postings: It was really pleasant meeting you Nick in LA.

I can be a real dolt sometimes. Sometimes I don't read posts quite as closely as I could/should. I was reading this "gnarl" guy's posts, and I couldn't quite figure out who he was. Then I wondered why he has ALSO interviewed Michael Taylor...then he said he met ME....and now I was totally confused.

Then today I was finishing up The Wild Trees and I got to page 276 where Preston mentions "a lump of bloated gnarl as big as a sofa." Richard, this is NO COMMENTARY ABOUT YOU....but that was the moment when it hit me.... Gnarl = Richard Preston.

It was a pleasure to meet you, too. Perhaps we'll meet again in the future. Maybe at the Rendezvous?!?!?!?!

Oh, I have a question for you about something in the book....I'll send you a U2U.

love  
nick, who is on page 278 of the book.

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Posted by rmbnxs - 05/08/2007 05:11pm

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Did anyone catch Richard on The Colbert Report last night? Enviro-porn! Dude, check out the lobaria on that one ...

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Posted by moss - 05/09/2007 12:03am

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It's that rock and roll lifestyle on the booktour.

I'll be appearing with Richard at the Museum of Science in Boston, 7 PM today (this evening) 5/9. If you're in the Boston area stop by say hello, listen to Richard tells some stories and get a book signed!

-moss

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Posted by coonrad - 05/09/2007 12:48am

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The book just arrived at my library and I was numero uno on the reserve list. So I'm going to get cracking tonight on a pristine edition of The Wild Trees.

Big ups to moss and gnarl on this fine tome I'm clutching in my hands.

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## Preston book event in Boston 5/9

Posted by moss - 05/10/2007 01:56pm

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The Wild Trees author Richard Preston presented at the Museum of Science last night. We had a great turnout with many tree friends and family in attendance. The audience was enthralled as Richard "Gnarl" Preston described the ecology of the redwood canopy and the adventures of the brave band of tall tree researchers.

Some good connections were made with a local canopy researcher, climbers, artists, and kids and adults who want to climb. A big plus for rec climbing and some interesting ideas put forth around citizen science projects and recreational climbing.

-moss

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Posted by JimK - 05/19/2007 08:20pm

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Gnarl,

Great book!! I was swept away on a grand adventure. It's the first book that I've read in many, many years. I'm more of an informational reader. There was one problem that I encountered with the book: it ended.

I've been bragging to Andrew about his superior illustrations through PM. As I mentioned to Andrew, I see this book as being a tipping point for popularizing RTC. We were missing a book.

Thanks for creating a wonderful book, Richard.

JimK

Treeclimber's toast: may we climb a 100 year old oak, and may we plant that tree tomorrow.

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