

Title: *the WILD COAST 2*

Subtitle: *A Kayaking and Recreation Guide for the North and Central B.C. Coast*

Author: John Kimantas

Published: 2006

Publisher: Whitecap Books

Website: www.whitecap.ca

Contents: 344 pp, bibliography, index, colour pics and maps throughout

Cover: paperback

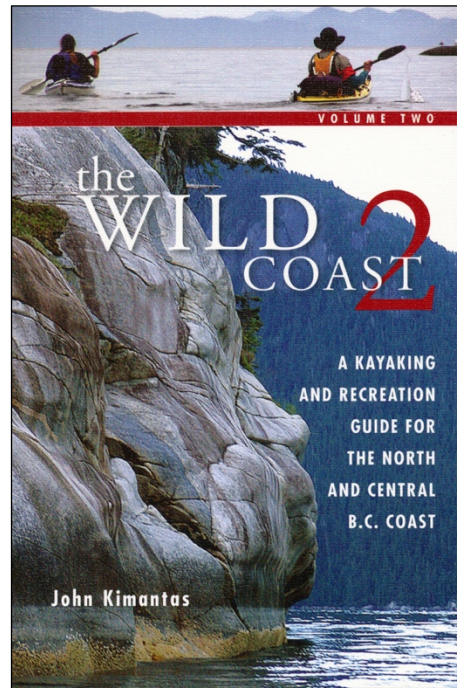
Size: 150 x 226 mms

Price: Can\$ 29.95 NZ\$ 42.90

ISBN: 978-1-55285-768-1

NZ Availability: TheNile.co.nz

Review: Paul Caffyn



This paddling guide to the British Columbia coast of Canada, north from the tip of Vancouver Island to the boundary with Alaska is one of the best I have come across. In terms of layout, words, photos, the maps, bibliography and index, it is a standout paddling guide.

Particularly with BC paddling reports by Peter and Margot Syms (No. 178) and Susan Cade's Johnstone Strait encounters with orca in this magazine, it seems timely for a review of John Kimanta's latest guide. He has previously published *The Wild Coast, Volume 1* which covers the north and west of Vancouver Island, and *The Wild Coast Volume 3* for BC's south coast and the east coast of Vancouver Island. The background bit below is the author's profile on the publisher's website:

'When John Kimantas took a job in Nanaimo, BC and first moved west from Ontario, he was struck by Vancouver Island's natural beauty. Since those first few days on the Island, John has become somewhat of an expert on the natural wonders and recreational opportunities Vancouver Island holds.

'John took an immediate interest in the water, and explored the British Columbia coast by kayak. Through these explorations, John began writing the Wild Coast series of guidebooks exploring the British Columbia coast in three installments. John also created the BC Coastal Recreation Kayaking and Small Boats Atlas series to help kayakers and other boaters navigate the BC coast.

'When John's exploration of the Island took him inland, he was disappointed to see that most road maps did not include many roads or other features that lay mid-island. Despite the enormous amount of information and features documented by various specialty clubs and organizations, John struggled to find a comprehensive guide to help access the world of recreational wonderment that he knew Vancouver Island held. As a result, John began to write and research his book, *The Essential Vancouver Island Outdoor Recreation Guide*.

'John has worked at several daily newspapers across Canada, beginning as a cub reporter in *The Pas*, Manitoba, in 1986, moving on to become a magazine editor in Ontario and then managing editor at a daily newspaper on Vancouver Island.'

In the foreword, John writes that he spent 92 day in 2005 paddling 3,304 kms in order to:

- provide an overview of the north and central BC coast through photos, maps and descriptions
- demystify some aspects of the coast
- compile a list of camping opportunities

An introduction of 40 pages includes is concise, but for visiting Kiwi paddlers, it includes sections on 'Managing insects' and 'Managing kayaks on ferries'. The maps symbol definitions are excellent. The guide has the regional sections colour coded on the page margin, for easy reference. The geographic descriptions are also concise and the words 'profusely illustrated' are apt for this guide with a superb colour photo on most pages, and the maps contain all the info vital for a visiting paddler. A short bibliography or reference texts are included, followed by a listing of websites used to research the guide. A comprehensive index rounds out this excellent book.

The book's size makes it ideal for stowing in a day hatch for paddling or in day pack for on-shore tiki touring. In low light, the map details may need glasses or a magnifying glass to see clearly, but the text is easy to read, even in low light. Topo maps or marine charts (or a GPS with charts) would still be necessary for navigation.

Perhaps the beautiful seascape photos are mostly taken in fine weather, they highlight what a magic, mysterious coastline lies waiting for visiting paddlers.