



# Australian Rainforests: Islands of Green in a Land of Fire

*D. M. J. S. Bowman*

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Why do Australian rainforests occur as islands within the vast tracts of Eucalyptus? Why is fire a critical ecological factor in every Australian landscape? What were the consequences of the use of fire by the Ice Age colonists? In this original and challenging book, David Bowman critically examines all hypotheses that have been advanced to answer these questions. He demonstrates that fire is the most critical factor in controlling the distribution of rainforest throughout Australia. Furthermore, while Aboriginal people used fire to skillfully manage and preserve habitats, he concludes that they did not significantly influence the evolution of Australia's unique flora and fauna. This volume, the first comprehensive overview of the diverse literature on this topic, solves the puzzle of the archipelago of rainforest habitats in Australia. It is essential reading for all ecologists, foresters, conservation biologists, and others interested in the biogeography and ecology of Australian rainforests.

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