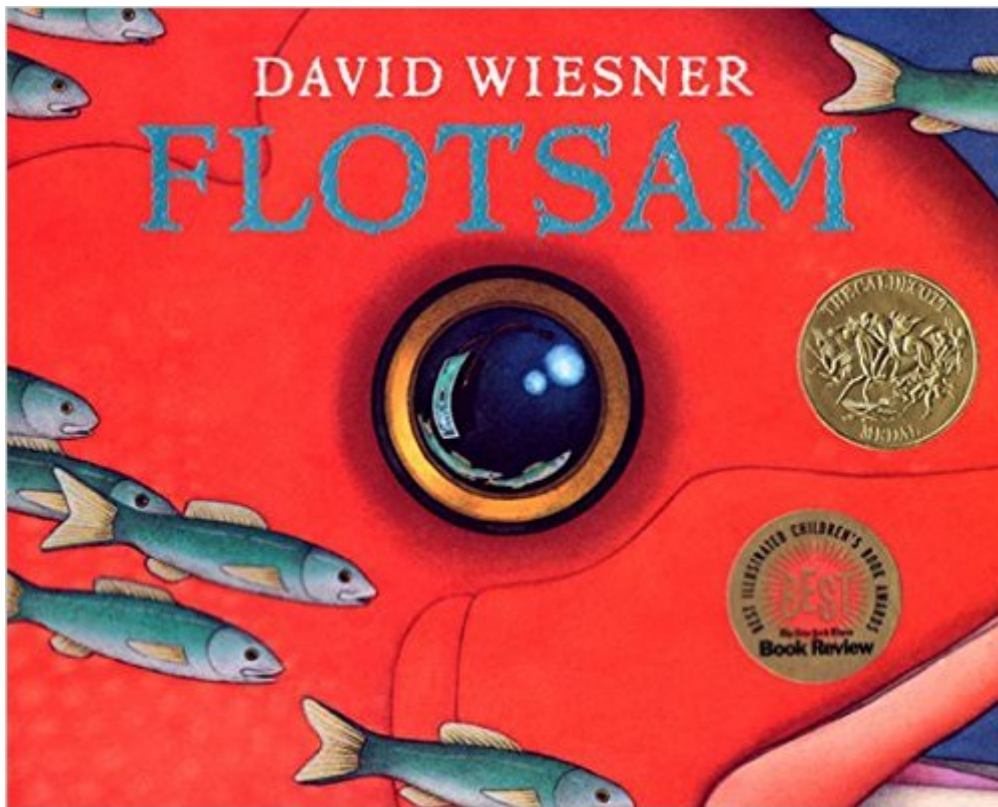


The book was found

Flotsam



Synopsis

A bright, science-minded boy goes to the beach equipped to collect and examine flotsam--anything floating that has been washed ashore. Bottles, lost toys, small objects of every description are among his usual finds. But there's no way he could have prepared for one particular discovery: a barnacle-encrusted underwater camera, with its own secrets to share . . . and to keep. Each of David Wiesner's amazing picture books has revealed the magical possibilities of some ordinary thing or happening--a frog on a lily pad, a trip to the Empire State Building, a well-known nursery tale. In this Caldecott Medal winner, a day at the beach is the springboard into a wildly imaginative exploration of the mysteries of the deep, and of the qualities that enable us to witness these wonders and delight in them. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 9.8 x 11.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (249 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #8,432 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in Home Improvement & Power & Hand Tools > Tool Organizers > Tool Pouches #29 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Marine Life #93 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature

Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

I suppose that there must be some people in world for whom the name "David Wiesner" means nothing. I can't fathom what this kind of an existence must be like. I suppose it would be the literary equivalent of not knowing what chocolate was. Or snow. The minute the new Wiesner book comes out I, like hundreds of thousands of others like me, rush out to purchase it for friends, relatives, and passing acquaintances I met once in the grocery store. Little wonder that the man has won two Caldecott Medals AND two Caldecott Honors. Now one of those numbers is about to change since

Wiesner has produced his most ambitious creation to date. Wordless (as always) and more intense than his light-hearted "Tuesday" and "Sector 7" ever were, this is a book overflowing in deep-water mysteries and delights. A scientifically minded young man is closely examining the various critters and crabs he finds washed up along the beachshore when he's suddenly doused in a wave. When he emerges he's sitting on the sand with an old-fashioned camera beside him. On its front are the words, "Melville underwater camera". Intrigued, the boy plucks out the film and takes it to a one hour photo store. The pictures he get back, however, are nothing a person could imagine. Mechanical fish swimming with real ones, hot-air pufferfish, entire civilizations living on the backs of gigantic starfish... and that's just the tip of the iceberg. The last photo, however, is the most interesting of them all. In it, a girl holds a picture of a boy holding a picture of a boy, holding a picture of a girl, and so on. Our boy gets out his magnifying glass and sees even more pictures of kids holding pictures of kids. And when he gets out his microscope he can see all the way back to the very first picture in the batch ever taken.

The little one is presently holding steady at age

"four-and-a-half-and-three-quarters-but-in-my-head-I'm-seven." And boy, is she ready to read. We're delighted. And we want to encourage her. (Which does not extend to teaching her how to read; we are old, our reservoir of patience is not what it once was, it's better to let the experts at her high-priced school do the job.) So we get her the picture books of David Wiesner and ask her to tell us their stories. Wiesner is the acknowledged master of wordless books for kids. (All three of the Wiesner books we own --- Tuesday, Three Pigs and Flotsam, his most recent book --- have won the Caldecott Medal.) It's not just that he draws beautifully and that his pictures allow a child aged 4 through 7 to tell the story. His greater gift is his refusal to talk down. His books are challenging. They are invitations to consider the story later, to broaden a child's sense of the world --- or, more accurately, they reflect the ability of most children to dream big and think poetically. "Flotsam," for example, takes us to the beach. A well-equipped boy --- he's got a magnifying glass, binoculars and a microscope --- is digging and exploring while his parents read. He's so fascinated by a crab he doesn't see a rogue wave rolling in; when it rolls out, there's an ancient box camera at his feet. He shows it to friends, who are predictably puzzled. (Film inside? What, no digital chip?) And he takes the film to be developed at a one-hour photo shop. Back at the beach, the boy looks at the pictures. One is of fish --- but some of the fish have gears. In another, sea creatures sit on lounge chairs in an underwater living room. A puffer becomes a hot air balloon. A village of shells travels on the back of a turtle.

David Wiesner's fans will be tickled pink with his latest book. Flotsam takes for its setting the Jersey seaside and the author's memories of his trips to the beach as a young boy. (The back flap of the dust jacket has a color photo of Wiesner as a five year old looking perfectly suited to slip right into his book!) Painted quite appropriately in watercolors, and utilizing a horizontal format, with pages wider than they are tall, the book perfectly captures the reflection of light at the seaside while framing the spacious broad stretch of blue waterline against the long strip of sandy beach. Opening with a long shot of a young boy digging at the tideline with his bucket we turn the page to find ourselves staring face-to-face with an enormous hermit crab! Looking again we realize the crab is not sitting on beach sand but the boy's upturned palm, while an enormous eye - the boy's eye seen through a magnifying glass - gazes down behind the upturned twitching two eyes of the crab. Then things jump back to regular size on the next page but only for a moment as Wiesner constantly shifts the size and format of each step of his silent story. Like the boy we are meant to look carefully and from every possible angle. The title marvelously conveys the narrative method as mysterious snapshots flit back and forth with a young boy's curiosity of what lies out beyond the waves. Mr. Wiesner achieves almost a perfect storyboard, deftly mixing and merging images of varying sizes with his now unequalled mastery of visual storytelling, the sum producing an utterly delightful experience. Large sea turtles, their backs bedecked with villages of shell grottos sail through the water with the same wonderful stillness as the magical pigs in Tuesday.

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Flotsam

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