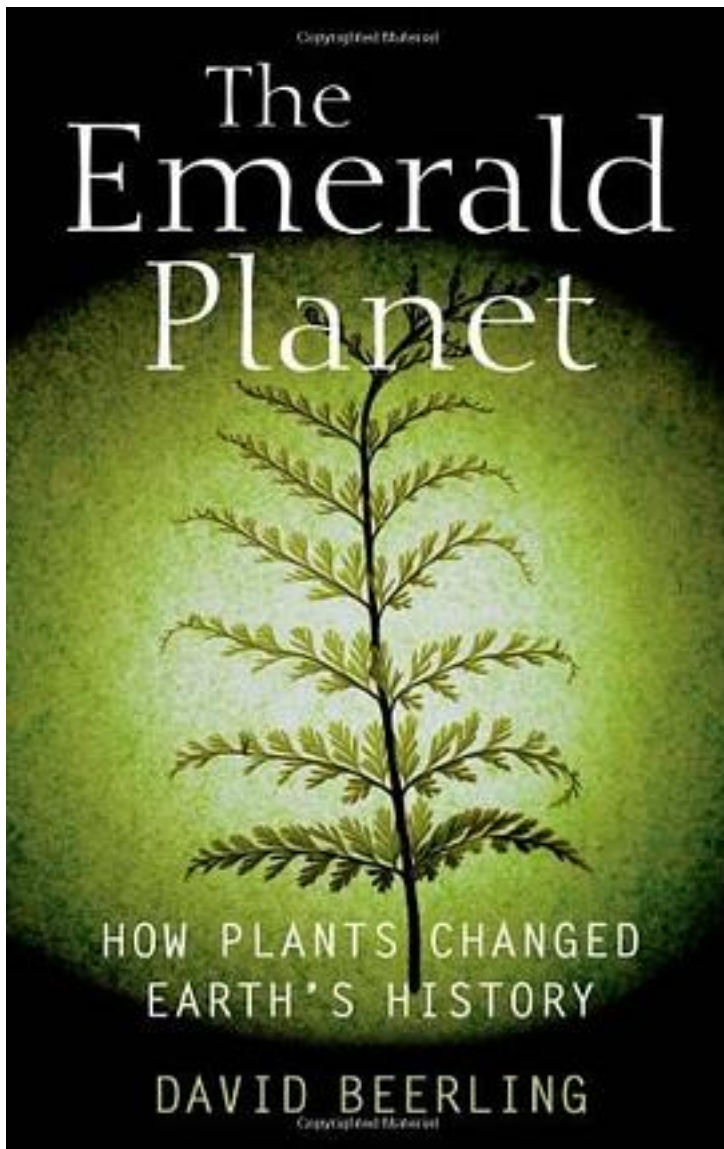


The Emerald Planet



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著者:David Beerling

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Plants have transformed our planet over the last 470 million years as they invaded the land and diversified into the astonishing variety we know today. But their influence has reached even further: they have profoundly moulded the Earth's climate and the evolutionary trajectory of life. Far from being 'silent witnesses to the passage of time', plants are dynamic components of our world, shaping the environment throughout history as much as that environment has shaped them. In *The Emerald Planet*, David Beerling puts plants centre stage, revealing the crucial role they have played in driving global changes in the environment, in recording hidden facets of Earth's history, and in helping us to predict its future. His account draws together evidence from fossil plants, from experiments with their living counterparts, and from computer models of the 'Earth System', to illuminate the history of our planet and its biodiversity. This new approach reveals how plummeting carbon dioxide levels removed a barrier to the evolution of the leaf; how forests once grew on Antarctica, how plants played a starring role in allowing spectacular giant insects to thrive in the Carboniferous; and strengthens fascinating and contentious fossil evidence for an ancient hole in the ozone layer. Along the way, Beerling introduces a lively cast of pioneering scientists from Victorian times onwards whose discoveries provided the crucial background to these and the other puzzles. This new understanding of our planet's past sheds a sobering light on our own climate-changing activities, and offers clues to what our climatic and ecological futures might look like. There could be no more important time to take a close look at plants, and to understand the history of the world through the stories they tell.

作者介绍:

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英国谢菲尔德大学自然科学教授和利华休姆减缓气候变化中心主任。戴维·比尔林在学术期刊上发表多篇论文,《植物知道地球的奥秘》是他的一部科普作品。2014年,戴维·比尔林当选英国皇家学会会员。

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书评

你是否也喜欢园艺，喜欢养几盆花草？你的花草是欣欣向荣，还是常常活不过一个月呢？喜欢养花，但是总是养不活的你肯定常常感叹，雨林中，山谷里，雪山脚下那些无人照顾看管的植物，怎么都长得那么茂盛？冬去春来，植物随着春天一同降临大地，仿佛有一双看不见的双手在抚育它们...

《植物知道地球的奥秘》这本书取了个很好的名字，它包含“植物”两个字看起来很文艺，它又包含“地球”两个字看起来很理性，最后又包含“奥秘”两个字让它看起来很有诱惑性。如果你真的以为里面是让人狡黠一笑的八卦猛料，那么就大错特错了。虽然的确有很多有趣的观点在其中， ...

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