

STAR TRAILS – Navajo

A Different Way To Look At The Night Sky

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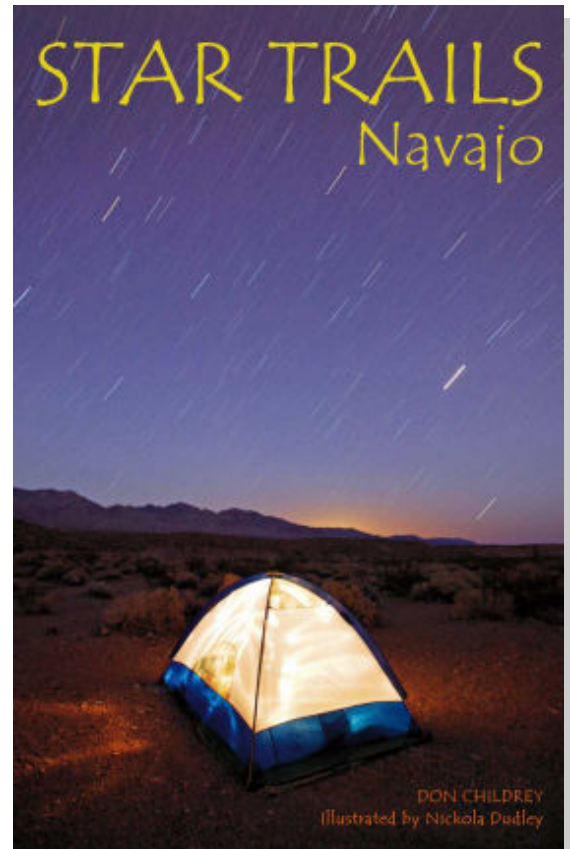
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SYNOPSIS:

STAR TRAILS - Navajo sheds new light on the night sky by offering readers a different perspective from which to view the stars and constellations. The star lore of the Navajo people preserved the knowledge of the night sky discovered by their ancestors over countless centuries. These stories explained the importance of specific stars and groups of stars, the orderly movement of celestial bodies, and the chaotic placement of the multitude of other stars that decorate the heavens at night. *STAR TRAILS - Navajo* connects readers with the Navajo perspective by combining these stories with detailed star charts and viewing guides that can be used to locate the Navajo star figures in the sky.

The Introduction describes how star lore was incorporated into various early cultures and why it was especially important to pre-literate peoples. A basic guide to observing the night sky is provided in the Visual Astronomy chapter, to help the reader get the most out of their viewing experience. The Navajo star creation story is retold from the context of a sandpainting healing ceremony. The Navajo Star Figures chapter details the eight primary groups of stars recognized by the Navajo, including commentary on how other early cultures described these same stars. References to contemporary star data is also included for specific stars within each of these star figures.

STAR TRAILS - Navajo is rounded out with several sets of useful reference data. Sky Viewing Guide charts identify which dates offer the best chance for dark sky viewing. Planet Visibility charts allow the user to quickly determine which planets should be visible at certain times. Both of these charts are provided for the years 2004 through 2008. Annual meteor shower dates are listed in another chart. A section on the names of each full moon throughout the year is included. Many of these names come from Native American cultures. A detailed bibliography and index is also included.



AUTHOR:

Don Childrey is a husband, father of two girls, an IT functional development analyst with the NC Office of the State Controller, an author, and an avid outdoor adventurer. He studied aerospace and civil engineering in college and earned his Professional Engineering license while working as an engineer for NCDOT. His love of the outdoors was encouraged as a child and continued to develop through his years as a Boy Scout, a volunteer maintainer of the Appalachian Trail and founder of UMBA, a mountain bike trail maintenance association. He is also active in the sport of adventure racing and promotes the sport through his race company Bushwhack Adventures, Incorporated.

He published his first book, the *Uwharrie Lakes Region Trail Guide*, in 1998. This 302 page book provides detailed coverage of more than 133 miles of hiking and biking trails around the Uwharrie National Forest in central North Carolina. Over 3,000 copies of this book have been sold to date. While enjoying countless nights afield on hiking, paddling, and biking trips, he was able to indulge his interest in the night sky. *STAR TRAILS - Navajo* is the result of his research into the star lore of the Navajo people of the American Southwest.

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