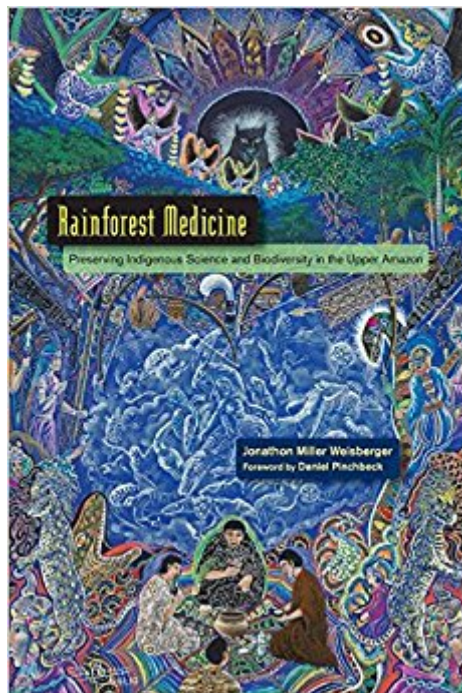




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# Rainforest Medicine: Preserving Indigenous Science And Biodiversity In The Upper



## Synopsis

Chronicling the practices, legends, and wisdom of the vanishing traditions of the upper , this book reveals the area's indigenous peoples' approach to living in harmony with the natural world. Rainforest Medicine features in-depth essays on plant-based medicine and indigenous science from four distinct ian societies: deep forest and urban, lowland rainforest and mountain. The book is illustrated with unique botanical and cultural drawings by Secoya elder and traditional healer Agustin Payaguaje and horticulturalist Thomas Y. Wang as well as by the author himself. Payaguaje shares his sincere imaginal view into the spiritual life of the Secoya; plates of petroglyphs from the sacred valley of Cotundo relate to an ancient language, and other illustrations show traditional Secoya ayahuasca symbols and indigenous origin myths. Two color sections showcase photos of the plants and people of the region, and include plates of previously unpublished full-color paintings by Pablo Cesar Amaringo (1938-2009), an acclaimed Peruvian artist renowned for his intricate, colorful depictions of his visions from drinking the entheogenic plant brew, ayahuasca ("vine of the soul" in Quechua languages). Today the once-dense mysterious rainforest realms are under assault as the indiscriminate colonial frontier of resource extraction moves across the region; as the forest disappears, the traditional human legacy of sustainable utilization of this rich ecosystem is also being buried under modern realities. With over 20 years experience of ground-level environmental and cultural conservation, author Jonathon Miller Weisberger's commitment to preserving the fascinating, unfathomably precious relics of the indigenous legacy shines through. Chief among these treasures is the "shimmering" "golden" plant-medicine science of ayahuasca or yajãñ, a rainforest vine that was popularized in the 1950s by Western travelers such as William Burroughs and Alan Ginsberg. It has been sampled, reviled, and celebrated by outsiders ever since. Currently sought after by many in the industrialized West for its powerful psychotropic and life-transforming effects, this sacred brew is often imbibed by visitors to the upper and curious seekers in faraway venues, sometimes with little to no working knowledge of its principles and precepts. Perceiving that there is an evident need for in-depth information on ayahuasca if it is to be used beyond its traditional context for healing and spiritual illumination in the future, Miller Weisberger focuses on the fundamental knowledge and practices that guide the use of ayahuasca in indigenous cultures. Weaving first-person narrative with anthropological and ethnobotanical information, Rainforest Medicine aims to preserve both the record and ongoing reality of ayahuasca's unique tradition and, of course, the priceless forest that gave birth to these sacred vines. Featuring words from ian shamans--the living torchbearers of these sophisticated spiritual practices--the book stands as testimony to this sacred plant medicine's power in shaping and healing individuals, communities,

and nature alike.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"People interested in indigenous uses of ayahuasca will enjoy reading this book. Author JMW shares what he has seen, heard and experienced during long years spent with indigenous people. He discusses the dangers of sorcery even for those who do not believe in it, as well as the importance of keeping quiet about one's visions. He also discusses a jaguar-centered world view, in which jaguar embodies energy, and energy makes up the universe. JMW shares nugget after nugget of Secoya wisdom about how to work with rainforest medicines. This book is personal rather than academic, and its approach is "kaleidoscopic", but it is packed with knowledge, experience and respect for indigenous cultures. I will recommend it to friends."

—•Jeremy Narby, author of *The Cosmic Serpent*, Anthropologist

"Rainforest Medicine is a remarkable account from a scholar and experiential adventurer who has devoted more than twenty years of his life, much of the time in the field, to the study of physical and metaphysical realms where plants, nature, and the human imagination merge in the mind of the shaman, the true wizards of the upper."

—•Wade Davis, author of *One River* and *Into the Silence*, Explorer-in-Residence at the National Geographic Society

"Rainforest Medicine offers valuable insights into deepening our understanding of the natural world and thereby rediscovering ancient ways of thought that can guide us toward healthy living."

—•Andrew Weil, M.D., author of *Spontaneous Happiness: A New Path to Emotional Well-Being*

Jonathon Miller Weisberger, or 'Sparrow' as called by his friends, has been dedicated to

the preservation of biodiversity, indigenous cultures, and indigenous knowledge in the Northwest for over twenty years! " His commitment is one fueled by passion, a deep understanding of why all humanity needs the rainforest and a profound respect for traditional ways of knowing. In this book Jonathon shares the spiritual perspectives of healers and traditional elders as well as his own body of experiences, alongside a compilation of the identities and uses of two-hundred-and-one indigenous medicines. This book jumps off the bookshelf and urges readers to connect straight to the living heart of the rainforest itself. This book undeniably will be appreciated by researchers of indigenous topics for years to come, as well as anyone concerned about saving the rainforest and being an ally to its peoples."

•Dennis McKenna, Ph.D., ethnopharmacologist, author of *The Brotherhood of the Screaming Abyss: My Life with Terrence McKenna*"Rainforest Medicine carries a timeless message, one that makes evident our essential need which is to reconnect with nature. This book is an instrument of positive transformation. Highly recommended."

•Graham Hancock, author of *Supernatural: Meetings with the Ancient Teachers of Mankind*"Rainforest Medicine teaches us a great deal. While holding true to adventure, the journey goes deep into the earth consciousness where the real medicine for all life exists. Weisberger is one of the great ethnobotanists of our time. Even more so, he is without a doubt one of the finest ambassadors for our planet. His story of the Upper with its amazing medicine plants, people, and oral traditions leaves you wanting to do something anything to save this amazing place. He has a gift for evoking a sense of place and purpose, and the characters he meets come alive on the page. There is little doubt in my mind that Rainforest Medicine is a masterpiece and sets a new standard in ethnobotany and conservation."

•Michael Cottingham, director of Voyage Botanica School of Botanical MedicinePraise for Jonathon Miller Weisberger's work "Courageous and innovative work. [He is] working to preserve ancient botanical wisdom, not on some dusty bookshelf, but in the hearts of indigenous youths and in the forest itself. This is a bold and crucial step in these times."

•Robert Hass, former United States poet laureate "Presided over by a most benevolent array of plant energies and animal intelligences, leafing and leaping spirits ... like a dark heart of the wave on the sloping strand in wilderness and wonder."

•David Abram, author of *The Spell of the Sensuous* "Jonathon Miller Weisberger a 'young Schultes' is a master with the plants.... He helps you listen to their myriad voices, each a wise voice singing a different part in Nature's chorus."

•Bill Pfeiffer, Sacred Earth Network

Ethnobotanist JONATHON "SPARROW" MILLER WEISBERGER was raised in Ecuador and the U.S. He has collected over 2,000 herbarium specimens, including first-time collections of several

new species. From 1990 to 2000, Jonathon lived in the Ecuadorian among five indigenous nationalities, and was influential in the creation of three reserves including the Napo-Galeras National Park. He participated in the demarcation of Waorani territory and in groundwork that helped the Secoya people retain a significant tract of their ancestral homelands. He is the executive director of the Council for Cultural and Biological Diversity (known in Latin America as Fundaci3n OSA), supporting rainforest conservation and cultural heritage projects in Ecuador and Costa Rica. He is the steward of Guaria de Osa Ecolodge ([guariadeosa.com](http://guariadeosa.com)), a rainforest and ocean discovery and education center on the remote Osa peninsula, Costa Rica. The author lives in Guaria de Osa, Costa Rica.

I cannot remember being so into a book since the Teachings of Don Juan. This, however, is noticeably less a fantastical narrative, but a first hand chronicle and guidebook and compendium of knowledge, based on the author's evident direct experience and research. Jonathon's respect and love for the traditional teachings and his dedication and devotion to its conservation, over a span of many years, shines through on each page. The parallels to a broad understanding of Taoist teachings is also very supportive. I am also grateful for his sharing this, knowing that his intention is that it falls into hands that will benefit from the depth of this magical knowledge from the forests and will treat it, at least, with equal respect.

A no nonsense, hardcore, pure as gold personal account of indigenous wisdoms of the Ecuadorian Secoya tribe, their medicinal approach, and inner sources of the origins to their archaic knowledge. Although the writing represents years of scholarly, academic, and first hand personal experience, it is narrated in an approachable, straight to the point fashion, which unapologetically presents the utmost marrow of ethno botanical, medicinal, and shamanic education, without the tonality of validating these sacred truths for the popularity of pop cultural acceptance. This book is for the kindred spirits, the truth seekers, and the ones who want their medicine thick, unwatered-down, and straight from the cup.

This book is a rich introduction to a world that has all but vanished. Jonathon Weisberg's deep respect and personal intimacy with his subject comes through on every page. Not only that, he shows a mature, seasoned wisdom that only comes through hard-won experience and thoughtful reflection. There is a moral integrity to Rainforest Medicine that is inspiring and important for our times.

This is a beautifully written book full of captivating stories and rich in indigenous wisdom. While both captivating and informative, the books call for action to preserve nature and interact sustainably with life is urgently compelling. Anyone interested in Ayahuasca, plant spirit shamanism, healing, or South American indigenous culture will find this book an amazing storehouse of information.

Yes, ayahuasca is well presented. But really, this book contains the entire context around the phenomenon of ayahuasca. The jungle, the peoples, the full cultural ambience surrounding this native healing and divination ritual, are all presented by the author; who has lived, worked, and traveled in the "natural territory of historic ayahuasca culture".

AMAZING BOOK. I couldn't put it down. I had the good fortune to be personally acquainted with this medicine and the author many years ago, and to see his valuable life's work put down in such a beautifully written book is a tremendous gift. It is an absolute pre-requisite for anyone interested in Ayahuasca. I cannot recommend it highly enough. Fascinating, beautifully written, brimming with intelligence.

Informative -- well written book full of invaluable information and great stories. Recommended to anyone interested in healing plants and indigenous cultures.

Such a wealth of knowledge contained in this book. Its one of the only books I have read multiple times and every time I seem to learn something new.

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