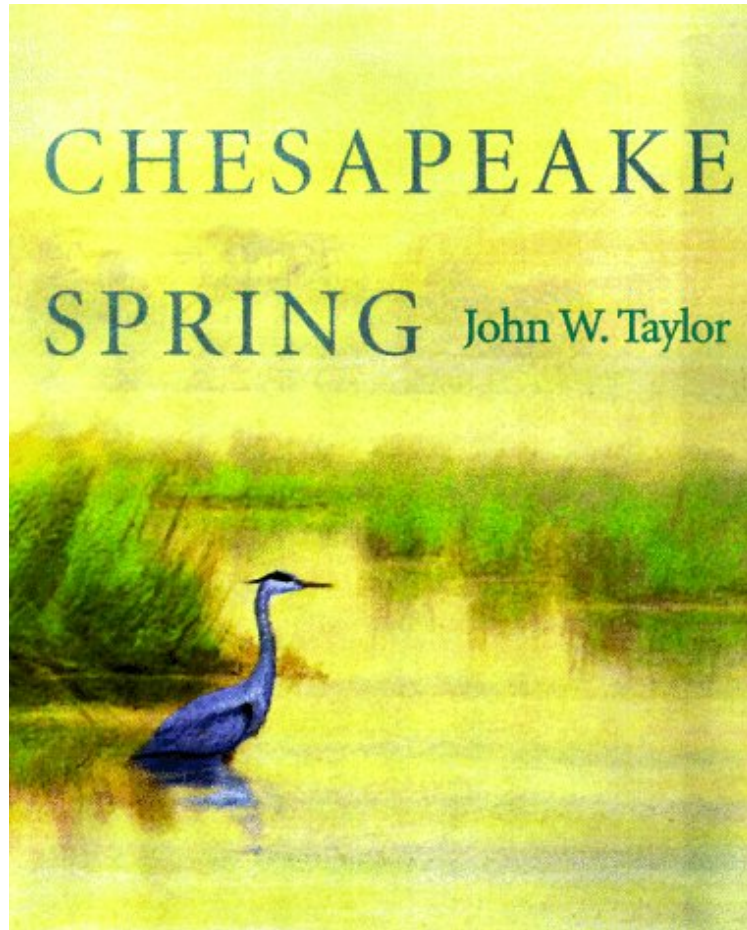


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Chesapeake Spring

John W. Taylor

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John W. Taylor : Chesapeake Spring before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chesapeake Spring:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Outstanding Book By Thomas W. Greene This is an unusually fine book written and illustrated by a most talented writer, illustrator and painter. Because this book beautifully describes the annual rebirth of natural life around us, in the Chesapeake Bay region, it has been a favorite, academic year end gift to some of the hard working students I tutor at St. Ignatius Loyola Academy in Baltimore. Most of these students are from disadvantaged economic circumstances and I have found this book to be an excellent distraction to another world that many of us don't even know exists. This book offers an excellent introduction to that world.

The artist John Taylor has been attracted all his life to the luminous beauty and extraordinary vitality of the Chesapeake Bay. He has won wide acclaim for his paintings of the region's wildlife and landscape. Taylor not only draws and paints the Bay but for years has kept a journal recording a naturalist's observations through an artist's eye. In

Chesapeake Spring he gathers his paintings and writings into a single record, giving us an engaging portrait of the Bay from late December through June in all its splendor and variety. "In Chesapeake latitudes," writes Taylor, "the first day of winter might well count as the first day of spring. Already there are indications of an awakening, a renewal, despite the extreme cold or deep snow that is to come." A unique blend of weather, water, and foliage gives the Chesapeake not only an unusually long spring, but a breathtakingly beautiful one. In sixty-five color paintings, Taylor reveals the signs of spring that emerge as early as the winter solstice, as soon as days begin to lengthen. He shows the bolder contrasts of color and texture that appear in late winter as life returns to the landscape. And he captures the exuberance of the Chesapeake spring in all its glorybursts of color on branch and stem, layers of clouds reflecting the warming sun, wave upon wave of birds returning to their homes, and the host of other animals that make the Bay and its watershed their home. Following the progress of the season at sites throughout the region, Taylor's journal entries complement his paintings and describe each scene with a naturalist's insight and an artist's eye for detail. From bald eagles gliding over West River to mud turtles crawling the sandy roads near Hill's Bridge, from ospreys and owls to alewives and fiddler crabs, Taylor's Chesapeake is a place of ceaseless inspiration. In paintings and words, he offers us a charming account of the emerging wonders of a typical Chesapeake spring. But here, too, is a lifetime of spring—the eloquent expression of one man's ties to a place he loves and his dedication to recording its beauty. From Chesapeake Spring: "This is a book about convergence, about the coming together of a particular time and a special place. The time is spring... The place is the Chesapeake Bay, an especially favored body of water known for its beauty and bounty." for the Introduction "The sun had the afternoon sky to itself but for a lone swirl of high cloud, pale against the deep azure. The river rested unruffled, touched by the same blue. Across its broad reaches, near the far shore, a raft of ducks relaxed, most of them sleeping, heads tucked into back feathers." West River, December 26 "It grew cold last night, well below freezing, and I had expected the little blue speedwell to be closed or shriveled. But this morning the delicate flowers were still open, made even lovelier by a coating of frosty rime." Beverly Beach County Park, February 12 "The day passed without a cloud. The temperature reached 70 degrees, rousing the spring peepers to a concert that lasted well into the night. Above their babel, I could hear the calls of old squaws migrating in the darkness." Turkey Point, March 13 "Dark clouds tumbled low across the morning sky, following a windy front that had brought rain most of the night. Wraiths of driven mist veiled the river shore, blending the yellowish haze of willow with the tawny red of maple. Other bankside vegetation merged in a formless mass of pastel green." Hill's Bridge, April 15 "A monster snapping turtle, its head the size of a baseball, blocked a sandy road. I would have thought it the granddaddy of all snapping turtles, except that it was a mama. She had apparently lumbered up from the marsh to lay her eggs in the soft mud of a drying puddle." Deal Island, May 11 "White flecks against the green grasses, the gulls showed little concern as our small boat neared shore. Quite suspicious, however, were the half dozen oystercatchers that rushed out to greet us with raucous complaint. Clownish in appearance, with oversized scarlet bills, pink feet, and bold black and white plumage, they were nevertheless quite serious in their intent. They mobbed us as fearlessly as they would a passing hawk." Spring Island, June 20

Artist John W. Taylor combines journal entries with his lovely wildlife paintings to evoke one archetypal spring on the banks of the Chesapeake. (Baltimore Magazine) John W. Taylor, venting his passion for Chesapeake Bay, has the advantage of a double talent: As outdoorsman, he explores, notices, and diarizes; as artist, he freeze-frames and perpetuates... His new book of delicate-color illustrations, Chesapeake Spring is broad in format and time. This 'spring' runs from Dec. 26 to June 21. Taylor's pauses are labeled Marmusco Creek, Corrotoman River, Sheepshead Cove, Beverly Beach County Park, Jug Bay Wetlands Park, Dragon Run, and Barren Island. But nothing is barren to his eye and hand. (Baltimore Sun) For years Taylor has been recognized as one of the foremost painters of Chesapeake Bay waterfowl. With this book, however, he has broadened his vision. The volume includes 65 color illustrations of the region's flora and fauna. Among the paintings are images of egrets, eagles, yellow and white perch, salamanders, irises and willows. All are wonderfully evocative... Throughout the book, Taylor blends odd facts with his own first-hand observations. As a result, the book is very informative. But that is not its main purpose. The words and pictures in this volume capture the sense of exhilaration that one feels when surrounded by natural beauty. (Port Folio Weekly) One of those books you don't want to put down... Taylor obviously enjoys the Bay and each day of his chronicle is a distillation from his notebooks. His paintings that illustrate the book show the naturalist's eye for important detail. (Fifty Plus) About the Author John W. Taylor is an award-winning painter of Chesapeake Bay wildlife and landscapes. He has been a featured artist at the Easton Waterfowl Festival since it began and has shown his work at the National Wildlife Federation headquarters, the Ward Foundation Wildlife Exhibition, and at many other regional galleries and exhibitions. His previous book of paintings and commentary, Birds of the Chesapeake Bay, is also available from Johns Hopkins.