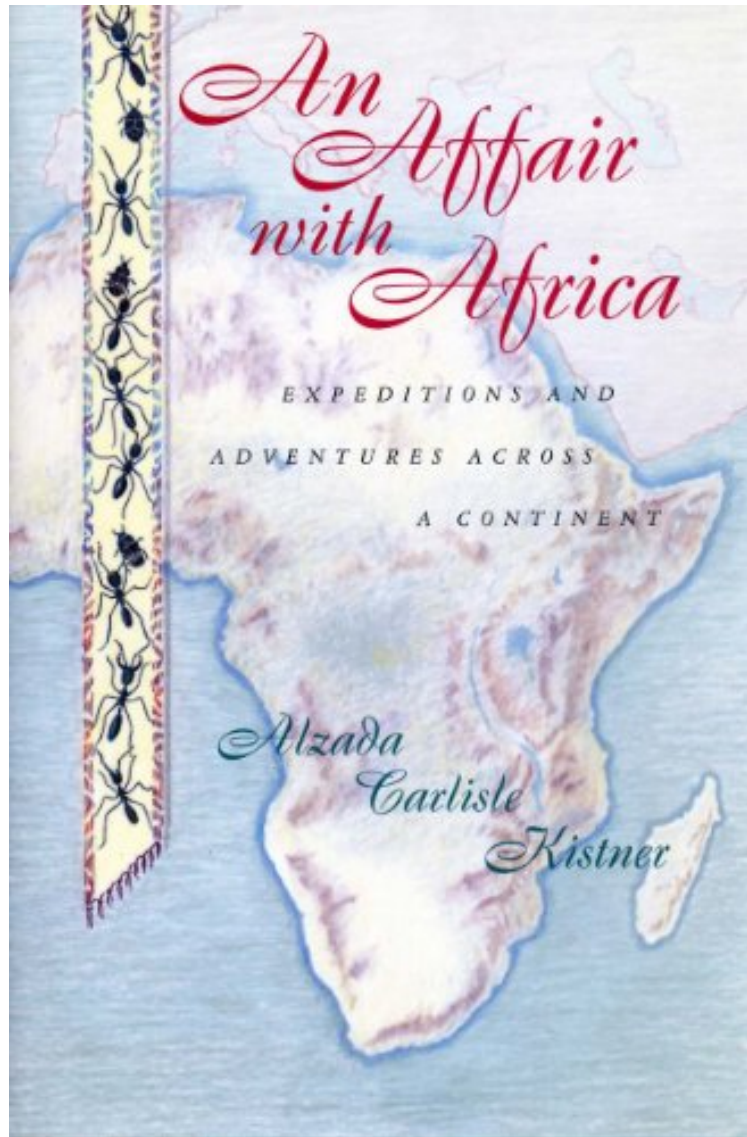


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An Affair with Africa: Expeditions And Adventures Across A Continent

Von Alzada Carlisle Kistner

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Produktinformation Verffentlicht am: 2013-03-05Erscheinungsdatum: 2013-03-05File Name: B00C6F9DMS | File size: 59.Mb

Von Alzada Carlisle Kistner : An Affair with Africa: Expeditions And Adventures Across A Continent before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Affair with Africa:

Expeditions And Adventures Across A Continent:

Kurzbeschreibung In June 1960, a young faculty wife named Alzada Kistner and her husband David, a promising entomologist, left their 18-month old daughter in the care of relatives and began what was to be a four month scientific expedition in the Belgian Congo. Three weeks after their arrival, the country was gripped by a violent revolution trapping the Kistners in its midst. Despite having to find their way out of numerous life-threatening situations, the Kistners were not to be dissuaded. An emergency airlift by the United States Air Force brought them to safety in Kenya where they continued their field work. Thus began three decades of adventures in science. In *An Affair with Africa*, Alzada Kistner describes her family's African experience -- the five expeditions they took beginning with the trip to the Belgian Congo in 1960 and ending in 1972-73 with a nine-month excursion across southern Africa. From hunching over columns of ants for hours on end while seven months pregnant to eating dinner next to Idi Amin, Kistner provides a lively and humor-filled account of the human side of scientific discovery. Her wonderfully detailed stories clearly show why, despite hardship and danger -- and contrary to all of society's expectations -- she could not forsake accompanying her husband on his expeditions, and, to this day, continues to find the world "endlessly beckoning, a lively bubbling cauldron of questions and intrigue." In the spirit of Beryl Markham's *West with the Night* and Isak Dinesen's *Out of Africa*, *An Affair with Africa* shares with readers the thoughts and experiences of a remarkable woman, one whose unquenchable thirst for adventure led her into a series of almost unimaginable situations. Readers -- from armchair travelers fascinated by stories of Africa to scientists familiar with the Kistners' work but unaware of the lengths to which they went to gather their data -- will find *An Affair with Africa* a rare treasure.

Pressestimmen The adventures of a family spanning more than a decade of scientific expeditions to Africa in search of some of the tiniest of that continent's wildlife. Kistner, associate editor of the journal *Sociobiology*, is the gamely devoted wife of entomologist David Kistner, the world's foremost expert on myrmecophiles, beetles that live among ant colonies. Beginning in 1960, the young couple began an often harrowing but productive series of expeditions to Africa at a time when many Americans and Europeans were headed the other way to escape the instability of the end of the colonial era. In search of their small quarry, the Kistners, eventually with both of their young daughters in tow, spend long, dusty hours on all fours sucking up insects - sometimes thousands in one session - through an aspirator. But what readers will find more memorable in this unflaggingly cheery narrative are the family's frequent life-threatening encounters with both nature and man, from poisonous snakes and charging elephants (not to mention biting ants) to bandits and terrorists. They also experienced the last gasp of the European and especially British colonial period with its dinner parties, sumptuous houses, and colorful old Africa hands and colonial administrators. Then, too, the family by happenstance ran into some of the famous and infamous men who took their places, such as presidents Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and in a brief but scary restaurant encounter, Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. Kistner tiptoes around the issue of apartheid in then Rhodesia and South Africa, only vaguely muttering her dissatisfaction with the policy and with white attitudes toward black Africans, but politics is only tangential to this account, which is really a rather remarkable family saga. While readers might get tired of stooping to examine ant nests with the Kistners, the portrait of Africa from nearly four decades back makes for an unusual tale. (Kirkus s)

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