

THE COMPLEAT WETLANDER

"The Contemplative Blog of the Association of State Wetland Managers"

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The Compleat Wetlander: Paul Keddy's Wetland Ecology –The Real Story of Wetlands

Posted By [Jeanne Christie](#) | [October 11, 2010](#)



Paul Keddy's Wetland Ecology –The Real Story of Wetlands

"All life contains water. From distant space, Earth appears as a mosaic of blue and green, blue for water, green for plants. This book is about the ecological communities that occur where green meets blue: wetlands."

—Paul Keddy

There are gifted teachers in the world—or maybe it would be more accurate to say there are gifted storytellers, who are also teachers. There are not nearly enough of them. Even rarer is the scientist, who is also a gifted storyteller. But there are some. I have my own list.

One individual on my list is scientist, teacher and author Paul Keddy <http://www.drpaulkeddy.com/bio.html>. A couple of months ago we received a letter letting us know that we would be receiving a copy of the recently published Wetland Ecology: Principles and Conservation. Now if a publisher sends us a note that we're about to receive a book we've got no interest in—we ask them not to send it. But this book was one I really wanted. I was not disappointed.

Maybe I've been working in wetlands too long if reading about slugs and sheep in peatlands or snails in salt marshes, zonation, rates of burial, flood pulses and empirical ecology elicit a sense of joy and excitement. But they do, particularly when they are organized into a logical progression of theory and applied science that provides a detailed and comprehensive description of wetlands and their place in a broader landscape.

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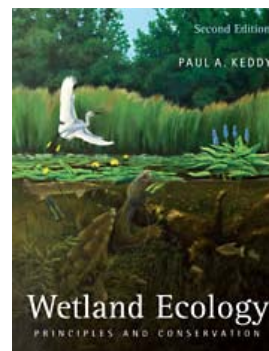
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The strength of “Wetland Ecology” is that it does not dissect wetlands into disassociated pieces. It describes wetland systems assembling the various parts into a larger whole. It examines wetland terminology and concepts, causal factors that create wetlands, major characteristics of different wetlands types, wetland services, restoration and research gaps. To aid understanding, the author, Paul Keddy, includes examples from around the world—including wetlands associated with the Danube, Yangtze, Pantanal, the Congo, coastal Louisiana, and the prairies of the United States and Canada—to name a few. There are extensive descriptions of studies with helpful graphs and illustrations. Together they provide a comprehensive picture of the similarities and dissimilarities of wetlands and the anthropogenic processes that affect wetlands on a global scale.

“Wetland Ecology” provides the reader with an understanding of the range of variability among different types of wetlands; the drivers that create the many unique features in wetlands and what it might be important to examine to understand management choices for a specific wetland. There are summaries of what is known as well as discussions of the limits of current understanding. Topics that merit future research are identified throughout the book.

Frequently wetland managers are only examining bits and pieces of wetlands: a permit application, a new policy or regulation, a restoration project, a watershed plan or the line that defines the boundary of a wetland. The day-to-day focus on details makes it easy to lose track of how an individual project fits into the larger context of wetlands in an ever-changing landscape. “Wetland Ecology” provides a context for understanding these individual projects.

Paul Keddy’s *Wetland Ecology* is quite simply one of the best books about wetlands that exist today. It should be required reading for wetland managers.
<http://www.aswm.org/propub/bookservice/science.htm#keddy>

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All replies are subject to approval and comments deemed insulting or disrespectful will not be posted. This includes comments written in all capital letters or bold print (the written equivalent of shouting).

We want our site to be a place where people discuss and debate ideas that foster greater understanding of wetland issues and a stronger appreciation for the viewpoints of the many communities engaged in wetlands programs, science and policy. Please help us take care of it. Tolerate broad thinking. Make it a credible and safe place worth preserving and sharing.

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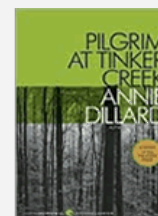


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