

Director of Publicity & Marketing:

Katharine Walton
kwalton@chelseagreen.com
919.563.1353 • cell 919.357.4400

Publicity Manager:

Taylor Haynes
thaynes@chelseagreen.com
802.295.6300 ext. 106

Publication Date: WINTER 2008/09

Events Coordinator:

Allison Lennox
alennox@chelseagreen.com
802.299.2456

10th Anniversary Edition

GAVIOTAS

A Village To Reinvent The World

Alan Weisman, best selling author of *The World Without Us*, revisits Gaviotas for this 10th anniversary addition:



Nearly two decades ago, while covering a rather harrowing story for the *New York Times Magazine*, I unexpectedly came across a living example of how humans might actually be able to strike a harmonious, sustainable bargain with our natural surroundings. To this day, the village of Gaviotas in the remote eastern savannas of war-torn, drug-ridden Colombia remains the most hopeful portent I've ever seen amidst the hell that too often defines our modern world. Subsequently, I produced a piece about Gaviotas for NPR's *All Things Considered*, wrote another for the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, and then finally returned to research my book *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World*.

In the decade since it was published, I've been continually invited to speak at colleges and universities in the United States and beyond. Gaviotas is perennially assigned in departments of urban planning, engineering, environmental studies, tropical ecology, Latin American Studies, journalism, science writing, and literature, among others, and entire curricula for high school students and incoming college freshman programs have been based around it. Repeatedly, I hear from faculty that even students who typically shun reading will devour this true story that reads like a novel, filled with real, fascinating characters who show what imagination can accomplish even in the most difficult settings.

As the Gaviotans themselves told me: "If we can do it in Colombia, you can do it anywhere." Yet in discussions and hundreds of letters, I'm always asked how Gaviotas has fared – and whether it has actually survived – amid the awful civil war that inflamed their country in the ensuing years since my book. Many have wanted to travel there, but even I, despite many past trips with Colombian guerrillas, have been dissuaded by some of the world's highest homicide and kidnapping rates. Yet through messages, phone calls, and communiqués from Colombian journalists, each year I could report that miraculously, in this community whose single defense was its acknowledged defenselessness – the only rule at Gaviotas is that no guns are allowed – no one had succumbed to the violence that bloodied their nation.

As the tenth anniversary of my book's publication approached, I decided it was time to see for myself. Last March, I flew to Bogotá and chartered a plane across the Andes, out to Gaviotas. I'm pleased to say that my expanded afterword to this 10th anniversary edition of *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World* reports not only how they've managed to survive, but how they are conjuring ingenious new ways so that even the rest of us might actually thrive in this challenging new century. –Alan Weisman



the politics and practice of sustainable living

P.O. Box 428, 85 North Main Street, Suite 120, White River Junction, Vermont 05001
Telephone: 802.295.6300 • Fax: 802.295.6444 • www.chelseagreen.com

Director of Publicity & Marketing:

Katharine Walton

kwalton@chelseagreen.com

919.563.1353 • cell 919.357.4400

Publicity Manager:

Taylor Haynes

thaynes@chelseagreen.com

802.295.6300 ext. 106

Publication Date: WINTER 2008/09

Events Coordinator:

Allison Lennox

alennox@chelseagreen.com

802.299.2456

10th Anniversary Edition

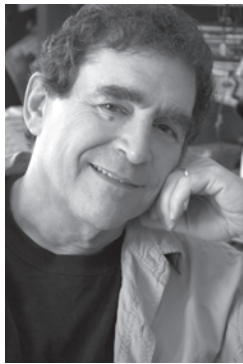
GAVIOTAS

A Village To Reinvent The World

—TOPIA—

"They always put social experiments in the easiest, most fertile places. We wanted the hardest place. We figured if we could do it here, we could do it anywhere."

—Paolo Lugari, founder of Gaviotas



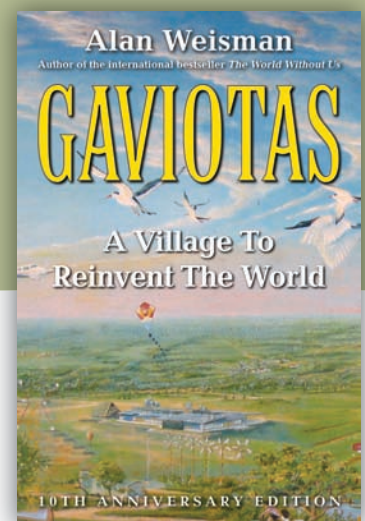
Author of the critically acclaimed New York Times BEST SELLER *The World Without Us*, **Alan Weisman** is an award-winning journalist whose reports have appeared in *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Discover*, *Orion*, NPR, and more. A former contributing editor to the Los Angeles Times Magazine, he is a senior radio producer for Homelands Productions and teaches international journalism at the University of Arizona. He lives in western Massachusetts.

Los Llanos—the rain-leached, eastern savannas of war-ravaged Colombia—are among the most brutal environments on Earth. Here, in the late 1960s, a young Colombian development worker named Paolo Lugari wondered if the nearly uninhabited, infertile llanos could be made livable for his country's growing population. He had no idea that nearly four decades later, his hard work and dedication would be celebrated around the world as an example of environmental hope and sustainable living: a permanent village called **Gaviotas**.

In the absence of infrastructure, the first Gaviotans invented wind turbines to convert mild breezes into energy, hand pumps capable of tapping deep sources of water, and solar collectors efficient enough to heat and even sterilize drinking water under perennially cloudy llano skies. Over time, the Gaviotans' experimentation has even restored an ecosystem: in the shelter of two million Caribbean pines planted as a source of renewable commercial resin, a primordial rain forest that once covered the llanos is unexpectedly reestablishing itself.

Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez has called Paolo Lugari "Inventor of the World." Paolo himself has said that Gaviotas is not a utopia: "Utopia literally means 'no place.' We call Gaviotas a topia, because it's real."

Relive their story with this special 10th-anniversary edition of *Gaviotas*, complete with a new afterword by the author describing how Gaviotas has survived and progressed over the past decade.



GAVIOTAS

A Village To Reinvent The World

10th Anniversary Edition

By Alan Weisman

\$16.95 USD • PB • 6x9 • 244 pages

ISBN: 9781890132286



the politics and practice of sustainable living

P.O. Box 428, 85 North Main Street, Suite 120, White River Junction, Vermont 05001

Telephone: 802.295.6300 • Fax: 802.295.6444 • www.chelseagreen.com