

[From Winter 1993 - 1994]

## **Review - New Video at the Bookstore**

### ***Rivers of Sand: Exploring Barrier Islands***

#### **The Joy Foundation -- \$19.95**

There are more than 300 barrier islands stretching from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico, many only valued for their beaches. But barrier islands are much more than surf, sun and fun. This brand new 30-minute video takes you on a walk through the different zones of a barrier island with particular focus on Assateague Island. The spectacular photography shows how the lives of plants and animals are interdependent and how they adapt to the ever changing landscape.

There are five major zones that make up the habitats of a barrier island. In the beach zone, you will discover that because of the turbulence, few plants are able to live here. Birds such as the threatened piping plover use the beach zone for nesting while others use it as a feeding ground. The next zone is the dunes. Blowing sand covers the wrack line and beach grasses take root in decaying organic material. The dunes protect the diversity of life on the leeward side from the onslaught of storm tides.

The third zone is the thicket zone which develops behind the dunes. In between the tangle of briars, berries and poison ivy, there are birds and wild flowers. Occasionally over washes of sand and water from gaps in the dunes will create a flat sandy plane. Dikes and water-control structures help maintain these areas as feeding grounds for migratory waterfowl.

The forest zone has very little salt spray to limit the plant growth and is where the endangered Delmarva Peninsula fox squirrel is most common. Where the forest is today will eventually be beach as the barrier island continues its relentless westward movement. The last zone is the salt marsh. It may at first seem inhospitable but is probably the most nutrient productive land on earth.

This video takes time to explore the natural world of a barrier island and helps you discover how all the parts work together. It is a wonderful vacation memento and enables you to relive all the sights and sounds. The video closes with these lines, "The more we understand and appreciate the rich diversity of our natural heritage, the more we will cherish and work to protect it."

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