

Name: Robert Marshall

Years: January 2, 1901 to November 11, 1939

Residence: New York City and Lower Saranac Lake

Brief Biography: Pioneer conservationist, forester, lobbyist, author, and philanthropist, Bob Marshall was born on January 2, 1901, in New York City to Florence and Louis Marshall, German immigrants. Bob's father was a prominent lawyer, conservationist, and leader in the Jewish community. The young Marshall was schooled in New York City but spent his first twenty one years during the summers at the family's home on Lower Saranac Lake in the Adirondacks. Here, Bob and his brothers, George and James, and learned the compass and map. Bob and George climbed 42 of the Adirondack peaks over 4,000 feet between 1918 and 1924 and later climbed the remaining four. Following his passion for the mountains, Bob earned three degrees by 1930, including a Ph.D. in forestry from Johns Hopkins University. From 1925 to 1928 he worked in Montana at the Northern Rocky Mountain Forest Experiment Station researching reproduction in forests after fires. Beginning in 1929 he took several trips to Wiseman, Alaska, to explore the Central Brooks range of the Alaska wilds. His book, *Arctic Village* (1933), about his life with the Alaskan Eskimos and whites in Wiseman from 1930 to 1931 was a best seller. Throughout his years working for the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service Marshall wrote extensively of the aesthetic importance of the wilderness and pushed for its public ownership. In 1930, fearing private interests would destroy the forests, Marshall wrote "the Problem of the Wilderness", which ran in the February, 1930, *Scientific Monthly*. Marshall's article called for a strong group of citizens united in wilderness protection. Five years later, in January of 1935, Marshall and several of his colleagues and friends, including Aldo Leopold, Benton MacKaye, and Robert Sterling Yard, founded a group they named "The Wilderness Society". On November 11, 1939, while on an overnight trip from Washington D.C. to New York, Marshall, one of the most powerful proponents of the modern wilderness movement in America, died at age thirty nine.

Major Achievements: During his last five years after co-founding the Wilderness Society, Bob Marshall's prominence in the Forest Service had grown rapidly. Friendships and associations he made during this time helped propel the Wilderness Act into law. In 1964, Congress set aside over one million acres in Montana, of one of the most completely preserved mountain ecosystems in the world, as a public wilderness area and named it The Bob Marshall Wilderness.

More Information: Wilderness.net: <http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=feature1106> ;
The Bob Marshall Wilderness:
<http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=wildView&wname=Bob%20Marshall%20Wilderness>

Sources: The Wilderness Society Official Web site at: <http://wilderness.org/about-us> ;
<http://wilderness.org/about-us/bob-marshall>

By Steve Grim