



The Race to Save the Lord God Bird

Phillip Hoose

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The tragedy of extinction is explained through the dramatic story of a legendary bird, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and of those who tried to possess it, paint it, shoot it, sell it, and, in a last-ditch effort, save it. A powerful saga that sweeps through two hundred years of history, it introduces artists like John James Audubon, bird collectors like William Brewster, and finally a new breed of scientist in Cornell's Arthur A. "Doc" Allen and his young ornithology student, James Tanner, whose quest to save the Ivory-bill culminates in one of the first great conservation showdowns in U.S. history, an early round in what is now a worldwide effort to save species. As hope for the Ivory-bill fades in the United States, the bird is last spotted in Cuba in 1987, and Cuban scientists join in the race to save it.

All this, plus Mr. Hoose's wonderful story-telling skills, comes together to give us what David Allen Sibley, author of *The Sibley Guide to Birds* calls "the most thorough and readable account to date of the personalities, fashions, economics, and politics that combined to bring about the demise of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker."

The Race to Save the Lord God Bird is the winner of the 2005 Boston Globe - Horn Book Award for Nonfiction and the 2005 Bank Street - Flora Stieglitz Award.

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