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Earthflight



Synopsis

'Earthflight' uses ground-breaking technology to take you on a journey like no other: into the skies to fly with birds. Filmed using pioneering techniques, this collection of photographs from the landmark BBC series takes you across the world to experience some of the most stunning spectacles on Earth in a new and inspiring way.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

(starred review) Using a variety of techniques including hang-gliders, "bird-shaped model gliders," and bird-mounted cameras to capture footage of birds in flight, veteran BBC wildlife photographer Downer and his crew spent three-and-a-half years collecting footage for what would become the BBC series EarthFlight. Here, he shares truly stunning images from the program, accompanied by commentary. The photos-of cranes gracefully soaring over the Chateau de Chenonceau in France's Loire Valley, an African eagle beneath a rainbow, migrating geese, tens of thousands of flamingos nesting in South Africa and Kenya, pelicans gobbling up grunion in Mexico's Sea of Cortez, bats seething from Texan caves, gannets in search of food plunging into the Scottish seas, and the brilliantly colored Australian budgies ("nomadic parakeets") offer extraordinary glimpses of wildlife on every continent (but Antarctica) from a perspective rarely-if ever-seen before. Though the photos are spectacular, the final chapter might be the most remarkable aspect of the book, as Downer details how he and his team captured these amazing shots, as well as discussing the many obstacles they faced. A genuine treasure, Downer's work must be seen to be truly appreciated.

Photos and map. (Publishers Weekly) This eye-popping collection of photos offers a truly bird's-eye view of what birds in flight actually see. Utilizing a pioneering arsenal of high-tech spy cams, gliders, mini-helicopters and bird-mounted cameras, Downer and his team documented the miracle of flight from the participants' perspective in a trip around the world... A final chapter details how the photographers devised and implemented the equipment to "fly with the birds." (Neil Pond American Profile 2012-06-29) The book includes an introductory essay by Downer, maps of the flight paths of a few of the featured birds, and a detailed concluding chapter about the making of the film. We like it for all of that, but mostly we can't take our eyes off the photographs... Spectacular, one and all. (Chuck Hagner and Matt Mendenhall BirdWatching 2012-06-01) The photographers of Earthflight, a companion book of the BBC series of the same name, take the concept of the bird's eye view very very seriously. If you've ever wanted to see how the crow flies, literally, Earthflight producer John Downer can show you.... The book combines lots of eye candy in the form of birds-eye-views of iconic landscapes, but it is also generous with the fascinating details telling how the rare images were made. In many cases the images were results of years of experimentation and work. The patience of the crews paid off, not a single bird was lost in the making of Earthflight. (Discover Magazine 2012-05-01) Using incredible ingenuity and the latest technology, not to forget the patience that is necessary with wildlife photography, Downer and his team have brought us closer to experiencing the bird's world.... The photography is breathtaking throughout the book and provides a view that is unlike anything ever seen before. (Terry Peters North Shore News 2012-04-13) The title of this book... is not an exaggeration... The stunning and awe-inspiring photos include some that appear too good to be true.... This book could be used for a variety of purposes--although most obviously it is an eye-catching coffee table book, it also provides a plethora of information on migration and ecology of the species highlighted. It is a great source of rather obscure information that otherwise would be difficult to find in the scientific literature. (Shelley Sporn Science Books and Films 2012-03-01) Everybody dreams of soaring like an eagle, but few consider that they probably wouldn't be alone in the sky. The 200 photographs in John Downer's 'EarthFlight' offer the exultant wing-to-wing camaraderie enjoyed otherwise only by fighter pilots and birds themselves. (Wall Street Journal 2012-04-12) These stunning images have great potential to inspire a deep ecological worldview amongst older teenagers and adults. (Green Teacher 2013-04-01) Breathtaking photographs. (Eric Boodman Montreal Gazette 2012-06-16) --This text refers to the Digital edition.

Producer and director John Downer has pioneered many of the spectacular techniques that are now commonplace in wildlife filmmaking. Both in his early work with the BBC Natural History Unit and as

an independent producer, John has created award-winning programmes, including In-Flight Movie, Supersense and Polar Bear: Spy on the Ice.

Love this book and the DVD movie. What a story about different birds.

This is a truly remarkable book with photographs that defy description. The story of how this was done is equally remarkable. It is worth twice the price and then more. gave super service! EarthFlight: Breathtaking Photographs from a Bird's-Eye View of the World

This book arrived like new, better than expected. It also arrived on time. Gorgeous views of various birds from up high.

After seeing the BBC docu EarthFlight in full HD wanted to have copy of the shots to view without needing to turn on the HDTV or PC, and must say the pics are good and nice to view, an addition to my Blu-Ray

I love this series. I bought both the book and the dvd.

A gift for my brother - feedback very good indeed - great series!

This was a good read, the pictures of birds around the world were great and well done. I believe this would be a good book for any person interested in the birds of the world.

THE GIST: Six continents. Four years worth of filming. Literally, shot from the birds point-of-view. You see what the bird sees. You get to experience the choices he makes, the scenery and expansive, often dangerous, landscapes he navigates. So I picked up this Blu-Ray series a week or so ago and I'm already finished. I was watching two episodes a night, completely sucked in. Originally, I thought I could restrain myself and watch one episode every other night, but it's just an impossibility with this highly edifying nature documentary. If you haven't watched the trailer, head to Youtube after you finish this review and give it a watch. What you'll experience are tiny high resolution cameras mounted to the backs of agile birds as they trek great distances, incredibly numbing altitudes and navigate the bodies of dense and stunning wilderness with awesome nimbleness; like the forest scene where a hawk weaves at light-speed around massive tree's

seeking its next meal. There are five classical nature documentary episodes: North America, Africa, Europe, South America, and Asia & Australia and one behind-the-scenes episode: Flying High. All episodes narrated by the Scottish actor, Doctor Who's David Tennant, who fares an boyish Sean Connery cadence for nature narration. All episodes will blow your mind. An immediate standout scene is found in the first episode, North America, where the crew follows Bald Eagles, one of the most social birds on the planet, as it soars over and through the Grand Canyon. The result is a dazzling view of one of the greatest places on earth, from the perspective of one of the most fabled birds on the planet. Another great aspect of the series is how it fearlessly interlaces terrestrial animal biology with its bird facts. This is great because likely you're not a birder; or, rather, there's a good chance you're into birds as much as you're into other animals, so the series does its best to balance the focus. I'd say 70% birds, 30% terrestrial animals. And the scenes are gripping: you'll see, for instance, a baboon yank a Flamingo meal from the air, and watch a Manta Ray leap from the ocean and flap its enormous wings like a bird. Subtle markers that enshrine the interconnection between all flights of life. The birds-eye-view scenes are dotted throughout each episode, but the series is not shot exclusively from the bird point of view, despite what the trailer implies. Rather, maybe 5% of each episode has birds-eye-view shots (Bald Eagles, Condors, Hawks, Cranes, Goslings, etc.) it would be headache-inducing if it was 100% birds-eye-view. The other scenes are filmed in the tradition of BBC's Planet Earth and Life, boasting vibrant panoramas, intrepid ecological study, glorious unending habitats and surprising terrestrial landmarks. There's some new ground trod by the series, where the crew spotlights incredible landmark travel destinations in high resolution aerial cinematography. You'll see renown Indian temples, Mayan/Incan relics like Mach-Pichu, European castles, even New York City filmed from the sky following some of the most inspirational migrations on Earth. I can say this as an avid nature movie buff, man-made architecture and landmarks are often distractions in nature movies and take away from the natural experience you seek (as a viewer, you want to know that vast wild habitats are still out there, to be or are under protection--without brow-beating the viewer with guilt over habitat destruction and natural degradation). This series respectfully acknowledges small pluses of man's influence on the planet, while retaining the dimensional reality of man's effects on the planet--but it never makes you feel guilty. There's no, say, scenes of a baby polar bear drowning because it can't find a glacier island rest. It says, rather emphatically within the subtext, "Here is our planet, isn't it incredible that these species and these places exist? It would be totally cool if we could preserve and conserve them both." Some of the behavior captured in this series will blow you away. I am constantly engrossed by the wild familial relationships, and the bird families in this series do not disappoint. For instance,

there's an incredible scene with a bunch of South American condors are feasting on a wild llama carcass, each condor family gets a segment of the carcass while several families feed at once, oldest males first, then females and finally the children, all feeding cooperatively. Then a wild fox spots the feeding birds and a chase ensues. The oldest males, the birds which ate first, are now at a disadvantage, heavy from their meal. It's fascinating, the level of detail which the tiny dramas unfold, the narration pointing out tidbit facts that aren't obvious to the viewer. Say, for instance, the hot air thermal island refuges that hoist birds over the ocean, little air sanctuaries that literally keep the birds alive, as they can't swim, for literally hundreds of miles. But not just that, they underscore the importance of man-made cities creating the same kinds of thermals, how our freeway network creates "thermal highways" for the birds to use navigating over vast topography. Seriously fascinating stuff. I know this review is long and gives away a lot, but this is barely the pinky of an iceberg of fascinating biological and ecological tidbits found in this incredibly eye-popping and edifying series that is totally worth your time and is completely appropriate for all members of your family. This series is easily on par with, say, Planet Earth, Life, Madagascar and Frozen Planet.

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