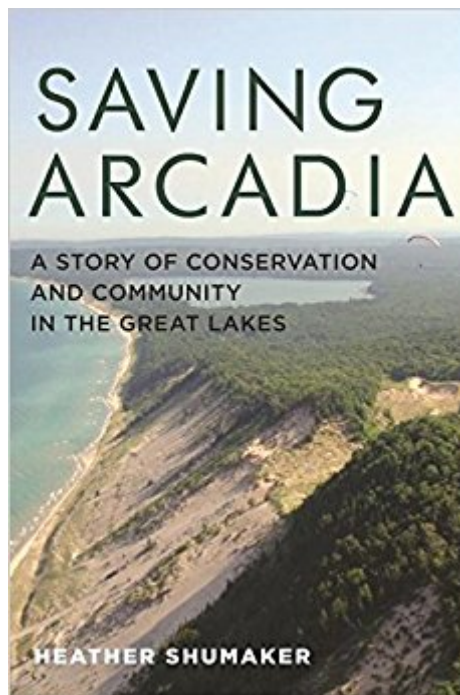




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# **Saving Arcadia: A Story Of Conservation And Community In The Great Lakes (Painted Turtle)**



## Synopsis

*Saving Arcadia: A Story of Conservation and Community in the Great Lakes* is a suspenseful and intimate land conservation adventure story set in the Great Lakes heartland. The story spans more than forty years, following the fate of a magnificent sand dune on Lake Michigan and the people who care about it. Author and narrator Heather Shumaker shares the remarkable untold stories behind protecting land and creating new nature preserves. Written in a compelling narrative style, the book is intended in part as a case study for landscape-level conservation and documents the challenges of integrating economic livelihoods into conservation and what it really means to "preserve" land over time. This is the story of a small band of determined townspeople and how far they went to save beloved land and endangered species from the grip of a powerful corporation. *Saving Arcadia* is a narrative with roots as deep as the trees the community is trying to save, something set in motion before the author was even born. And yet, Shumaker gives a human face to the changing nature of land conservation in the twenty-first century. Throughout this chronicle we meet people like Elaine, a nineteen-year-old farm wife; Dori, a lakeside innkeeper; and Glen, the director of the local land trust. Together with hundreds of others they cross cultural barriers and learn to help one another in an effort to win back the six-thousand-acre landscape taken over by Consumers Power that is now facing grave devastation. The result is a triumph of community that includes working farms, local businesses, summer visitors, year-round residents, and a network of land stewards. A work of creative nonfiction, *Saving Arcadia* is the adventurous tale of everyday people fighting to reclaim the land that has been in their family for generations. It explores ideas about nature and community, and anyone from scholars of ecology and conservation biology to readers of naturalist writing can gain from *Arcadia's* story.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A David and Goliath conservation story set on Lake Michigan.

Heather Shumaker has worked in land conservation for two decades and was coastal program director for protecting Arcadia Dunes. She has a master of science degree in land resources from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is a national speaker and author of *It's OK Not to Share* and *It's OK to Go Up the Slide*. She lives in northern Michigan with her family.

You know that quote about a small group of people changing the world? This is a great story bringing that quote to life. Really enjoyed the narrative nonfiction format about the saving of an ecological treasure -- Arcadia Dunes in northern Michigan -- through sheer determination. I appreciated the honesty of the ending as well -- that it was thrilling to protect this gorgeous place but then the reality hit of being responsible for its care forever. I think people don't truly appreciate the similar weight of responsibility of the national parks: how do we preserve Yellowstone, for example, for ALL TIME not just for the next few seasons or even decades? Shumaker shares personal stories and details to enliven what could have been a fairly dry book. The legal, business, non-profit, natural, and human twists and turns make it suspenseful even if you can guess the positive ending. Worth reading!

Until I read *Saving Arcadia*, it had been more than a decade since I'd visited Old Baldy, the crowning glory dune. Within a week of finishing it, I had made a trip back. I have wonderful memories of summers spent at this Michigan coastline gem, and each chapter was like a round of polishing, ultimately inspiring me to make modern memories with a new generation of family. If you do not know Arcadia personally, the vivid writing and full-color photo selection are the next best thing to being there. I'll be buying this book for gifts, too.

A wonderfully told story of passion for our lands and the convergence of fate, love, and daring. The book is a great adventure -- all the pieces had to fall into place for this grand scheme to work. And,

Heather Shumaker was just the right person to tell this story of big dreamers and hard relentless effort. Saving Arcadia shows how determined people can succeed, working together, accomplishing even the loftiest of goals.

The threat was none too subtle and all too real: "You can hole up all you want, but it's going to happen. As a utility, we can use eminent domain to condemn your property. We will have this land." SAVING ARCADIA is a gripping true story of a small but mighty band of people who saved their land and its inhabitants from corporate greed and destruction. Five stars, must-read, we would all do well to take a page from the environmental vision in this incredible book.

Saving Arcadia is a grand story of passion, conservation, community, and love of the natural world. I just moved up to the area a few months ago and instantly fell in love with my natural surroundings. Success stories such as this one that Heather elegantly and passionately describes are the reason why beautiful areas such as Arcadia Dunes still exist. It is hard to find optimistic success stories in the environmental realm these days. Saving Arcadia has given me a new spark to my career in conservation. I felt as if I were in Heather's shoes learning and fighting to save Arcadia Dunes. Once I picked up the book I could not put it down. I finished reading it in two days it was so good!

In a clear clean style, Heather Shumaker makes the decades old story of Saving Arcadia into an absorbing adventure, a quest to save the place that meant so much to so many people. As a participant in the Conservancy's efforts, Shumaker learned first hand the ins and outs of conservation and fundraising, but this story also tells the personal tale of the people who gathered around a cause to save an important tract of land, and keep it whole for the community. It's pretty gripping, unfolding with tension and suspense.

This book reads like an action thriller. It is fascinating and mesmerizing. I couldn't put it down. Neither could my husband. Of the people I have recommended it to, they have all loved it and have bought more to pass along to friends. Heather Schumaker does an excellent job of describing the plight of the farmers who were affected by the initial land purchase, the neighboring communities and resorts that share this piece of paradise in their backyard, and all who want to preserve it for its ecological, recreational, and natural beauty. If you care about special places and protecting them, this book is a text book. If you are involved with fund development, this book is a guide to the intricacies and importance of relationships and stakeholder value. I love Arcadia dunes, so I picked

this book up to learn the whole story of how the Conservancy was able to acquire the land from Consumers Energy. What I found through reading it was so much more.

Before I begin my review, I want to thank all who sacrificed to save Arcadia - especially Heather Shumaker, Glen Chown, Dori Turner and the Arcadia community. Without them, the unthinkable could very well have happened. I first vacationed at Watervale with my parents and brother in 1967 and just last week, after making a two day drive from Texas, I enjoyed its peace and beauty with my own family including four grandsons. I marveled once again at how much the same it has remained. I knew of the 2003 Coastal Campaign but had no idea what tremendous effort went into insuring the preservation of this area I love. Saving Arcadia is well written and informative - a must read for anyone who knows the land, forests, plants, animals and water it describes or who has an interest in the conservation of God's creation. Even though I knew what the outcome of the campaign would be, I couldn't put this book down! After finishing Saving Arcadia, I have even greater appreciation for the privilege of visiting the Arcadia area annually and the work that goes into maintaining it. Thank you for heightening my awareness , Heather, and keep up the good work GTRLC!

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