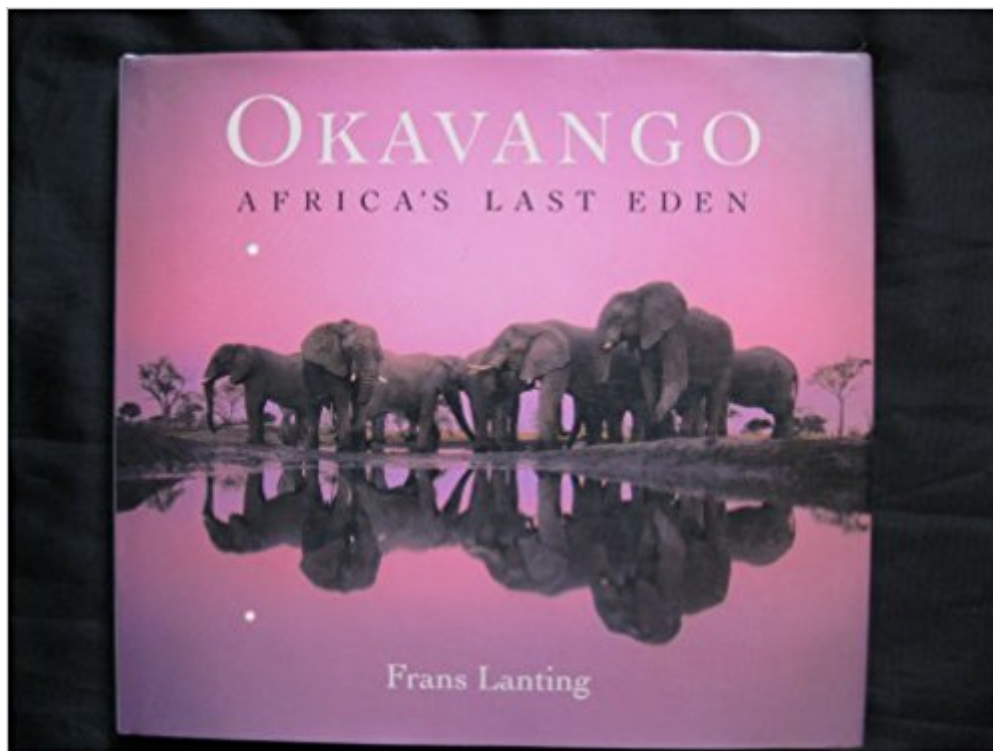


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Okavango Africa's Last Eden



Synopsis

Okavango is the first major celebration in text and photographs of Africa's last Eden. More than 130 extraordinary photographs, taken during a year-long assignment in the region by award-winning photographer and naturalist Frans Lanting, capture with powerful immediacy the beauty and drama of Africa's breathtaking Okavango Delta. Spreading over 8,600 square miles, this vast wetland in the heart of the Kalahari supports an unparalleled diversity of wildlife. From its origins in the highlands of Angola, the Okavango River descends to the near-desert of northern Botswana, where it fans out as the world's largest inland delta; an ecosystem of a size and complexity rivaling any on earth, a rare place where desert and swamp dwellers meet. Hippos, crocodiles, zebra, impalas, buffalo, giraffe, lions, hyenas, and the continent's largest unharassed elephant population find refuge and replenishment in the seasonal ebb and flow of fresh water into the delta. Together, Lanting's words and images tell of the dynamic movement of water throughout the year and of the rhythms of flora and fauna in response to it; of the spectacular array of wild creatures; of the people who live in this frontier region; and, finally, in a thoughtful epilogue, of the difficult environmental challenges faced by this complex natural system and its hopeful future as a place where Africa's free-roaming wildlife stands a chance of surviving intact into the twenty-first century. No other photographer has captured the variety of Africa's wildlife and the richness of its landscape with such vividness, sympathy, and skill. Okavango is an unforgettable portrait of Africa's remarkable primeval oasis.

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Customer Reviews

The Okavango is an enormous seasonal wetland in the midst of the Kalahari Desert. As Lanting warns, it's another precious habitat teetering on the edge. Though it has long been left to the wildlife because of the tsetse fly problem, recent fly control success has governments pondering whether cattle grazing and other developments should be allowed. Yet damming, draining, and road building would severely alter the natural cycles of water and wildlife migrations. In documenting the cycles of the Okavango, Lanting's photographic skills are seemingly boundless. His viewpoints, lighting, backgrounds, and composition are unparalleled. From vast aerial shots to closeups of lionesses lapping water, each extraordinary photo conveys life and power and feeling. Both in the brief chapter narratives and in each photo caption, Lanting's superb prose is equally absorbing. Highly recommended for public libraries, Africa collections, and photography collections.- Nancy Moeckel, Miami Univ. Libs., Oxford, OhioCopyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This latest in the long, long stream of African wildlife photo albums is in some ways just another one. It has a first-person text by the photographer, the familiar cast of animal subjects, the usual harping on water and sun as the determinants of life in its harsh settings, the expected rant about the fragility of the depicted environment (in this case, a nature preserve in Botswana rather than Kenya or Tanzania) in the face of encroaching civilization, etc. But Lanting's entry, more than most, is so full of photos in which the colors seem so unearthly that they make you wonder what bearing they have on reality. Just how did Lanting obtain the hues of the cover image, for instance, in which a group of elephants stand out against a magenta sky as it is reflected in an equally lurid pond? Sure, these are gorgeous pictures, real eyepoppers, but on what planet were they taken, by what necromancy? Ray Olson

Mr. Lanting is a unique and wonderful photographer who is a great help to all of us. His photos capture the wildlife of the Okavango as they are -- not postcard photos. He has a respect and reverence of this fragile ecosystem (unlike none other in the world) and all that lives and dies there that is captured in this book. Botswana is a special country with a unique ecosystem in the Delta that you should travel to. I've had the good fortune to experience Africa eight times, Botswana twice. I will return many times to the Delta as there is so much there to experience and each time its fresh. Let Mr. Lantings photos persuade you to go.

Fabulous Photos bringing back memories of an amazing trip. Wish my photos were as good!!

This book makes me suspect that Frans Lanting is not only the worlds greatest wildlife photographer but also the greatest bird photographers, crocodile photographer, elephant photographer etc. As usual, his photography is far from the species type of photography often seen. Lanting connects with the subject and transform the experience into art. In addition, he is not afraid to break the rules and make it work. The book is a must in any nature photographers library.

As other Lanting books, attitude is all, from cover to cover

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