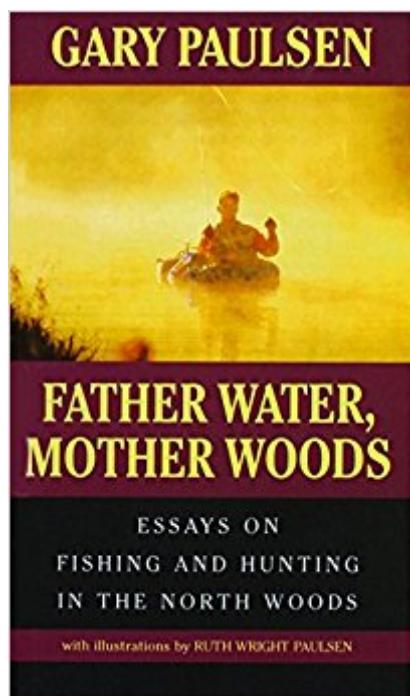


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# Father Water, Mother Woods (Laurel-Leaf Books)



## **Synopsis**

Survival in the wilderness--Gary Paulsen writes about it so powerfully in his novels "Hatchet" and "The River" "because he's lived it. These essays recount his adventures alone and with friends, along the rivers and in the woods of northern Minnesota. There, fishing and hunting are serious business, requiring skill, secrets, and inspiration. Luck, too--not every big one gets away. This book takes readers through the seasons, from the incredible taste of a spring fish fresh from the smokehouse, to the first sight of the first deer, to the peace of the winter days spent dreaming by the stove in a fishhouse on the ice. In Paulsen's north country, every expedition is a major one, and often hilarious. Once again Gary Paulsen demonstrates why he is one of America's most beloved writers, for he shows us fishing and hunting as pleasure, as art, as companionship, and as sources of life's deepest lessons."

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

"Descriptions of light and water, of fish and wildlife, Kindle in the reader a measure of the author's own complex respect for nature," said PW in a starred review. All ages. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 7 Up-Paulsen begins this collection of compelling memoirs with a forward that reflects on the

genesis of his novel *Hatchet* (Macmillan, 1987). He concludes by poignantly expressing doubts about the moral correctness of hunting. In between, he pares away the layers of his life, revealing a lost kid who sought sanctuary in friends and the outdoors. In half of the selections, he relates the joys of fishing. There's one essay on camping as comic disaster during high summer; the rest are about hunting. All are intensely personal and steeped in a bygone time of hand-set pins in a bowling alley, lack of equal rights for African Americans, corporal punishment, dress codes, and ducktail haircuts. Readers of the author's earlier works will hear echoes as old as *Winterkill* (Elsevier-Nelson, 1976; o.p.) in Paulsen's description of snagging fish by the hydropower dam. The metaphor of life as a dance; his characteristic good humor; and the frequent references to blood, madness, prostitution, farts, and beer will strike a familiar chord, as will the seasonal structure through which the essays cycle. The pieces are rooted in the details of a youth spent in search of perfection: the perfect cast, perfect catch, perfect shot. Equally on target are descriptions of the pain of feeling the outsider, of being a failure at school, and of being ashamed of his parents' drunkenness. This book will appeal to Paulsen's many fans, to lovers of the outdoors, and to students of the essay. Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Jr. High School, Iowa City, IA  
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My grandson, 14, hunter and fisherman, enjoyed this book. I liked the writing, as well.

One of my favorite books. I remember reading it when I was a fourth grader back in the nineties and I would compare it to my own lifestyle of growing up in the Upper Midwest. Remembered the book recently and bought it for my kindle to take with me to the treestand. Think I read it in after one or two hunts. Now it reminds me of my childhood and the feelings I would get in the outdoors. Simply awesome book even though it is an easier read (meant for young adults). Still you can tell Paulsen put his heart into it. Wish there were more authors who wrote with that kind of passion about the outdoors.

I was disappointed in the condition of the book. When I purchased the book the seller rated it as A+ good condition but it had a tear in the cover. The story is GREAT and the person I gave it to was very excited that I had found it but I was very disappointed in the condition of the book itself.

As always Paulson is a favorite and I have read all over twice and I am 83. Hurrah

Yes very good book I read small parts as i Deer hunt from my Deer Tree Stand . My 3 Sons try to get it from time to time .will pass it on when done

Very good book it shows how the kids back then lived and how they managed to do what they loved while they supported their family

Paulsen writes about seasons in his hometown being determined by types of fish caught down by the dam, under the Ninth street bridge, or in frozen lakes, and not by dates on calendars. When fishing ends, hunting is the obsession for Paulsen and friends he calls "orphans of the woods." He explains, "When we were in the woods or fishing the rivers and lakes our lives didn't hurt." This book is a nature lover's choice. Paulsen writes of growing up in a small Minnesota town and he intertwines this town's life with stories of adventurous boys. Two of my favorite essays are "Running the River" and "Bow Hunting." The first is a hilarious tale of an overplanned camping trip gone wrong when the boat, full of supplies and boys, sinks, forcing the boys to walk back to town. "Bow Hunting" is a coming of age essay in which a boy, after killing his first doe, poignantly describes his realization that while his life will continue, hers will not.

This book truly brings nature to your fingertips. As a reader, I felt as if I was out in the wild, experiencing everything of which Paulsen wrote. With the descriptive settings and easy-to-relate-to tales, Paulsen makes the reader feel as if they have entered the woods along with the characters in the story. The essays on fishing and hunting in the northern woods are definitely his best work yet! This book is easy to follow, yet has very deep and interesting accounts. I recommend this illustration to anyone who enjoys the great outdoors. If you want to learn about cold, winter morning fishing excursions, or hot, summer days in the woods, this is the perfect book to help fulfill your curiosity. Father Water Mother Woods is worth your time of reading and is definitely a classic.

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