



## Book Reviews

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## BOOK REVIEWS



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**A Tide-Swept Coast of Sand and Marsh: Coastal Geology and Ecology of Georgia.** By Miles O. Hayes and Jacqueline Michel; Joseph M. Holmes, Illustrator. Published by Pandion Books, Columbia, South Carolina, 299p., 188 color plates. \$29.95. ISBN: 978-0-9816618-3-4.

This latest contribution by the talented duo of authors, Miles Hayes and Jacqueline Michel, is the third book in their “A Coast” series, following guides for South Carolina and Central California. Joseph M. Holmes, illustrator, has once again worked his magic in putting the authors’ visions onto paper, ranging from useful diagrams and maps to beautiful oblique aerial photos, satellite views, and instructive ground shots, almost all in color. The authors have followed their proven efficient organization from earlier books, and although there is some content overlap, particularly with the South Carolina book, this reviewer recommends all three for any coastal scientist’s bookshelf. The Georgia book holds the reader’s interest from the dedication (Legends of the Game), preface, through three sections beginning with Coastal Processes and Landforms, then a Coastal Ecology Overview for Georgia, followed by the last half of the book on Major Compartments of the Georgia Coast. Part I (nine chapters) is a primer on geology, sedimentology, and surficial processes, but focusing on the southeastern United States, particularly the Georgia Bight, and providing a good review of Coastal Plain geology and evolution, including a concise summary of successive Pleistocene shoreline sequences and barrier island systems. The authors provide a good summary on sea-level fluctuations, including climate change and sea-level rise. Throughout this section and the entire book, one is struck by how much of our current understanding of the fundamentals of coastal science, particularly barrier islands and beach dynamics, came from studies conducted on the Georgia coast. Authors of ideas, hypotheses, and debates are fully credited, including personal communications from reviewers, and the book is supported by an excellent, extensive references list. Chapter 5, Major Landforms of the Coast, is the highlight of the primer, with an extensive collection of diagrams and color photos of Georgia coastal features from satellite images of island systems down to ripple mark types. In addition, chapters on Estuaries and Fresh Water Rivers extend the coverage well inland of the

shoreline. Section II is a single chapter on Coastal Ecology covering marine mammals, sea turtles, and birds.

Section III constitutes the second half of the book, with a chapter devoted to each of the four major compartments as defined by the authors on the basis of the natural regional features of the coast (Savannah River to Ossabaw Island, Ossabaw to Blackbeard Island, Blackbeard to Jekyll Island, and Jekyll to the St. Mary’s Sound on the Florida border), followed by a chapter on the Okefenokee Swamp, and a short conclusion on The Future of the Georgia Coast. The compartments are discussed in terms of subcompartments, with details of landforms and their evolution given for each, interwoven with stories of human history (*e.g.*, James Oglethorpe; rice plantations; the formula for tabby construction; events from the “first civil war” and the later “war between the states”). Each subcompartment has a “places to visit” section that includes inland areas related to the rivers as well as marshes and the shoreline sites. Emphasis ranges from ecotourism to history, hiking, botany, and birding, the latter being of great interest to the authors. The reader comes away from this half of the book with a greater appreciation of not just the science of the shore, but the importance of the entire coastal zone in the region’s human history and its continued well-being. Whether you are a historian, birder, boater, coastal scientist, or just a nature lover, this book should be your guide to the Georgia Coast—boots on the ground or from your armchair.

In 2013 the *Journal of Coastal Research* published Special Issue #69, the proceedings of a symposium honoring Miles Hayes. Sometimes such honorary events mark the close of a contributor’s career, but Miles Hayes and Jacqui Michel are still providing the best coastal summaries for classic U.S. coastlines, and providing outstanding coastal services through their company Research Planning Inc., particularly in producing environmental sensitivity maps and responding to oil spills. This reader looks forward to their next contribution to the “A Coast” series on the coast of Alaska, due for publication in late 2014.

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