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REVIEW: Down to the Waterline: Boundaries, Nature, and the Law in Florida

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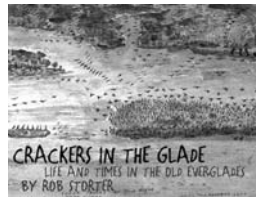
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Crackers in the Glade: Life and Times in the Old Everglades by

Rob Storter, edited by Betty Savidge Briggs (University of Georgia Press, 2007; ISBN 978-0-8203-3043-3, \$22.95).

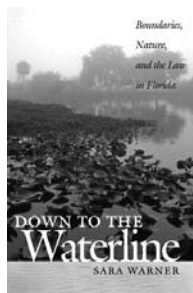


Robert Storter wrote *Crackers in the Glade: Life and Times in the Old Everglades* at the age of 91. His descriptions of the beautiful wonders of sea life are just as I remember them from growing up in Coden, Ala. This book reminded me of my dad, Leophas, who often scribbled on everything in sight to recall his experiences of fishing, storms and horseback riding. Storter describes coastal life as one filled with sand flies, ferryboats and mosquitoes. Folks burned rags to keep these “swamp angels” away, and rattlesnakes swam in the channel. Fathers allowed their young sons to be involved in working activities such as steering a boat, going on a mail route, riding a horse or going fishing. Late at night, the singing of “Amazing Grace” or another hymn could be heard as these were baptized, praying people. Every family had a sailboat. Weathering frequent “squalls” was often pure excitement, but Storter also talks about the awful destruction of tremendous hurricanes. School classes at the time were quite small; classes were made up mostly of family and the children of teachers. Shoes were worn only occasionally — to church — but not to school. School lunches consisted of great northern beans and biscuits, bananas and mayonnaise sandwiches every day. Storter’s view can best be summed up in his own words: “We are like little mangrove twigs and are drifting somewhere to find a lodging place. Let’s hope we will not stop on the mudflat or drift out to sea but will find the rock, and there we will be rooted to stay.” *Crackers in the Glade: Life and Times in the Old Everglades* is highly recommended to anyone interested in family oral history, traditions, rural coastal living, fishing, photography and art.

— Reviewed by **Regina W. Cannon**
UGA Griffin Research Facility Library

Down to the Waterline: Boundaries, Nature, and the Law in Florida by

Sara Warner (University of Georgia Press, ISBN 0-8203-2703-4, \$24.95.)



Down to the Waterline is a comprehensive review of Florida’s water boundary ownership issues from the early days of statehood (1845) to the present. It includes extensive research of legislation, legal and municipal hearings, land records, first-person accounts and innumerable historical events

that have shaped the ongoing controversy. Warner, a lifelong Floridian, brings more than 20 years of experience to compiling, analyzing and interpreting the information collected in this book. The author’s quest to understand the struggle to preserve private ownership rights while preserving public access and maintenance of navigable bodies of water began in 1989 as a research project for her Ph.D. from Emory University, after hearing an NPR report on the channelizing of, and subsequent work to restore, the Kissimmee River. Several chapters are devoted to the Kissimmee debacle and the slow, painful lessons sometimes learned from overmanipulating nature. Runoff pollutants from the work on the Kissimmee contaminated agricultural acreage, while poisonous gases produced by organic decomposition in the oxygen-depleted water proved lethal to river inhabitants. In *Waterline*, Warner also discusses the definition of the “ordinary high water line (OHWL).” For hundreds of years, the OHWL was accepted as a line discernable “without scientific exploration” and was considered a protected property of the state, preserved for the use of all. Now it is a battle line, requiring frequent examination by both legal and technological means. Woven within the narrative of the struggle to clearly understand and define the OHWL are important ecological lessons. Warner’s reflections on the plight of indigenous wildlife, for example, misguided attempts to remove the alligator from the endangered species list, are particularly poignant and not easily dismissed. *Down to the Waterline* provides globally applicable perspectives of interest to ecologists, students in environmental studies at all levels and the general public.

— Reviewed by **Lori Critz**
Georgia Institute of Technology

Man Food: Recipes from the Iron Trade *Forward* by Karen R. Utz.

(University of Alabama Press, 2007; ISBN 978-0-8173-5451-0, \$14.95).



This is a quirky but engaging book. The connection between the flourishing iron trade in Alabama and cooking was, at first, lost on this reviewer. The answer goes like this:

The iron industry emerged in the Birmingham area beginning in the late 19th century, built upon the proximity of ore, coal, railroads and entrepreneurs. In the late 1920s, a magazine was launched to bring technical developments to the widespread foundry trade. *Pig Iron Rough Notes* (from the adage, “rough as pig iron”) informed, educated and promoted. In 1939, editor Russell Hunt added “soft” journalism about iron trade people, their communities, their hobbies. And recipes. Pig iron,