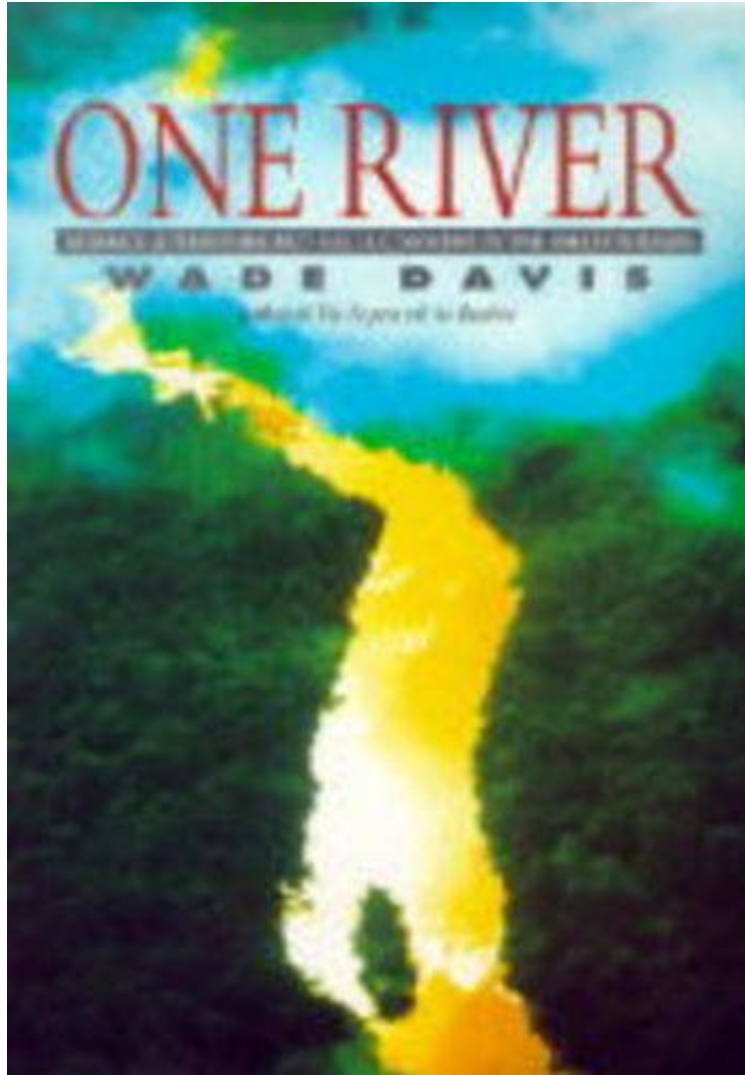


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One River

Wade Davis

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Wade Davis : One River before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised One River:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. one of the best books I've ever readBy AFPStrangely enough, one of the best books I've ever read. I am a Richard Evan Schultes fan boy in some sense, but my God, his life was as close to an "Indiana Jones of Drugs" as you can get. But he wasn't a hippie or new age goofball in any sense of the word, just loved plants, science, and plants that mess with humans.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Vital Link to a Forgotten WorldBy Matthew ReedDr. Davis' One River carries the reader on an unforgettable journey through the twentieth-century ian rainforest. Providing an intimate glimpse into the travels of the legendary ethnobotanist Richard

Schultes and his graduate students, Davis weaves a fascinating history of mentor and student, lured collectively to the Amazon wilderness to explore its plants and people. A remarkable storyteller, Davis illuminates the incredible reality of these indigenous peoples and their extensive ecological relationships with an understanding of science and appreciation for mysticism that few others are able to offer. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a good book. By readsalotI gave it five stars but it was not as good as the "Serpent and the Rainbow". Also two other things bothered me, one the strong focus on drug plants and highs, two that the author's explorations contributed to the exploitation and subsequent destruction of jungle and peoples. Otherwise the book was very entertaining, informative and about a place no-one can return to.

The story of three scientists - Richard Evans Schultes, Tim Plowman and Wade Davis - who, over the course of several decades, explored the Amazon river basin, studying what the Indians knew and trying to learn some of the secrets of the rainforest before they disappeared.

Best known for *The Serpent and the Rainbow*, Wade Davis is an ethnobotanist interested in the native uses of plants, especially psychotropics. He finds many such plants in the travels he recounts in *One River*, especially coca and curare. (The first, famously, is a curse in the First World but is a necessity in the Andes, where it promotes the digestion of many kinds of food plants.) Framing Davis's narrative is an account of the dangerous World War II-era Amazon expeditions undertaken by his mentor, Harvard biologist Richard Evans Schultes. Davis describes a few hair-raising encounters of his own, making this a fine book of scientific adventure. From *Publishers Weekly* The prodigious biological and cultural riches of the vast rain forest are being lost at a horrendous rate, according to the author, often without yielding their secrets to the Western world. During his years in the South American jungle, ethnobotanist Davis (*The Serpent and the Rainbow*) has done much to preserve some of these treasures. He tells two entwined tales here: his own explorations in the '70s and those of his mentor, the great Harvard ethnobotanist Richard Evans Schultes, beginning in the '30s. Both men have been particularly interested in the psychoactive and medicinal properties of the plants of the basin and approach their subject with a reverence for the cultural context in which the plants are used. The contrasting experiences of two explorers, a mere generation apart, starkly demonstrates how much has already been destroyed in the rain forest. Although Schultes probably knew more about Amazon plants than any Western scientist, he was constantly learning of new ones and new uses for them from native experts. Davis graphically describes the brutal clash of cultures from Columbian times to the present, often so devastating for indigenous peoples, that has defined this region. At times humorous, at times depressing, this is a consistently enlightening and thought-provoking study. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* While not technically a biography, this is the story of Timothy Plowman, a young ethnobotanist who died while looking for medicinal plants in the South American rain forests. The author, who explored with Plowman in 1974 and 1975, tells a vivid story of adventure, Amerindian culture, and, to a lesser extent, the social and political climate surrounding Harvard in the 1960s and 1970s. Plowman was the brilliant protégé of Richard Evans Schultes, one of the world's leading authorities on hallucinogenic plants and the rain forest. The author mixes the backgrounds and travels of the two men with sociology of South American tribes and their sacred plants. Because use of hallucinogenic plants is described, this is not a book for young people. For adults, it's a fascinating story of ethnobotanical exploration and an excellent real-life tale of science out of the laboratory, and only peripherally the sad story of a brilliant life lost to AIDS (Plowman contracted the disease as a result of pretrip inoculations). It also reveals the effects of development on the dwindling rain forests and their endangered cultures. Recommended for large collections. ?Laura E. Lipton, Center for Urban Horticulture, Seattle Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.