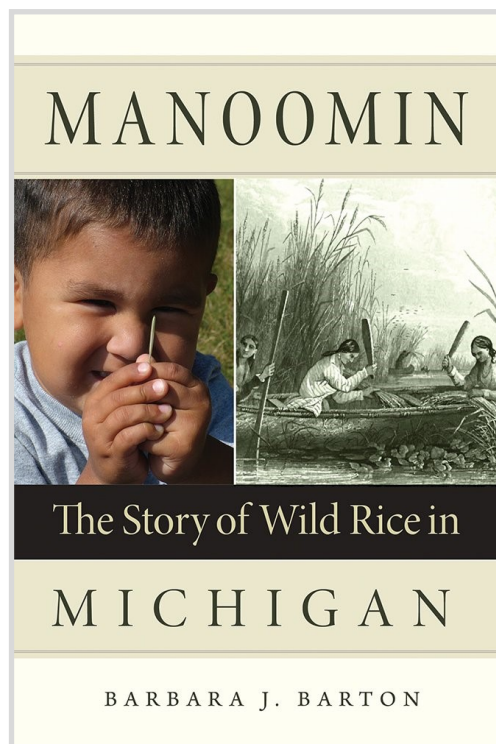


2019 MICHIGAN NOTABLE BOOK AWARD

2018 MICHIGAN HISTORY AWARD



\$29.95

Order your copy today!
www.barbbarton.com

**Also available on Amazon,
Kindle and at fine booksellers.**



Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan

By Barbara J. Barton

This is the first book of its kind to bring forward the rich tradition of wild rice in Michigan and its importance to the Anishinaabek people who live there. *Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan* focuses on the history, culture, biology, economics, and spirituality surrounding this sacred plant. The story travels through time from the days before European colonization and winds its way forward in and out of the logging and industrialization eras. It weaves between the worlds of the Anishinaabek and the colonizers, contrasting their different perspectives and divergent relationships with Manoomin. Barton discusses historic wild rice beds that once existed in Michigan, why many disappeared, and the efforts of tribal and nontribal people with a common goal of restoring and protecting Manoomin across the landscape.

Barbara J. Barton is an endangered species biologist; member of the State of Michigan's wild rice working group, Michigan Water Environment Association, and western Upper Peninsula's wild rice team; and academic affiliate of the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science and the Arts Biological Station where she collaborates on the state's wild rice map. She was awarded the 2009 MSU Extension Diversity Award for her work with the Michigan tribes on Manoomin.

"Barton brings us the untold story of one of Michigan's iconic natural resources—its cultural and historical importance, its mistreatment and demise, and the seeds of hope for its future recovery. She writes with deep reverence and careful scholarship, in a warm style that makes me want to paddle the backwaters of Michigan's rivers and lakes, searching for lost stands of this amazing grass."

—Samuel Thayer, author of *The Forager's Harvest: A Guide to Identifying, Harvesting, and Preparing Edible Wild Plants*; *Nature's Garden: A Guide to Identifying, Harvesting, and Preparing Edible Wild Plants*; and *Incredible Wild Edibles: 36 Plants That Can Change Your Life*

Reviews

Manoomin – The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan

Barbara J. Barton

Barton explores a familiar story in Michigan's natural history, but this time from a perspective seldom considered. Many authors have reported upon the State's logging, mining, urbanization, industrialization and conversion of pristine land into farmland. We've seen the frequent accounts of the hardy pioneers that cleared the forests and tilled the prairies.

What we haven't seen is a comprehensive account of Wild Rice, which is a denizen of clean, shallow, gently flowing water with an organic substrate. If Wild Rice is considered a species indicative of the health of our waterways we are deeply troubled. This once abundant species was a staple of Anishinabek lifeways, providing dietary sustenance, habitat for other wildlife used as food and a spiritual and cultural connection nearly unparalleled.

Perhaps no other resource in Michigan has been abused more than its wetlands and waterways, and Barton unabashedly reveals their draining, filling, channelization and pollution. Sadly, we cannot reconstruct the vast beds of Wild Rice that once beckoned the Anishinabek from the Eastern Seaboard in search of the Food That Grows on the Water. We cannot bring the waterfowl back in numbers that blackened the skies. And we cannot fully restore the Wild Rice culture that accompanied the natural resource sustainability model of the First People.

*What we can do is learn from our past and prepare for a hard-wrought improved natural resource future. We can research, inventory, monitor, expand and regulate our existing remnant populations of Wild Rice. We can appreciate this premier feature of our fragile waterscape and all that attends it. And this is exactly what Barton has accomplished. Barton has worked extremely hard in her impassioned investigation and it has paid off in the form of leaving us, our descendants and our interconnected wildlife with a better world. -- **John C. Rodwan, Environmental Director, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi***



"A unique and critically important work of simply outstanding scholarship, *"Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan"* is enhanced with the inclusion of maps, figures, tables, three appendices, a bibliography, and an index. Exceptionally well written, organized and presented, *"Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan"* is unreservedly recommended for community, college, and university library collections. It should be noted for the personal reading lists of students, academia, and the non-specialist general reader with an interest in the subject that *"Manoomin: The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan"* is also available in a digital book format (Kindle, \$23.95)." – **Midwest Book Review**



"I bought this book because I live in a rural part of Michigan, where foraging is a hobby of many of the residents and I'm also a bit of a foodie who likes to understand the history of food. What I found as I began to read was something much more. Ms. Barton, intentionally or not, has created a book that uses "wild rice," the common non-indigenous people's name for "manoomin," as an allegory of the unintended consequences of a clash of cultures. In this case it is the conquering capitalist culture of European settlers and the spiritual culture of the Indigenous Peoples they conquered. It creates a heartfelt picture of the brutal, if unintended, consequences, of two cultures colliding on an unequal footing."

This book certainly satisfied my original desire to learn about wild rice, it's history, traditional cultivation, harvest and preparation. The history of its destruction and the effect this had on the Indigenous Peoples who relied upon it as a staple in their diet, is not something I expected to learn. This story is heartbreaking, because it seems clear that the settlers were not intending to do anything wrong. They viewed the rice as simply a problem: it was unpleasant to look at, it was difficult to navigate, it impeded logging, it's beds grew in an environment that facilitated malaria (or so they thought). In acting to solve these problems they simply did what they thought was needed in order to make the land better; better for commerce, for travel, for health and for aesthetics. The fact that they were in the process destroying a part of the Indigenous People's cultural ties to the land, both spiritual and material, never occurred to them or, if it did occur to them, was probably dismissed as simply a casualty of progress. It was only much later that their descendants were able to overcome the cultural blindness to the consequences of their actions – and by then it was far too late."

Ms. Barton opens each chapter with a few paragraphs provided by someone who is a part of what is left of that Indigenous culture. It was when I read these words by Kyle Whyte, a Potawatomi person and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, that I realized that this book was much more than just a story about wild rice:

"Settlor colonialism differs from other types of colonialism because the settler population seeks to stay in the territory permanently. Given most human societies I am aware of cannot handle the cognitive dissonance of seeing themselves both as people aspiring to the moral life and as people who commit genocide, settler societies seek to erase indigenous peoples, either through direct forgetting, such as in the U.S. educational system, or through romantic portrayals of the destruction of Indigenous peoples that let current, wistful settlers living today off the hook."

In telling the story of wild rice in Michigan, a deep sense of loss pervades this book. What is so profoundly unsettling about this story, is the lack of evil intent with which the loss was perpetrated. What makes the reading of this book so important is that the history portrayed does not cast the settlor in any way as bad people, the settlers just won the war and their culture prevailed. The quote above simply forces the reader to consider what occurred from the perspective of the conquered. Because this story is dispassionately portrayed in using wild rice as the vehicle for this message it is all the more profound.

In a review like this, I do not want to ignore the obvious. The book in a very good history of the existence, destruction and attempted rehabilitation of wild rice, including a great deal of straight forward factual information about the presence of wild rice in Michigan and the efforts made to date to restore it.

In short, this is a book that works on many levels. I unqualifiedly recommend it." — **Robert D. Aicher, Amazon Customer Review**



"Barton brings us the untold story of one of Michigan's iconic natural resources—its cultural and historical importance, its mistreatment and demise, and the seeds of hope for its future recovery. She writes with deep reverence and careful scholarship, in a warm style that makes me want to paddle the backwaters of Michigan's rivers and lakes, searching for lost stands of this amazing grass." -- **Samuel Thayer, author of *The Forager's Harvest, Nature's Garden, and Incredible Wild Edibles***



"Destined to become a Michigan archaeology classic..." – **Michigan Archaeological Society**