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Book Review - Chattahoochee River User's Guide

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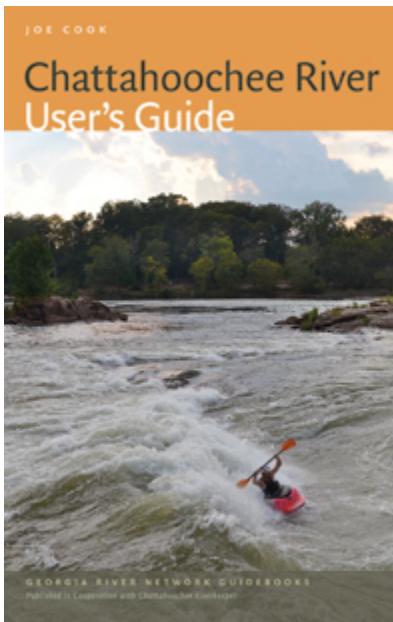
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Off the SHELF

Chattahoochee River User's Guide, by Joe Cook
(The University of Georgia Press, 2014: ISBN
978-0820346793, \$22.95)

Joe Cook's *Chattahoochee River User's Guide* serves not only as a handy guide to recreation on the Chattahoochee, but also a history book, an ecology lesson, and a love letter to Georgia's longest and perhaps most well-known river. This volume includes an overview of the history—political and environmental—of the Chattahoochee from its role as boundary between the Native Americans and the early European settlers to the modern day struggles to preserve animal habitats that have been sorely damaged by years of industry and damming. The book progresses through chapters that follow, geographically, the southward flow of the river and are filled with anecdotes, fishing tips, and breathtaking photographs. It is obvious throughout that the author cares deeply about both the wildlife that makes its home on and in the river and the experience to be gained through respectful interaction on the part of



tourists and sportsman alike. The author frequently recalls Sidney Lanier's "Song of the Chattahoochee" as a potent reminder that 150 years after the poem was written, the proud Chattahoochee is very much in need of care and preservation on behalf of the people it has long served. As such, he offers suggestions on how the sportsman and tourist can enjoy the river while preserving its beauty for the next traveler, including advice for boating etiquette and safety. The final pages are dedicated to a bestiary of fish, amphibians, birds, and mammals of all sizes that can be commonly found on the river and banks. Cook's appreciation for the Chattahoochee is evident and engaging, evoking vivid pictures of the living river that has something to appeal to all lovers of the outdoors, from kayakers to campers to the casual picnicker. This book is appropriate for adult and young adult outdoorsmen/women alike.

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