

(Ebook pdf) A Naturalist's Cabin: Constructing a Dream

# A Naturalist's Cabin: Constructing a Dream

*Cathy Johnson*

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# 1 9.02 x .59 x 5.981, #File Name: 0452266483208 pages | File size: 68.Mb

**Cathy Johnson : A Naturalist's Cabin: Constructing a Dream** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Naturalist's Cabin: Constructing a Dream:

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During a dusty Midwestern drought, Cathy Johnson stumbled upon a cool, limpid pond in northwestern Missouri and fell in love. Scraping together their savings, she and her late husband bought the pond and the surrounding 18 acres of land a naturalists playground, as she describes it. In this richly detailed account, Johnson introduces us to the timid white-tailed deer, iridescent blue dragonflies, velvety meadows, deep, quiet old-growth woods, and steep limestone and loess hills carved by prehistoric rivers or piled high by receding glaciers. Gradually overcome with a long-held desire to build her own cabin in the woods, Johnson decided to raise a small structure that fits the landscape hand-in-glove, where she could retreat to observe the astounding beauty of the wilderness. Filled with fascinating geology and natural history, this intriguing narrative will inspire you to see beauty and adventure in the great outdoors wherever you are and to put the foundations under your own dream.

From Publishers Weekly In this enthusiastic account, Johnson ( *The Local Wilderness* ) details her experience building a cabin in the Missouri woods on an 18-acre "microcosm of landscape." Exploring an area of land one day, Johnson happens upon a lovely pond--its rich environs form a "naturalist's playground"--and convinces her husband of the spiritual necessity of owning this piece of paradise. Intending to use the land as "a place to be alone and think" as well as a sort of organic laboratory in which to "discover the small changes that move across the face of the Earth," the author is gradually overpowered by her long-held desire to "fashion her own nest . . . in the woods." Johnson relates her story with painstaking meticulousness, describing virtually every movement and feeling related to her experience, sometimes using metaphors far too grandiose for such a simple purpose ("The idea of building took hold like an infection and ran rampant through my system, setting my veins on fire."). One has to admire the author's commitment both to the environment and to her personal goals, yet the reader, often mired in the minutiae of it all, may not always share her zeal. Illustrations not seen by PW. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

**About the Author** Cathy Johnson has worked as a naturalist, writer, and freelance artist for the past 40 years, and was staff naturalist and contributing editor for *Country Living* magazine for 11 years. She has been a contributing editor to *Artist's Magazine* and *Watercolor Artist*, and authored a regular column in *Personal Journaling*, where she wrote on the importance of creativity in our lives. Her writing and artwork have been included in a number of nature anthologies and art books. She has written and illustrated many books, and contributed to a number of others, working with a variety of national publishing houses. In 1993, she founded her own small publishing company, *Graphics/Fine Arts Press*, which primarily offers books of interest to the reenacting community or others interested in history and material culture. She has been a longtime member of the Author's Guild. She was chosen Conservation Communicator of the Year by the Burroughs Audubon Society in 1987, and won the Thorpe Menn Award for Creative Writing (AAUW) for *The Naturalist's Cabin: Constructing the Dream* (Viking Penguin) in 1992. Cathy teaches a number of self-directed mini-classes on her website, <http://cathyjohnson.info>. She also offers a number of free tutorial videos on YouTube; visit <https://www.youtube.com/user/KateJosTube>.