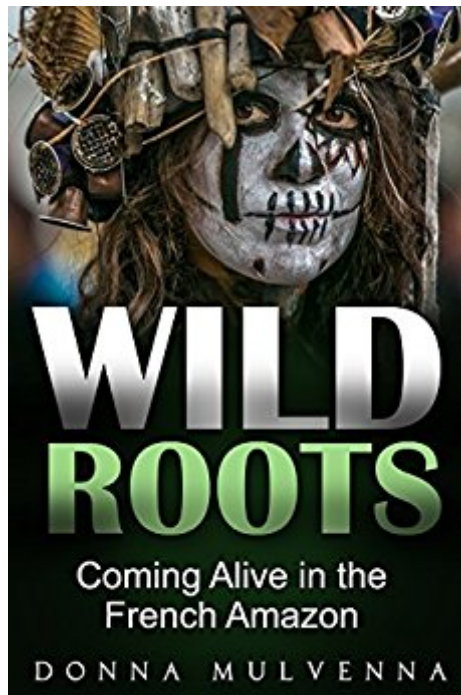


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# WILD ROOTS: Coming Alive In The French

## ROOTS



## Synopsis

"Wild Roots is one of those rare books that has the potential to change your life." Donna Mulvenna had everything she wanted in her modern Australian life: a rewarding career, a spacious home, and an around-the-clock connection to mobile technology. But for all these comforts, she couldn't shake the feeling something was missing. So when a Frenchman entered her life and invited her to move to France, she instantly daydreamed of strolling through lavender fields and sipping espresso in Paris. How could she have known he had two tickets to an obscure, mosquito-infested French territory in South America: French Guiana? After that life got a little crazy, Donna found herself hacking through a perilous jungle, canoeing along anaconda-infested rivers, and overcoming a tropical disease: in a place that became more hostile by the minute. Harrowing ordeals became just another pothole in the road as she battled with bureaucratic nightmares, befriended a bizarre assortment of lively characters, and encountered oddball creatures in a chocolate-colored sea. Then it happened. Forced out of her comfort zone and cleansed of the beliefs that had sustained her in a materialistic world, Donna dug deep within herself to unearth a long-lost hidden spirit. At that moment, she came alive in the rainforest. Written with humor, a respect for nature, and an awareness that we must somehow rebuild our relationship with it, this fascinating and uplifting memoir will make you want to reclaim your life and live out your wildest dreams.

## Book Information

File Size: 2257 KB

Print Length: 326 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0648022579

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: STORMBIRD PRESS PARNDANA (July 10, 2016)

Publication Date: July 10, 2016

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B011AC3C9U

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,060,150 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #57 in [Kindle Store > Travel > South America > Brazil](#) > #445 in [Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Science > Environment > Ecology](#) #505 in [Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > Central & South America > South America](#)

## Customer Reviews

WILD ROOTS: Coming Alive in the French by Donna Mulvenna  
Publisher: Naturebased Publishing  
Publication date: July 10, 2016  
Print Pages: 160  
Language: English  
ASIN: B011AC3C9U

Book Review by: L. G. Cullens on Aug. 25, 2016  
Are you comfortable in your niche, seeming to have a degree of control, yet sometimes fantasize about acting with abandonment and seeing new places? Maybe it's an unconscious feeling you suppress out of fear of where it will lead. Come on now, you can tell me. No? Well then may I suggest reading about how exciting real life can be, and maybe expanding your horizons at the same time. No one else need know you're escaping to another level of being. It's what the doctor prescribes for a gloomy day. As we join the author, she has made tentative steps in our artificial culture, maybe even making a few false starts as we all have, and is settling into a guarded lifestyle when she meets a new man. No, this isn't a romance novel, unless you think of such as a romance with what life can be. The immersing experiences are related in an at first seemingly naïve voice evoking awe, with a magical blend of subtle humor, touches of irony, sense of place, and insight, delivered at a quick pace. Quick to me at least, as I lost track of time reading this book. Getting further into the book, one realizes how much enlightening experience, and breadth of knowledge is being served up. Only those overly full of themselves could resist being pulled along. As a small example, even a simple act of taking a dip in the ocean is evocative, "I find swimming in their warm waters to be quite pleasant, or at least it was after I stopped freaking out every time something I couldn't see brushed against me." There are questioning natural world and biodiversity threads, subtle with a ring of hopefulness. And for the inquiring mind there's also a fair amount of interesting fact asides cleverly interspersed. For example, do you know why French Guiana's geographical location is ideal for launching satellite rockets? As another example of immersive writing, in this snippet the author is transitioning from a "civilized" world mindset to appreciating nature. "It wasn't long before illusions of following in the footsteps of eighteenth-century botanist Jean-Baptiste Aublet took root, and I tentatively slipped from the hammock to sit on the grass. However, rather than appreciate the nature around me, I anxiously

looked about for armies of man-eating ants or hordes of tail-waving scorpions, cringing the moment so much as a breeze brushed against me."When it comes to Nature observations, the author doesn't bore you with a mouse in the cupboard. Here she's talking about a Harpy Eagle."As well as being an astonishingly powerful bird imagine legs almost as thick as your arm they are possibly the most scary-looking of the carnivorous birds. It is the harpies that are depicted in Greek mythology as horrid winged women with their breasts hanging out who swooped down to take humans to the underworld. However, despite this formidable appearance, they really are quite nice to each other. They form monogamous couples that mate for life, chirp to each other as they build a nest, live together for their twenty-five to thirty-five-year lifespan, and devote two years to care for a single chick."Oh, and you think you have problems with wildlife in your yard? Try catching an enormous iguana making its way to the chicken pen, or helplessly watching as a colony of cassava ants make off with a good part of your garden. So you don't get the idea that only wildlife falls under the microscope, here's an example of the author's wry humor."French Guiana is also a bureaucratic and bungling nightmare, and that is being optimistic. It took six months to open a bank account and longer for a debit card to arrive. On one occasion the wait was so long I asked, "Do you have a toilet?" "Yes, I will show you where it is," said the clerk. Finding the door locked I asked, "May I have the key please?" "Oh no, we can't give out the key because one of our colleagues got murdered in there!" And at that moment I could understand why something like that may have happened."I don't know what a pooh-bah writing "expert" might think of this book, but I'd laugh if they missed the point that the dogma we find harbored in is a reflection of our problems. To me everything in these pages melds together in an exciting journey and enjoyable balanced learning experience, and I applaud how the author both entertains the surface reader, and speaks to those that realize there is much more to life on our exciting little blue canoe than we're conscious of. I truly hope that for all our sakes some of the author's insight and passion finds its way into the minds and hearts of readers.

Wild Roots is like getting together with an old friend author Donna Mulvenna inspires and entertains as she introduces you to the amazing diversity of wildlife and culture of French Guiana. Mulvenna reinvents her life when she takes a leap of faith, leaves behind her comfortable and predictable Australian life, and embraces the unpredictable mystery of living on the edge of the South American rainforest. I instantly engaged with Mulvenna's

authenticity, her yearning for adventure and deeper meaning, and her guts and courage to make it happen. When a book challenges you to examine your own life, dreams, and fears, it's a worthwhile read. *Wild Roots* is a joy—the words flow effortlessly as canoeing down a gentle stream.~Susan Sorg, Grand Rapids, Michigan USA

I am currently a resident of Ecuador and have visited the fringes of the (and have flown over additional parts). Reading this book encouraged me to spend more time in the , even though the mosquitos love me! Ms. Mulvenna thrived and she is a real inspiration.

WOW. Donna I want to thank you for the most amazing trip through the . I felt like I was in your shoes. Your descriptions of the animals and bugs and jungles were outstanding. I look forward to other book that you will pen. I am hooked..again, thank you.

Thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. I could really put myself in Donna's shoes and imagine I was there. One of my favourite books, when I was a child, was a series about adventures in the . It was a delight to read what it is really like :)

Read the book and I love it .. I love the writing style and it's what make this book a good one .

WILD ROOTS by Donna Mulvenna>> I just finished reading WILD ROOTS for the second time! Once wasn't enough!! I think the first reading just got my mind chewing and the second reading really set the concepts. I have been struggling in my life trying to define what it was that really made me feel alive. In her book, she deals with this concept for herself which helped me to find it again for myself. For anyone following this struggle, they will enjoy and appreciate her struggles and conquests. She brings so much love and humor to her new adventure. Someone once told me to take lots of pictures when you move to an exotic locale because in a while the exotic will become normal. WILD ROOTS is her album of photos in words. This may even be a better way!> Her love of Nature comes through in every page. Whether she is dealing with some newly-met bizarre animal or trying to stay afloat in her pirogue, the reader is struck by her love for all things natural. Her outlook really made me look out my window with different eyes! Even though I am not living in French Guyana filled with wonderful animals, I can find so many interesting familiar creatures to wonder at here at home.> I really liked the way she starts each chapter with a

Centering Thought. This is a brief quote from some well-known person that sets the mind of the reader to what will be encountered in the chapter. Being a plant person, I appreciated her use of botanical names for the plants that she describes. This helped to make the book more personal for me. I feel a very close tie to all she is writing about. It is almost like she wrote the book for me. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is searching for life's meaning and carries a love of nature in their heart. You may feel that she wrote the book just for you!> Tom Biggart

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