

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

*The Songs of Trees: Stories from Nature's Great Connectors*  
by David George Haskell  
Longwood Gardens Community Read, March–May 2022

If you want to continue to explore the ideas of *The Songs of Trees*, here is a list of resources to fuel your thinking. You will find the books at public libraries and local bookstores.

Please let us know if you find these suggestions interesting and useful. Email us your comments at [library@longwoodgardens.org](mailto:library@longwoodgardens.org)

### General

#### [dghaskell.com](http://dghaskell.com)

Author David George Haskell's website includes more information about each of the trees he observed, and photos and sound recordings from his visits that will enhance readers' understanding of what he describes in the book.

***The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature*** by David George Haskell (Viking, 2012)

In this fascinating Pulitzer Prize nominee, Haskell visits the same square meter of forest every day for a year to observe and understand the connections between its inhabitants. A New York Times review of that book states that Haskell "thinks like a biologist, writes like a poet, and gives the natural world the kind of open-minded attention one expects from a Zen monk rather than a hypothesis-driven scientist."

***The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate: Discoveries from a Secret World*** by Peter Wohlleben (Greystone Books, 2016)

Are trees social beings? Peter Wohlleben convincingly makes the case that, yes, the forest is a social network. He draws on groundbreaking scientific discoveries to describe how trees are like human families: tree parents live together with their children, communicate with them, support them as they grow, share nutrients with those who are sick or struggling, and even warn each other of impending dangers [from the publisher].

***A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*** by Aldo Leopold (Oxford University Press, 1949)

This cornerstone of conservation and land stewardship ideals was Longwood's first Community Read title in 2014. Leopold's model of a Land Ethic, which has clear influence on Haskell's work, is as relevant today as it was 70 years ago: "When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect." Community Read toolkit and discussion guide for *A Sand County Almanac*: <https://longwoodgardens.org/community-read-toolkit-2014>

***The Secret Network of Nature: The Delicate Balance of All Living Things*** by Peter Wohlleben (Vintage, 2019)

An exploration of the invisible connections sustaining the entire natural world...Did you know that trees can influence the rotation of the earth? Or that wolves can alter the course of a river? Or that earthworms control wild boar populations? The natural world is a web of intricate connections, many of which go unnoticed by humans. But it is these connections that maintain nature's finely balanced equilibrium [from the publisher].

**Part One of The Songs of Trees**

***Arboretum Borealis: A Lifeline of the Planet*** by Diana Beresford-Kroeger; photographs by Christian H. Kroeger (University of Michigan Press, 2010)

David Haskell observed and memorably described the natural connections of a balsam fir in the boreal forest. Take a deep dive into the boreal forest in this book, which gives detailed description, history, and care of the forest.

***The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest*** by Lynne Cherry (HMH Books, 2000)

A picture book for young readers about a man who exhausts himself trying to chop down a giant kapok (ceibo) tree. While he sleeps, the forest's residents, including a child from the Yanomamo tribe, whisper in his ear about the importance of trees and how "all living things depend on one another" . . . and it works [from the publisher]. *The Great Kapok Tree* was our 2015 children's Community Read title. Toolkit materials for *The Great Kapok Tree*: [longwoodgardens.org/education/library-archives/community-read/community-read-toolkit-2015](https://longwoodgardens.org/education/library-archives/community-read/community-read-toolkit-2015)



***Life in the Boreal Forest*** / text and photography by Wayne Lynch (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001)

An immense swatch of spruce, fir, larch, and aspen, it is arguably the largest forest ecosystem in the world. In *Life in the Boreal Forest*, noted science writer, naturalist and wildlife photographer Wayne Lynch examines the animals and plants of this mighty forest as the seasons unfold [from the publisher].

***The Sabal Palm: A Native Monarch*** by Barbara Oehlbeck (Gulfshore Press, 1997)

This exhaustively researched yet simply written book includes the sabal palm's life history, its relationship with man and place within natural systems [from the publisher].

## **Part Two of The Songs of Trees**

***Fossils of Florissant*** by Herbert W. Meyer (Smithsonian Books, 2003)

The Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument in Colorado is the location of the petrified redwood stump and ponderosa pine visited by Haskell. Encased by the ash of volcanoes that erupted tens of millions of years ago, animals such as insects, fish, and mammals were fossilized in the same deposits as flowers, trees, and the delicate leaves of plants. This amazing collection of animals and plants from the same place at the same time provides a rare, uniquely comprehensive glimpse of life in the past [from the publisher].

***Graced by Pines: The Ponderosa Pine in the American West*** by Alexandra Murphy; illustrated by Robert Petty (Mountain Press, 1994)

This book features nine essays about the ponderosa pine's history in the American west and its connections to its surroundings.

## **Part Three of The Songs of Trees**

***Bonsai and Penjing: Ambassadors of Peace & Beauty*** by Ann McClellan (Tuttle Publishing, 2011)

This book tells the awe-inspiring stories of bonsai and penjing trees in the collection of the National Arboretum in Washington D.C. It details their valuable role in international diplomacy and as instruments of American presidential influence. It also describes their inclusion in world's fair exhibitions, in Asian-inspired gardens around the country, and as a window onto the extensive cultivation of bonsai in North America today [from the author's website].



***Cottonwood and the River of Time: On Trees, Evolution, and Society*** by Reinhard F. Stettler (University of Washington Press, 2009)

Cottonwoods flourish on the verge, near streams and rivers. Their life cycle is closely attuned to the river's natural dynamics. An ever-changing floodplain keeps generating new opportunities for these pioneers to settle and prepare the ground for new species. Perpetual change is the story of cottonwoods -- but in a broader sense, the story of all trees and all kinds of life [from the publisher].

***Olive: A Global History***, by Fabrizia Lanza (Reaktion Books Ltd., 2011)

Lanza describes the role that olive trees, olives, and their oil have played in myths, legends, and literature, as well as in the everyday lives of people living throughout the Mediterranean [from the publisher].

***The Peace Tree from Hiroshima: A Little Bonsai with a Big Story*** by Sandra Moore, illustrated by Kazumi Wilds (Tuttle Publishing, 2015)

A colorfully illustrated, thoughtful children's book told from the perspective of the Japanese White Pine "peace tree" described by David Haskell in the last chapter of *The Songs of Trees*.

***Seeing Trees: A History of Street Trees in New York City and Berlin*** by Sonja Dümpelmann (Yale University Press, 2019)

Today, cities around the globe are planting street trees to mitigate the effects of climate change...The planting of street trees in cities to serve specific functions is not a new phenomenon. In her eye-opening work, Dümpelmann shows how New York City and Berlin began systematically planting trees to improve the urban climate during the nineteenth century, presenting the history of the practice within its larger social, cultural, and political contexts [from the publisher].

