



## *Pushing the Limits of Nature* Suggested Reading and Discussion Questions

In our environments or within ourselves, the idea of “natural” is complicated. In your discussions consider how we define nature, and if that definition is fixed or in flux.

### **Amazonia**

**James Rollins, Fiction.** The Rand scientific expedition entered the lush wilderness of the Amazon and never returned. Years later, one of its members has stumbled out of the world’s most inhospitable rainforest: a former Special Forces soldier – scarred, mutilated, terrified, and mere hours from death – who went in with one arm missing...and came out with both intact.

Unable to comprehend this inexplicable event, the government sends Nathan Rand into this impenetrable secret world of undreamed – of perils to follow the trail of his vanished father...toward mysteries that must be solved at any cost. But the nightmare that is awaiting Nate and his team of scientists and seasoned U.S. Army Rangers dwarfs any danger they anticipated...an ancient, unspoken terror – a power beyond human imagining-that can forever alter the world beyond the dark, lethal confines of the Amazon rainforest for better... and for worse. - *goodreads.com*

- What did you think about the tree’s mysterious powers?
- How did this book make you think differently about nature? Are there things that we just don’t know about nature? What kinds of things can you name?
- When there are things you don’t understand about nature, does that make you want to learn more, or figure out how it works? Have you ever done something like that as a science project or for your own interest (such as identifying bird species, or observing wild animals to see what they do)?
- Is genetic mutation occurring over time “natural”? If so, how far does it go before you feel it’s not natural? Do you consider food like beef “genetically modified” because it was purposely manipulated to mutate over time?

