



# The Tree

By John Fowles

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## The Tree By John Fowles

“For years I have carried this book...with me on travels to reread, ponder, envy. In prose of classic gravity, precision, and delicacy, Fowles addresses matters of final importance.”

—*Los Angeles Times Book Review*

“*The Tree* is the fullest and finest exploration I’ve ever read of how the useless delights to be discovered in nature can ripen into the practice of art.”

—Lewis Hyde, author of *The Gift*

“The most original argument for wilderness preservation I have encountered.”

—*Washington Post*

Finally back in print, here is the 30th anniversary edition of *The Tree*—the renowned English novelist John Fowles’s (*The Magus*, *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*) moving meditation on the connection between the natural world and human creativity. An inspiring modern ecological classic, *The Tree* is both a powerful argument against taming the wild and a major author’s inspiring and beautifully written defense of “the joys of getting lost,” and of spontaneity in life and art.

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## The Tree By John Fowles Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Review

“*The Tree* is part memoir, part explanation and part warning, one of the most beautiful, succinct and prescient pieces of writing we have.” (*Los Angeles Times Book Review*)

“[B]elongs alongside the finest wilderness-rambling narratives.” (*The New Yorker* "Book Bench")

“A revelation.” (*The Paris Review* "Daily")

“A gentle plea for wilderness [and] an argument for art and the imagination.” (*Chicago Tribune*, Editor's Choice)

“[A] great book. . . . [T]he perfect little thing to roll up in your pocket and take with you for a lunch in the park. It's like having a laid-back, wide-ranging conversation with one of the greatest novelists of the 20th century.” (*The Stranger*)

“[A] beautifully honed plea for us to “be” in the natural world, to seek human creativity through the wild. . . . Beyond the tree and beyond the woods, Fowles challenges us to embrace the unpredictable, the untamable, the unquantifiable.” (*Women's Voices for Change*)

“THE TREE is the fullest and finest exploration I've ever read of how the useless delights to be discovered in nature can ripen into the practice of art.” (Lewis Hyde, author of THE GIFT)

“Please read this book. It says the most important thing, and with a lovely succinctness. Step off the narrow path, so cleverly engineered for you, into the deep cathedral of the woods-where there are no engineers and the true self abides.” (Lydia Millet, author of the Pulitzer Prize finalist LOVE IN INFANT MONKEYS)

“THE TREE defies easy definition and even genre. Whatever else it happens to be-memoir, philosophy, natural history-the book is a kind of forest, and Fowles a masterful field guide. He shows us the hidden place where the woods and literature converge.” (Brad Kessler, author of GOAT SONG)

“Delightful... The real subject of this arboreal excursion is not trees at all, but the importance in art of the unpredictable, the unaccountable, the intuitive, the not discernibly useful.” (*Atlantic Monthly*)

“The most original argument for wilderness preservation I have encountered.” (*Washington Post*)

“[John Fowles] is a master of style, evident in the ease with which he transforms the abstract into the highly tangible, without sacrificing any of the subtleties.” (*Christian Science Monitor*)

“Beautiful. . . . A cross between Thoreau's “Walden” and John Berger's “Ways of Seeing,” with a dash of “The Gift,” Lewis Hyde's cult-classic manifesto on creativity. (*New York Times*, Paper Cuts)

“*The Tree* is a powerful, absorbing and beautifully written meditation on the connection between man and nature. . . . [A] magnificent and perfectly poised argument for a form of conservation that is even more pertinent now than when it was first published.” (*Financial Times*)

### From the Inside Flap

In this series of moving recollections involving both his childhood and his work as a mature artist, John Fowles explains the impact of nature on his life and the dangers inherent in our traditional urge to categorize, to tame and ultimately to possess the landscape. This acquisitive drive leads to alienation and an antagonism to the apparent disorder and randomness of the natural world. For John Fowles the tree is the best analogue of prose fiction, symbolizing the wild side of our psyche, and he stresses the importance in art of the unpredictable, the unaccountable and the intuitive.

### From the Back Cover

John Fowles (1926–2005) is widely regarded as one of the preeminent English novelists of the twentieth century—his books have sold millions of copies worldwide, been turned into beloved films, and been popularly voted among the 100 greatest novels of the century.

To a smaller yet no less passionate audience, Fowles is also known for having written *The Tree*, one of his few works of nonfiction. First published a generation ago, it is a provocative meditation on the connection between the natural world and human creativity, and a powerful argument against taming the wild. In it, Fowles recounts his own childhood in England and describes how he rebelled against his Edwardian father's obsession with the "quantifiable yield" of well-pruned fruit trees and came to prize instead the messy, purposeless beauty of nature left to its wildest.

*The Tree* is an inspiring, even life-changing book, like Lewis Hyde's *The Gift*, one that reaffirms our connection to nature and reminds us of the pleasure of getting lost, the merits of having no plan, and the wisdom of following one's nose wherever it may lead—in life as much as in art.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Joseph Gee:

The book *The Tree* can give more knowledge and also the precise product information about everything you want. So just why must we leave the best thing like a book *The Tree*? Wide variety you have a different opinion about book. But one aim that will book can give many data for us. It is absolutely correct. Right now, try to closer with the book. Knowledge or info that you take for that, you could give for each other; you are able to share all of these. Book *The Tree* has simple shape nevertheless, you know: it has great and big function for you. You can appear the enormous world by open and read a publication. So it is very wonderful.

#### Norma Lorentzen:

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