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The Sonoran Desert



Synopsis

The Sonoran Desert of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico is one of the most fascinating and starkly beautiful places in North America. In this large-format book, a widely published nature writer and a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer capture this unique terrain of dramatic contrasts and breathtaking horizons in words and images. 125 color photos. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

If you think of the deserts as places of emptiness and boredom, have a look at this superb book! The subject was not easy but Jack Dykinga is mastering the art of using the light and the shapes to make us enter a new dimension. His breathtaking large format photographs plead in favor of preserving the wilderness in it's original state and presents us to it's amazing vegetal hosts. After seeing this book, you will never ever think of the Sonoran Desert as an "uninhabited place".

This is a stunning book of photography, with about 120 color plates of the Sonoran desert, taken by photographer Jack W. Dykinga. Besides Arizona, locations include Mexico, Baja California, the shoreline of the Sea of Cortez, and Anza-Borrego and Joshua Tree National Monument in southern California. There's no mistaking that it's a dry, hot region, but it's also clear that there is plant life almost everywhere. There are photographs of landscapes of sand, rock and sky, with saguaro, barrel cactus, ocotillo, and many desert flowers. There is not a sign of human life (until you reach the last half dozen pages where the editor has included several shots of blight: graffiti, a junkyard, a concrete water channel). Many photos are taken at sunrise or sundown, capturing glowing colors

and shadows. A few are taken after snowfall. The text, by Charles Bowden, is personal and impressionistic, with a Sierra Club point of view. He emphasizes the desert's resistance to any but the Native populations, who lived here in harmony with the landscape for millennia before the exploitation of European explorers. To these, in their crudest manifestations, are compared the more reckless schemes of modern-day developers. The closing chapter is an appreciation of wilderness advocate Edward Abbey. In my opinion, an error on the part of the book designer was to set these long essays as full pages of italic type, which makes them difficult to read. As a companion volume, I recommend Joseph Wood Krutch's "Desert Year," an account of a year spent in the Sonoran desert near Tucson. Although a different desert, there's also Abbey's "Desert Solitaire."

Having grown up with Arizona Highways magazine, I had, over the years, lost interest in the same old lovely-but-humdrum Meunch brothers photography and lackluster text commonly given to the Sonoran desert. Then I saw the cover of "The Sonoran Desert" and everything changed as I leafed through it. Bowden's text is intensely thought-provoking; the text is spare and rich at the same time, like his subject matter, and Dykinga's photographs show the Sonoran desert in the only way it should EVER be photographed. The photos capture a depth of the desert I've never seen in print before. Dykinga shows like nobody else the juxtaposition of textures and colors, the whole feel of the Sonoran desert in all its glory- and there's a whole lot of glory there if you take the time to look for it. Dykinga clearly does.

I just finished going through this book and it is a beauty. I live in the Sonoran Desert here in Tucson, AZ. and the photos are superb as is the written word. If you desire information on the Sonoran Desert then this book is for you.....

This book is one to have in your collection. The images by photographer "Jack Dykinga," are done with an artistic approach to landscapes. Very nice layout, text and paper quality. I bought the hardcopy used in excellent condition. Much to my surprise it was signed by the author, "Charles Bowden," as an added bonus.

A beautiful and important description and memorial to the disappearing Sonoran desert. Better buy it because the Sonoran may soon be available to see and experience only in books and on film

This beautiful arrived on time and in perfect condition. It lays on our coffee table now, a reminder of

our happy years in New Mexico and Colorado.

Great book, beautiful photos and send on time!

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