



Kings of the Yukon: One Summer Paddling Across the Far North

Adam Weymouth

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>**One man's thrilling and transporting journey by canoe across Alaska in search of the king salmon**

The Yukon river is 2,000 miles long, the longest stretch of free-flowing river in the United States. In this riveting examination of one of the last wild places on earth, Adam Weymouth canoes along the river's length, from Canada's Yukon Territory, through Alaska, to the Bering Sea. The result is a book that shows how even the most remote wilderness is affected by the same forces reshaping the rest of the planet.

Every summer, hundreds of thousands of king salmon migrate the distance of the Yukon to their spawning grounds, where they breed and die, in what is the longest salmon run in the world. For the communities that live along the river, salmon was once the lifeblood of the economy and local culture. But climate change and a globalized economy have fundamentally altered the balance between man and nature; the health and numbers of king salmon are in question, as is the fate of the communities that depend on them.

Traveling along the Yukon as the salmon migrate, a four-month journey through untrammelled landscape, Adam Weymouth traces the fundamental interconnectedness of people and fish through searing and unforgettable portraits of the individuals he encounters. He offers a powerful, nuanced glimpse into indigenous cultures, and into our ever-complicated relationship with the natural world. Weaving in the rich history of salmon across time as well as the science behind their mysterious life cycle, Kings of the Yukon is extraordinary adventure and nature writing at its most urgent and poetic.

Kings of the Yukon: One Summer Paddling Across the Far North Details

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From Reader Review Kings of the Yukon: One Summer Paddling Across the Far North for online ebook

Kathleen says

Kings of the Yukon is a nonfiction book that defies classification. It serves several purposes: it chronicles the author's trip traversing the Yukon; follows the salmon's journey with stops along the way at places that count or propagate them as well as places where people catch them or factories process them; tells of the history of the salmon and the folk who depend on them for food and livelihood; and looks at the science and folk wisdom surrounding the many viewpoints on the reasons for the decline of the King Salmon including remedies being tried and how the various factions feel about them. Some or all of that may appeal to you.

Adam Weymouth beautifully describes the land in places in gorgeous detail. He makes the threat of bears palpable. These were the most enjoyable parts for me. In other places you are immersed in how gross the smelly, gorey mess surrounding the salmon fishing lifestyle is. It took me back to the smells of the fish cleaning stations in Pulaski, NY and the wooded areas surrounding the area before it was mandatory to have the salmon cleaned and disposed of by someone else.

Parts read like *On the Road* as Adam meets various folks and relates what their life is like, telling of the personal histories that lead them to their current situation. Tradition is valued by many he met along the way as well as the unquestionable hospitality they show to strangers. There are folk tales and sad stories of how the government separated children from their parents so they would forget the old ways. Everywhere people relate how fantastic the salmon harvests were in the past.

Adam tells of his investigation into why the change may have happened. He talked to various scientists and officials who crunch the numbers or study climate change. All viewpoints appear to be represented as how the limits affect the people, industries and salmon populations are discussed.

If some of this seems like something you would like to read about, give it a try. The author did not sanitize the stories, so you experience the language and sordid details just as he did. That said, this is not a book for children or anyone who would be put off by that sort of reality. (I received a paperback version of this book in a goodreads giveaway.)

Elizabeth? says

This book takes us on a journey up the Yukon River until it breaks into the ocean. Weymouth spent two seasons canoeing up the river. He speaks to native persons and locals and people in the fishing industry to gain a better understanding of what is happening to the biggest salmon in the river, the King.

We get a good handle of the indigenous cultures and how the government has done wrong by them (no surprise there). We also get a better understanding of the effects of over fishing. There are also many detailed descriptions of the environment and the unique character it takes to live in such an unforgiving terrain.

All in all, I enjoyed the journey down the river and all of the moments Weymouth shares with us. If you are concerned about the environment and the state of our animals, I would highly recommend this one.

Buck Edwards says

'Kings of the Yukon' is not a book, it is a journey. The author, in a canoe, has set out to try and understand the decline in the king salmon population over the years in Canada and Alaska. Paddling from the source to the mouth, some 2000 miles, Adam Weymouth, a Londoner, meets an array of river characters and listens to both their tales of woe as well as their speculations.

Though Weymouth, like many others, throws out those tedious numbers--15 million years ago, 1 billion this and that years ago--of which readers cannot wrap their brains around, he nonetheless comes close to admitting that those numbers don't matter anyway. On the Yukon, it is yesterday, today, and tomorrow, and for many it is hand-to-mouth.

What makes this book a charmer is the honesty of both the natives he runs into, and the way Weymouth weaves it into a page-turner. Add in his fear of bear and moose encounters and his open-minded thoughts on the salmon problem. This isn't just a fish story, it is an adventure, as well as a cross-section of life on the last frontier, where nature meets man.

Eleanor says

The Yukon River in Alaska is home to the king salmon, a fish that has been commercially hunted to the point of absolute peril and which also forms a large part of the religious and cultural life of the indigenous folk of both Alaska and Canada. (Adam Weymouth, in *Kings of the Yukon*, uses the words "Indian" and "Eskimo" to distinguish between ethnic groups which are not differentiated by catch-all terms like "First Nations" or "indigenous peoples". He notes, also, that many Alaskan indigenes use "Indian" or "Eskimo" themselves. It never particularly stands out, or at least it didn't to me, and never appears to be used in disrespect.) This book is an account of a voyage made down this enormous river in a canoe, over the course of several months, on the trail of king salmon.

Weymouth's nature writing, particularly his descriptions of river, forest, and wildlife encounters, is reminiscent of John McPhee's extraordinary Alaska travelogue *Coming Into the Country*. So is his journalistic eye: his encounters with the people who live and work along the Yukon are reported with a sense of interested detachment (except for a scene in which Weymouth and his partner Ulli Mattson encounter some young people at a fishing camp who seem particularly threatening; the intrusion of authorial fear is jarring enough that the reader understands how truly serious the situation seems.) The real star of the book is, of course, the king salmon, a mysterious creature that engages in behaviour unlike any other animal on earth, that has supported whole civilisations on its back. It is now the cheapest fish you can get in a supermarket. Weymouth focuses on the differences between commercial and subsistence fishing, demonstrating how enforced Department of Fish and Game quotas disproportionately affect subsistence fishers and do little to discourage big commercial businesses. He also writes with some wonder on the weird biology of the king salmon, its restlessness and relentless homing instinct, and how hatcheries are at best a partial solution to the problem of a shrinking population. Most importantly, though, *Kings of the Yukon* is intensely readable: a mix of adventure and natural history with a dollop of sociology. Like *The Feather Thief*, it is immensely worth your time.

Sondra Brooks says

I mistakenly thought this was a memoir about a canoe ride up the Yukon. Since I love adventure stories, it seemed a perfect choice for me. Little did I know, I would learn more about King Salmon than I ever thought possible. I was pleasantly surprised, however, with the author's beautifully descriptive voice, and I felt I was right there with him in that canoe. His writing about the plight of the salmon could have stood alone as an interesting nonfiction in its own right, but what really kept me interested were the accounts of the people he met along the way. Not a boring life story in the entire bunch. And just when I thought I had learned enough about salmon to last me a lifetime, I found myself tearing up at the end of the book. The ending really drove home what these poor creatures are up against, as well as so much of the natural world, which is obviously under assault by humans.

Christine says

I got to this book via the Penguin "Read The Year" list and I was really sceptical about this one because it is not a book I would have picked up in a bookstore usually (Fish? Alaska? WTF?). But that's the point of a reading list: discovering new books. So what can I say? I enjoyed it a lot. It is not just a story about salmon it is more a documentary on how nature and men are interwoven and what happens when humans intervene in a highly effective ecosystem. While reading you can breathe the fresh air and see the impressive nature Weymouth moves through with his canoe. The book made me want to go to Alaska (seriously!) and furthermore it makes you think about how we value food and which price nature pays for the salmon on your plate.

Paul says

The travelogue is a type of writing that attracts the fellow adventurer and the envious spectator. My hope is that this book will create awareness of this cause and commit both parties to action. Kings of the Yukon serves as a homage to the animals, the people, the land, and the journey. The paddle is the only way this story could have been written. Excellent job Mr. Weymouth.

Thank you to NetGalley, Little, Brown, and Co., and Adam Weymouth for the advanced copy for review.

Full review can be found here: <https://paulspicks.blog/2018/05/03/ki...>

Please check out all my reviews: <https://paulspicks.blog>

Janis says

Author Adam Weymouth paddled thousands of miles in a four-month journey down the Yukon River in an effort to puzzle out the status and patterns of the king salmon migration. Here, he offers a fascinating account of his experiences, of the life cycle and current state of these magnificent creatures, of the people who have

historically fished for them, and of the agencies that study and manage them. This is a thoughtful and powerful book, one that presents the complex forces and issues of this country clearly while bringing the people and the animals of the North to life for the reader. Look forward to reading this one on its publication date of May 15, 2018.

Donna says

Visited Alaska and the Yukon last summer. To be able to read about the places that we visited was a delightful experience, able to remember the scenery and people who make their homes along the Yukon. If you are planning a trip, read the book as you travel, you won't regret it. Well written book.

Literary Soirée says

I was enthralled by the grand adventure described in “Kings of the Yukon: One Summer Paddling Across the Far North.”

Solo adventurer Adam Weymouth thrills us with his poetic narrative of journeying by canoe across Alaska along the entire 2,000-mile Yukon river, where he follows the migration of king salmon over a four-month period.

The author also reveals the connection of people and fish through moving portraits of the individuals he encounters, giving us a powerful look into indigenous cultures in this riveting account of one of the last wild places on earth. Highly recommended!

Pub Date 15 May 2018

Thanks to Little, Brown and Company and NetGalley for the review copy. Opinions are fully mine.

#KingsOfTheYukon #NetGalley

Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

5 King Salmon stars to Kings of the Yukon! ? ? ? ? ?

We traveled to Alaska and the Yukon Territory on our honeymoon, and I must say, I have never seen anything more majestic, pristinely beautiful, and untouched, as the Yukon, its waters, the land, the mountains.

In Kings of the Yukon, Adam Weymouth weaves a tale of adventure, his own in fact, as he travels the Yukon River by canoe in order to study the migration patterns of the king salmon, also including the history of the fish.

But this book isn't just about salmon...Weymouth shows the connection between the people of Alaska and fish by painting descriptive vignettes of the characters he meets along his journey.

I found the writing to be as stunning, intriguing, and pristine as the Yukon. Well-done, Adam Weymouth!

Thank you to Adam Weymouth, Little, Brown and Company, and Netgalley. Kings of the Yukon will be available on May 15, 2018.

My reviews can now also be found on my shiny new blog! www.jennifertarheelreader.com

Ryan says

Amazing descriptions of Alaskan/Yukon Territory landscapes, Native ways of life, Western-Native interactions, commercial fishing processes, and how all these things affect the life cycle and future viability of King salmon populations. In turn, effects on the salmon disturb traditional and modern ways of life throughout the Yukon watershed.

Mike says

I just won a giveaway for this book! Yay! I'm so excited to read this one. Sounds like it will be a book I'll really enjoy. Review coming ASAP!

Update: just received my goodreads giveaway copy in the mail! Hopefully review coming soon.

Well, I finally finished this book and can happily say that I loved it!
a beautiful mixture of nature, adventure, history, natural science, sociology and politics. The author shows how all of these things are intertwined with the history of the Chinook and has clearly done some extensive research. I found the book to be very informative and interesting while still providing that rustic, out in the woods, river voyage adventure feeling that I was so hoping for.

I'm honestly putting this book right up there beside Walden as my favourite nature (but this book is so much more) related book of all time.

Stephen Richardson says

Only seems appropriate as I'll be canoeing 200+ miles down the Yukon this summer.
Slightly disappointing. Don't worry Jack London, Pierre Berton, or Robert Service you're in no danger.

Vera says

This is such a beautiful read. Both travel writing and an exploration of the relationship between fish and man, oddly enough both aspects just as captivating. I was very fond of reading about all the people Adam meets on his trip, their habits, their ways and traditions - it's also a very sensual account, whereby you can almost smell the fish and feel the wind and taste the clear water. Just beautiful.

There is the odd trail-off into imagined (or are they real?) scenarios which to me felt a little odd and out of place (even switching narrators) and I would have liked a bit more of the conversations that took place. But that doesn't make the book any less enjoyable, and I would recommend it to anyone!
