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Chesapeake: The Aerial Photography Of Cameron Davidson



Synopsis

Nearly 10,000 years ago, rising sea levels filled a meteor-impact crater to form the Chesapeake Bay, North America's largest estuary, and the third largest in the world. The long tendrils of its watershed cover 64,000 square miles and span six states from Virginia to New York. Seventeen million people live within its boundaries. There are more than 100,000 streams, creeks, and rivers in the watershed, including 150 major rivers, with names that conjure ancient voices, such as the Susquehanna, Nanticoke, Mattaponi, and Rappahannock. These waters mix with the Atlantic Ocean in a brackish estuary that helped sustain Native Americans for centuries, but in recent years the bay has come under siege from the impacts of increasing population and industry, threatening this national treasure. Cameron Davidson has been shooting aerial photography of the Chesapeake over a period of twenty years. The view from this privileged vantage point reveals humanity's impact on the land and the water. It yields an abstract beauty that is seldom seen, from the seven bends of the Shenandoah River to the important marshlands and islands of the watershed. Davidson's lens captures the changing seasons traced from the headwaters of the Susquehanna at Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, New York, to the mouth of the bay at Virginia Beach. Davidson's poetic pictures bear witness to the bay's vulnerability and the fragility of its future. Davidson's stunning full-color photography is arranged geographically and accompanied by the words of David Fahrenthold, who has written extensively about the Chesapeake Bay and other environmental topics for the Washington Post.

Book Information

Hardcover: 152 pages

Publisher: University of Virginia Press (October 5, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0984162003

ISBN-13: 978-0984162000

Product Dimensions: 9.4 x 12.3 x 0.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I live in the widespread region of the Chesapeake watershed and consider the Chesapeake the east-coast equivalent of the West Coast's magnificent Puget Sound. This book brings out the beauty of the Bay, which is endangered, and the entire watershed. I can only hope that, through its power, it inspires an understanding an asset that not only is beautiful but essential to our regional economy.f

Having grown up on the southern portion of the bay, I spent the majority of my childhood exploring its many beautiful shorelines. Often seeking the fish that haunt the bays magical waters, some of my best memories are directly tied to the splendor and magnificent imagery the Chesapeake had to offer. My travels away from the area allowed for short glimpses of the bay from the vantage point of airplane windows, often heavily etched by wear. These short air-bound episodes offered a time to view the intricate beauty of the Chesapeake from a whole new perspective. Cameron Davidson has been able to recreate these moments that were once trapped in my mind and give them a physical form exceeding much further than my memory. He has created a wonderful collection of images from the northern stretches of the Chesapeake to the intersection of the bay and the Atlantic. Chesapeake captures not only the beauty of the bay but the varied human activities that define and are embedded in the culture of the Chesapeake Bay.

Admittedly I have an attraction for all things "Chesapeake Bay" related. I had high expectations when I heard about this book of aerial photography of the Bay, and Cameron Davidson did not disappoint-with the possible exception of the fact that his beautiful work left me wanting more!

The perspective and photographers eye for beauty make this book a wonderful place to escape and dream. I received this as a gift and spent hours studying the photos. Then I ordered another copy to give as a gift myself. Now the book sits proudly displayed on my coffee table.

I grew up in up-state New York and my favorite teenage drive in a old Opel was to a ridge that divides and looks down on the Susquahana and Hudson valleys. I could look north to the Adirondacks and south to the Catskills and Hilderbergs. Instead of that single point of view Davidson takes his eye and his camera all over that entire southern range - Finger Lakes, Susquhama, bay to the Atlantic. If he didn't share what he saw one should be jealous. But Davidson has shared his unique arial views that most of the rest of us can only imagine. Occasionally towns

and industry but mostly land, serpentine rivers and creeks, the bay, and sky. And what marvelous textures has he captured! The book makes me feel as though I'd ballooned over the entire length of the bay.

This book is stunningly beautiful and poignant in its message regarding the environment. For more of Cameron's photos check out his earlier books (on of course - such as "Over Florida" or "Over Chicago" or "Over Washington"). I have to admit I'm partial to Cameron's work since I've known him all my life.

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