

How to Photograph the Canadian Rockies

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In the last year or so, I've had the pleasure of making acquaintance with Darwin. We first got to know each other through the Nature Photographer's Network web site discussion forums and then we spent some time in the field together as a barter arrangement for building his website "www.darwinwiggett.com". Darwin is a fascinating and deep person; a self-described "mountain man." So after spending a bit of time with him, I can attest to his consuming passion for all things outdoors. It can be said that photography is his creative outlet resulting from his love for the mountains, and that this book is best described as a diary of all the years he spent chronicling Canada's most beautiful area - the Rocky Mountains.

This book was officially released on April 30th at the Camera Store in Calgary, Canada, but I was privileged to get a sneak peek almost a year ago when Darwin asked me to review the Kananaskis portion of the book - chapter 5, in addition to some preliminary editing. I ended up reviewing the entire work, and remember saying to myself "Wow - photographers are gonna LOVE this book!" I am an avid outdoor photographer who loves mountains and waterfalls, and can say that this book is a seminal work as far as our "breed" of people is concerned. Imagine having all the best (and some secret) spots already scouted out for you - all you have to do is show up at the right time of day, the right time of year, and the shot is nailed. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

First, the book can be broken down into two sections: chapters 1 through 4 cover essentials such as equipment recommendations, learning to "see", and composition basics. The following chapters - 5 through 10 - give specific location references. It is worth pointing out that this is quite unique for a Canadian publication, in that no other book I know of gives such specific instructions on not just where to be, but when. By that I mean the time of year, the time of day, and the right weather to shoot in. So, in essence, what we have is a reference guide that makes shooting the Rockies much easier and convenient than before. Just cross-reference your expected location and weather type for that day, and find a spot in the book that matches!

As I mentioned earlier, there are some secret spots detailed for those who don't mind wandering off the beaten path. As a matter of fact, the book is full of suggestions for not only the icon shots that most are familiar with such as Mount Rundle and Castle Mountain, but also places that one wouldn't think of shooting from. One such spot is behind a waterfall, and access to it is not for the faint of heart! Darwin is comical in some of his descriptions of places such as this, so the book is quite a pleasant read. Also, the locations will be easy to find thanks to the kilometer markers he includes when describing each spot. If your vehicle's odometer only measures miles, a little math will be needed... just multiply the number by .6 to convert kilometers to miles.

In conclusion, I would consider this book to be major contribution to any and all interested in nature photography. One would almost think he's let the cat out of the bag; that he has exposed the trade secrets of the mountain photographer, but not so. As an open-hearted person, he wants only to share his knowledge and experience in a way that makes outdoor photography more pleasurable and accessible to all. So, grab a copy, whether through Darwin's [web site](http://www.darwinwiggett.com), Amazon.com, or your local bookstore. Unless someone moves the mountains around, this reference book will be relevant for years to come.

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About the author...

Jim Hutchison is a part-time photographer who lives in Calgary, Canada with his wife Moira and Buddy the cat. You may reach him via email at james@jamesphotography.ca. Visit Jim's website at www.jamesphotography.ca.



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