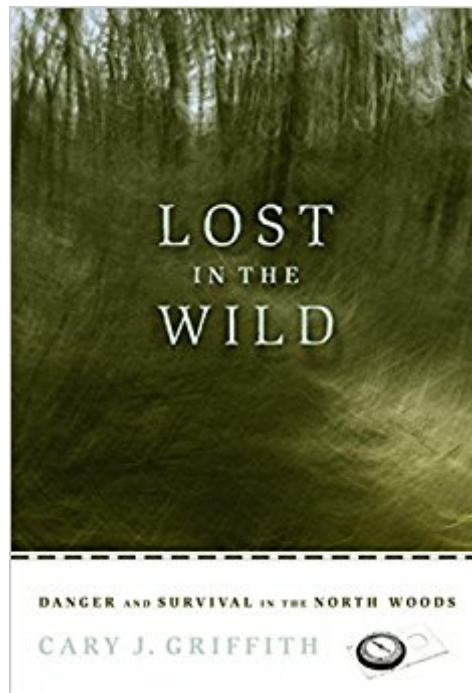




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# **Lost In The Wild: Danger And Survival In The North Woods**



## Synopsis

In the wilderness, one false step can make the difference between a delightful respite and a brush with death. On a beautiful summer afternoon in 1998, Dan Stephens, a 22-year-old canoeist, was leading a trip deep into Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park. He stepped into a gap among cedar trees to look for the next portage and did not return. More than four hours later, Dan awakened with a lump on his head from a fall and stumbled deeper into the woods, confused. Three years later, Jason Rasmussen, a third-year medical student who loved the forest's solitude, walked alone into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness on a crisp fall day. After a two-day trek into a remote area of the woods, he stepped away from his campsite and made a series of seemingly trivial mistakes that left him separated from his supplies, wet, and lost, as cold darkness fell. Enduring days without food or shelter, these men faced the full harsh force of wilderness, the place that they had sought out for tranquil refuge from city life. *Lost in the Wild* takes readers with them as they enter realms of pain, fear, and courage, as they suffer dizzying confusion and unending frustration, and as they overcome seemingly insurmountable hurdles in a race to survive.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Freelancer Griffith details the travails of two hikers who lost their way for several harrowing days in separate incidents in the Minnesota and Ontario wilderness and emerged alive and relatively unscathed thanks to the efforts of search-and-rescue professionals and volunteers. Hiking alone in a remote area with a changeable climate in October 2001, medical student Jason Rasmussen ran into trouble on the first day when he ventured onto a wrong path and became lost in dense forest.

The hapless Rasmussen next lost a crucial map and eventually abandoned his tent, food, and hat and gloves as he tried to recover the trail. By contrast, young Dan Stephens was a savvy canoeist and guide who, in August 1998, on a routine search for his next portage, fell, hit his head and wandered away from the inexperienced group of Chattanooga Boy Scouts he was leading. Griffith writes lucidly throughout, but is more adept with flora than people, whose characterizations are bland. This doesn't have the scope and power of standouts in the adventure genre like Jon Krakauer's *Into the Wild* and will be best appreciated by Minnesota and Ontario wilderness buffs.

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"Absorbing and suspenseful, *Lost in the Wild* brings wilderness survival lessons to life." Suzanne Swedo, author of *Wilderness Survival* "[A] riveting narrative of peril in the North Woods. It is not only a cautionary tale, but a resounding testament to the power of the human spirit. Anyone who relishes the wilderness should read this book." Peter Leschak, author of *Ghosts of the Fireground: Echoes of the Great Peshtigo Fire and the Calling of a Wildland Firefighter*

*Lost in the Wild* is one of those books where you really want to see what happens next. Just one more chapter. Okay one more. It's an easy read that's hard to put down. The book follows the unfortunate misadventures of two different people who get lost in the woods. Two separate stories that take place in different places and different times. The book goes back and forth between the two, showing how each person got lost and what happened afterwards. The details are interesting, especially since I spend a lot of time in the backcountry myself, and the author does a great job of making us understand how perfectly capable people get into bad situations. Both stories are compelling and the reader gets to know not only those who are lost, but their companions, rescuers, families, etc. All in all it's an enjoyable book that keeps you turning pages to see what happens next. The only drawback is that, in hopping back and forth, sometimes one story can get confused with another, temporarily. Once both victims are lost, on foot, in similar environments, there are too many similarities to keep straight all the time. Maybe that's just me (and not a problem that others will have), but two stories farther apart or in different conditions might have been easier to separate. All in all a good book for anyone interested in adventure, exploration, or survival.

I looked forward to reading from this book whenever I could. I enjoy wilderness survival stories and found this one to be well-researched and written. I haven't ever been to Northern Minnesota so the

book taught me about the wilderness there and delivered a home run on the survival stories. The author did a good job of transitioning back and forth between two survival stories separated in time, but in the same general area. There were about 20 awkward words that caused me to pause and scratch my head as to the meaning . . . simpler words could have been used to make the sentences flow more smoothly. *Lost in the Wild* is a good book to read for anyone venturing out into the wilderness. There are some good lessons-learned from these characters. It is amazing how quickly you can get lost in the wild. If you like real outdoor adventure stories, you may also consider reading *Rocky Mountain Adventure Collection*. Cary, thank you for the enjoyable reading.

Heads up spoiler alert. An excellent side-by-side story of two separate stories of lost men in Minnesota's Boundary Waters. The narratives give an excellent account of the incidents, as well as give the reader a sense of the immense resources, effort, and risk rescuers take in trying to save a fellow human being's life endangered by exposure and being lost. As a former search and rescue officer and incident commander, I'll attest that everything in the story is well detailed, and the author does an outstanding job "sneaking in" little survival lessons throughout the book. Although the initial exposition of the stories doesn't move as fast as the majority of the narrative, it is necessary for the background information that gives the story's details context and framing. At the end, even as "objective" and removed as I am (reading in a warm home in Colorado), I shed a few tears reading the conclusion to Jason's story and thinking of his family and the rescuers' amazement at him beating such odds that were very much against him. I'm jealous that in the Colorado mountains we cannot make use of communication (no line of sight in mountain valleys, radios often inoperative) and flights (planes can't fly anywhere near enough to the terrain in the mountains to help in search efforts). Excellent read!

I found that reading this cover-to-cover was too difficult to keep everything and everyone straight, so I read each story separately reading every other chapter. I thought each story was told well and the main characters well developed. I felt like I knew each of them. Their horrific experiences reminded me of how unprepared we really are to live in this world of nature. I learned some very valuable tips on survival in a very entertaining way. In my opinion, a good read.

This book changed how I venture in the wilderness. Long ago I met someone with a traumatic brain injury caused by a water skiing accident, someone who functioned at a very basic level following the accident. The difference between him and most of the rest of us: An instant. This book lays out how

small, seemingly insignificant decisions can have remarkably important results. Whenever I'm hiking (or fishing on remote waters), I now travel with an emergency kit that's fit neatly into a 32-ounce Nalgene bottle (space blanket, extra compass, extra knife, matches, first aid kit, water treatment tablets, whistle). I expect to never use these items, just like those profiled in the book never expected the troubles they encountered. This an excellent book, one highly recommended. You might also read Deep Survival by Larry Gonzales.

This was a good read on two survival stories in the woods of Minnesota and Canada. Griffith clearly did an amazing amount of research to create this book, and wove good stories out of it. There are places where the details slow things down a bit unnecessarily, but it's still solid.

I'll start with the caveat that I am a Search and Rescue volunteer. That said, this is a fascinating book. It's detailed on the process the two people profiled went through that resulted in getting lost, and what they did that helped and hindered their situations. I didn't want to put it down and finished the book in two days.

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