

Book Review

J.A. Henry, K.M. Portier and J. Coyne. (1994) *The Climate and Weather of Florida*. Sarasota: Pineapple Press. 279 pp., photos and maps. bibliography and index. ISBN 1-56164-036 \$27.95.

Reviewed by Morton D. Winsberg

In 1988, while attending a Florida Society of Geographers meeting, I approached Jim Henry about a project that I had begun. Jim, a climatologist by education, was then a member of the faculty of the University of Florida's geography department. To both of our surprise we discovered that we were both engaged in writing books on Florida's weather and climate. Since I am not a physical geographer, but a weather hobbyist, I was writing a book for the novice. Jim's ambition was to write a more technical book. With a division of labor worked out we both proceeded independently on our projects. Jim read my book in manuscript form, and later I read his. My book appeared in 1990, and Jim generously reviewed it in the *Professional Geographer*. Because of health problems, and a career move to Tennessee, Jim's book was published four years later. It is just as well that my book appeared first, because had his been published before mine, or at the same time, there would have been little need to have written mine.

The Climate and Weather of Florida is organized into nine chapters, based on the major elements of weather. Following a brief introduction, there is a chapter devoted to sunshine, evaporation and the water budget. Chapters that follow are developed around (1) temperature, (2) pressure and winds, (3) humidity and clouds, (4) precipitation, (5) thunderstorms, (6) tropical storms and hurricanes, and (7) climate changes over time. There are appendixes that give monthly precipitation for thirteen weather stations, the Saffir/Simpson Hurricane Damage scale, and a checklist for hurricane safety procedure.

The first couple of chapters bring to fruition what the author expressed to me was his intent in writing the book. They are technical descriptions of weather processes, well known to meteorologist and climatologist, but difficult for the weather hobbyist to understand. Had the book continued in this fashion it would have become very heavy going for the nonprofessional. Fortunately, following these first few chapters, Henry and his co-authors changed ap-

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proach, and began to write more for the weather enthusiast. While the weather processes are not slighted, there are many excellent anecdotes about weather events in Florida that the reader will find of interest. The book concludes with a chapter on climate change over time, in which city climates are discussed, as well as air pollution, acid rain, past climates of Florida, and those we might expect in the future.

The book is generously illustrated with easily read maps, well selected photographs, and numerous tables. It certainly should become a reference in every university, college and public library in the state. In addition, it will provide much pleasure to those with an interest in the state's weather.