



Taming the Flood: Rivers, Wetlands and the Centuries-Old Battle Against Flooding

Jeremy Purseglove

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In 2014 the Somerset Levels suffered from the worst flooding in over twenty years. Inevitably the residents asked for more drainage, more dredging and more money. Flooding in the area has been an issue since it was a marshland, but is more drainage and more dredging the answer?

Exploring the old arguments and new solutions raised over the last 400 years, this completely updated edition of the classic Taming the Flood reveals how harnessing nature, rather than attempting to repress it, is the only answer.

As a practical landscape architect and ecologist working in the water industry, Jeremy Purseglove has been actively involved in land drainage engineering to try to enhance, rather than destroy, the heritage of our rivers and wetlands. Taming the Flood draws extensively on this experience, analysing many of the conflicting demands made on rivers and wetlands. Purseglove charts the conservation, agriculture and development, and outlines practical proposals for the protection and use of these sensitive ecological habitats.

From the Lancashire mosses and the Derwent Ings, Otmoor and the Fens, to Romney Marsh and the Somerset Levels, he traces the history and natural history of our rivers and wetlands, describing in vivid detail both the beauty of these strange and ancient landscapes, and the often disastrous results of attempts to tame them. Beautifully written and magnificently illustrated with photographs, line drawings and maps, this book serves both as a celebration of the richness of the British countryside, and as a warning of the legacy of loss and destruction we could so easily leave to future generations.

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