



## Pilgrimage to Vallombrosa From Vermont to Italy in the Footsteps of George Perkins Marsh

By Elder, John

University of Virginia Press, 2006. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Dust Jacket Condition: New. Still shrinkwrapped; Under the Sign of Nature: Explorations in Ecocriticism; 1 x 9.2 x 6 Inches; 282 pages; The pivotal figure in John Elder's latest book-itself a combination of environmental history, travel writing, literary criticism, and memoir-is the nineteenth-century diplomat and writer George Perkins Marsh, generally regarded now as America's first environmentalist. Like Elder, Marsh was a Vermonter, and his diplomatic career took him for some years to Italy, where, witnessing the ecological devastation wrought upon the landscape by runaway deforestation and the plundering of other natural resources, he was moved to produce his famous manifesto, Man and Nature. Marsh drew parallels between the despoiled Italian environment and his home landscape of Vermont, warning that it was vulnerable to ecological woes of a similar magnitude if not carefully maintained and protected. In short, his was a prescient voice for stewardship. On a Fulbright year, Elder chooses to follow in Marsh's footsteps along a trajectory running from Vermont to Italy, and at length fetches up at the managed forest of Vallombrosa-which, as it happens, boasts a stand of sugar maples planted by Marsh. Punctuated throughout with learned and...



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