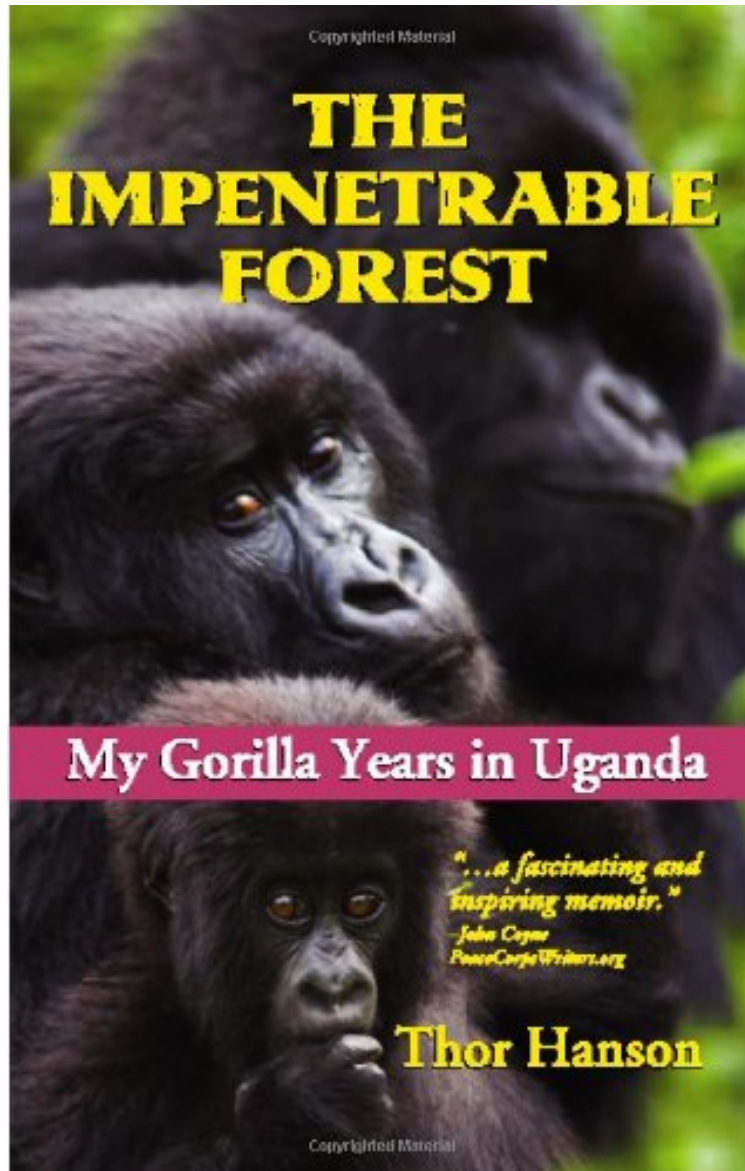


(Free read ebook) The Impenetrable Forest: My Gorilla Years in Uganda, Revised Edition

# The Impenetrable Forest: My Gorilla Years in Uganda, Revised Edition

Thor Hanson

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**Thor Hanson : The Impenetrable Forest: My Gorilla Years in Uganda, Revised Edition** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Impenetrable Forest: My Gorilla Years in Uganda, Revised Edition:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Context, Conservation, and Contagions  
By Janelle C. Dr. Hanson uses his experience as a Peace Corps volunteer to provide an engaging history of the conservation movement that has catapulted Bwindi (Buhoma), Uganda into a popular travel destination. His auto-biographical account is humorous at times and heart-wrenching at others. He provides details about mountain gorilla behaviors (and how they are impacted by humans), though he does not overwhelm the reader with scientific "facts". He presents the information in a very digestible way that allows the reader to feel they are observing rather than reading. He does this while simultaneously examining the socio-political and economic factors that shaped the region in the early 1990's, including the political turmoil in neighboring Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire) and the impact of the AIDS epidemic on the local populations. I read this before spending several months in Buhoma as a volunteer at the Bwindi Community Hospital, and I recommended it to several other travelers while I was there. The hospital was not in place during Dr. Hanson's Peace Corps tour of duty (however, in the revised version, he does refer to it). Nonetheless, this is a lovely way for travelers with an interest in human or gorilla populations to become acquainted with the (semi-)recent local history. My only critique is that he does not really touch on the plight of the Batwa (pygmies) population that traditionally lived in the forest. They were forced to leave the forest (as conservation refugees) for the creation of the park and they now live on reservations. Of course, it is difficult to capture all of the complexities. Overall, Dr. Hanson does an excellent job presenting and contrasting issues that impact both humans and gorillas alike.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The best Peace Corps experience ever!  
By Arnold This is an amazing book about an amazing part of the world. I took this book with me when I visited Bwindi Impenetrable Forest a few weeks ago. While seeing the gorillas myself was wonderful, Thor Hanson's account in *The Impenetrable Forest: My Gorilla Years in Uganda, Revised Edition* really added depth to my visit. In the book, Hanson recounts his years as a Peace Corps volunteer helping to establish ecotourism in Bwindi (the same ecotourism I ultimately benefitted from). His book weaves observations of the gorillas with amusing anecdotes of the Uganda people, whom he describes as being amongst the kindest in the world (an observation with which I agree). Hanson really breathes life into the gorillas, describing the personalities of the individual families. One episode in particular really stuck out. Gorillas often mock charge humans. Once, when Hanson was observing a family, two aggressive males charged him and his group. However, another gorilla stood in between the aggressors and the humans, as if protecting them. This heartwarming episode suggests some gorillas have empathy for humans. Through Hanson's book, hopefully more of us will have empathy for them. Hanson also provides an excellent overview of life in Peace Corps. While he admits his Peace Corps experience may have been more exciting (most volunteers end up teaching English), he shows the struggles some volunteers face immersing themselves into an entirely new culture. I was particularly struck by how volunteers sometimes felt they were never fully accepted into the community - that they often remained the "white curiosity". On that note, this book should be assigned reading for new Peace Corps volunteers. *The Impenetrable Forest: My Gorilla Years in Uganda, Revised Edition* is not just about gorillas, not just about Uganda, not just about Peace Corps - it's the combination that makes reading it such a joy. I wholeheartedly recommend it if you ever get to visit the gorillas and people in Bwindi - or if you are just looking for a good book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must read if you're going to Uganda  
By Wayne Lobb I read Hanson's fine book before going to Uganda and Bwindi in 2005. It was an excellent and useful read then. Now, ten years later, I've read it again during my 6th or so trip back to Uganda, finding it even more interesting and insightful than the first time, in part because I've spent a lot of time with Bakiga people in Kabarole. Long ago I was a Peace Corps volunteer in India, and wish I could have interacted as deeply with the people there as Hanson did in Uganda, and written as eloquently and warmly he has about life, culture, mores, gorillas and the land.

A self-described eco-nerd Thor Hanson, scientist and writer, brought the nascent gorilla tourist program in Bwindi National Park, located within Africa's Impenetrable Forest, to life. With grace and good humor Hanson navigates the local customs, mores and bureaucracy governing everything from love to superstition to build infrastructure, hire and train staff, fend off millions of ants among many other creatures while studying and acclimating the mountain gorillas to humans in their midst.

This book is a fun-read that provides an insider's account of life in the remote African bush as a Peace Corps volunteer. Great reading for everyone with a sense of adventure and interested in protecting our natural world. (Craig R. Sholley, African Wildlife Foundation) If you love to read about people who've made a difference, Thor's life full of successes and disappointments makes a fascinating, inspiring memoir. (John Coyne, *Living on the Edge: Fiction by Peace Corps Writers*) Fascinating...very well-written. From the Publisher Award-Winner in the nature category of the National Best Books 2008 Awards, sponsored by USA Book News. From the Author As a biologist, working with endangered mountain gorillas deepened my understanding of evolution, animal behavior, and the critical interface between people and the natural world. Personally, my time in Uganda gave me friendships and insights that crossed wide cultural boundaries. *The Impenetrable Forest* describes a transformative period of my life and will always be a

special book to me.