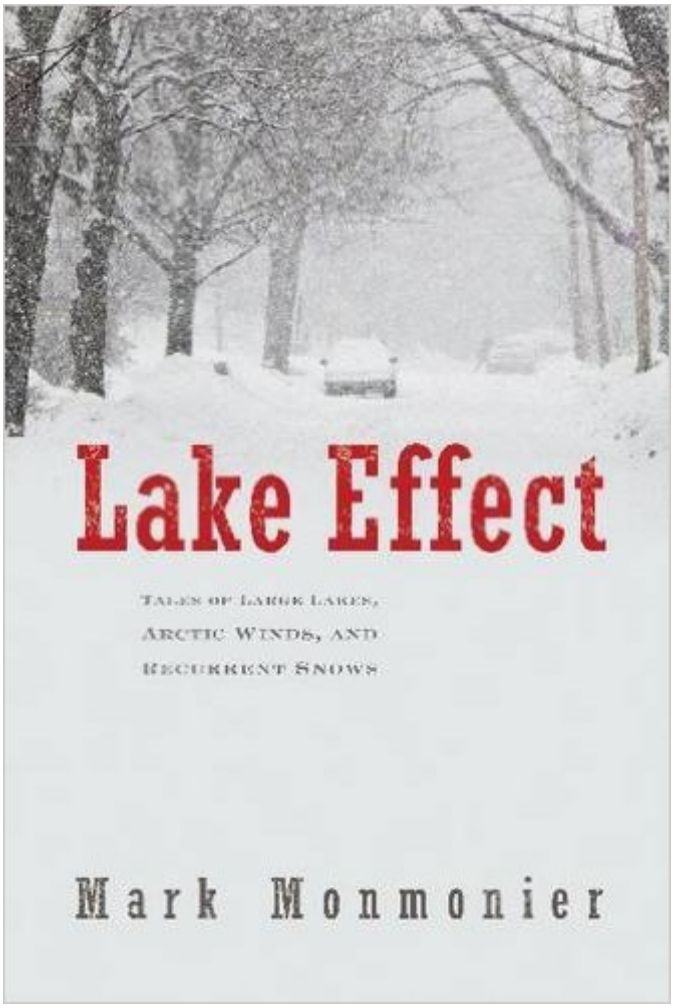
Lake Effect: Tales Of Large Lakes, Arctic Winds, And Recurrent Snows



Synopsis

Blending meteorological history with the history of scientific cartography, Monmonier charts the phenomenon of lake-effect snow and explores the societal impacts of extreme weather. Along the way, he introduces readers to natural philosophers who gradually identified this distinctive weather pattern, to tales of communities adapting to notoriously disruptive storms, and to some of the snowiest regions of the country. Characterized by intense snowfalls lasting from a couple of minutes to several days, lake-effect snow is deposited by narrow bands of clouds formed when cold, dry arctic air passes over a large, relatively warm inland lake. With perhaps only half the water content of regular snow, lake snow is typically light, fluffy, and relatively easy to shovel. Intriguing stories of lake effect's quirky behavior and diverse impacts include widespread ignorance of the phenomenon in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since then a network of systematic observers have collected several decades of data worth mapping, and reliable shortterm predictions based on satellites, Doppler radar, and computer models are now available. Moving effortlessly from atmospheric science to anecdotes, Monmonier offers a richly detailed account of a type of weather that has long been misunderstood. Residents of lake-effect regions, history buffs, and weather junkies alike will relish this entertaining and informative book.

Book Information

Hardcover: 246 pages
Publisher: Syracuse University Press; 1 edition (September 15, 2012)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0815610041
ISBN-13: 978-0815610045
Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 0.9 x 9.3 inches
Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (4 customer reviews)
Best Sellers Rank: #754,317 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #229 inÂ Books > History > Arctic & Antarctica #352 inÂ Books > History > Historical Study & Educational Resources > Historical Geography #663 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Rivers

Customer Reviews

Lake Effect: Tales of Large Lakes, Arctic Winds, and Recurrent Snows introduces readers to a wide range of ideas associated with the large snows commonly talked about and depicted by the national media. Lake effect snow is an intriguing subject due to the tremendous snowfall totals that occur in

just a few locations in the United States. The author, Mark Monmonier, does a tremendous job explaining why these storms happen and goes on into further detail in how the storms are predicted, the impacts of the snowstorms, historical snow data, and how climate change is playing a role in changing these storms. Monmonier focuses much of the book on Upstate New York, where he has lived and experienced this unusual weather phenomena for a number of decades as a geography professor at the University of Syracuse. Syracuse along with Buffalo, are considered to be the two most well-known cities receiving this unusual weather. Lake effect snow impacts areas of the Great Lakes more than any areas of the United States. Syracuse is part of the so-called Snow Belt, which experiences large amounts of snow year after year. Snow belts are explained in more detail in the book, but are essentially areas which see the largest amounts of snow. His first-hand experience with lake effect snow as well as his experience as a cartographer provides readers an inside look into how, where, and why these abundant snowfalls occur. This book would be a fantastic read for anyone interested in how weather develops and how land, wind, and water play distinct roles in how lake effect snow occurs. Even those of us who arenÃ¢Â Â™t privileged to experience the lake effect, can get a chuckle out of the snow belts and the feetÃ¢Â Â™s of snow that can occur during a single snow storm. Impressive snow records and statistics are located throughout the book for those who enjoy reading up on the remarkable history of these storms. Many of these snow storms can be measured in feet rather than in inches. If you are a snow lover, this would be an excellent read on a hot and sunny July afternoon when dreaming of the upcoming winter. If snow is not your cup of tea, hopefully you donÃ¢Â Â™t reside in Buffalo or Syracuse where much of the book is focused on. Monmonier describes that much of what is known about lake effect snow has been developed in the recent decades thanks to the help of improved weather technology. Even in the middle of the 20th Century, not much was known about the prediction and overall understanding of lake effect snow. Monmonier notes the Doppler radar along with other new and improved weather instruments and technology have helped to clarify some of the unknown with the snowfalls. Although, he does admit these storms can still be quite difficult to predict. The unknown about these storms is something that I think helps to create intrigue with not only weather professionals, but the common person as well. Lake effect snow can provide local weatherman with difficult forecasts and should provide jobs for meteorologists for years and decades to come. If you are a numbers person, the book dedicates a whole chapter to some of the snowfall records that have been recorded since the late 19th century. I donÃ¢Â Â™t think this is the most interesting part of the book, but I do think it is something that is necessary when dealing with this subject. Snowfall totals and records are an essential part of a book like this. The chapter also helps the reader understand where some of the snowiest places are

in the United States as well as in New York. Monmonier also explains some of his theories on why much of the snow data that has been collected over the years may not be the most accurate information. Monmonier continues to reinforce the fact that there just is not a whole lot of historical data about snow and specifically lake effect snow. Climate change of course is talked about and Monmonier gives some information about what he thinks has changed. Since there is only so much historical data, the author did not want to make any over the top conclusions in regard to climate change. From what he has seen, Monmonier believes the overall snowfall in the United States has stayed pretty much the same, but more lake effect snowfall has occurred. The book also goes on to explain that snowfall amounts will be significantly lower if global warming continues. Many charts and graphs are depicted within the chapters to provide the reader with a better understanding of what is being explained. The book as a whole is a great read and will provide entertainment for a few days. The book is an easy read for the average reader and with less the 250 pages will not take months to read.

For those that loves to know about the weather and lake effects, this is a book to have. Gave it to my dad for x-mas and he loved it. He isn't much of a reader but he really enjoyed the book.

I really enjoyed reading this book, and living about 30 minutes south of the Snowbelt, it helped me understand this phenomena better!

This book is written for the non scientist. It is well written with many facts about lake effect snowfall around the Great Lakes region of the United States.

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