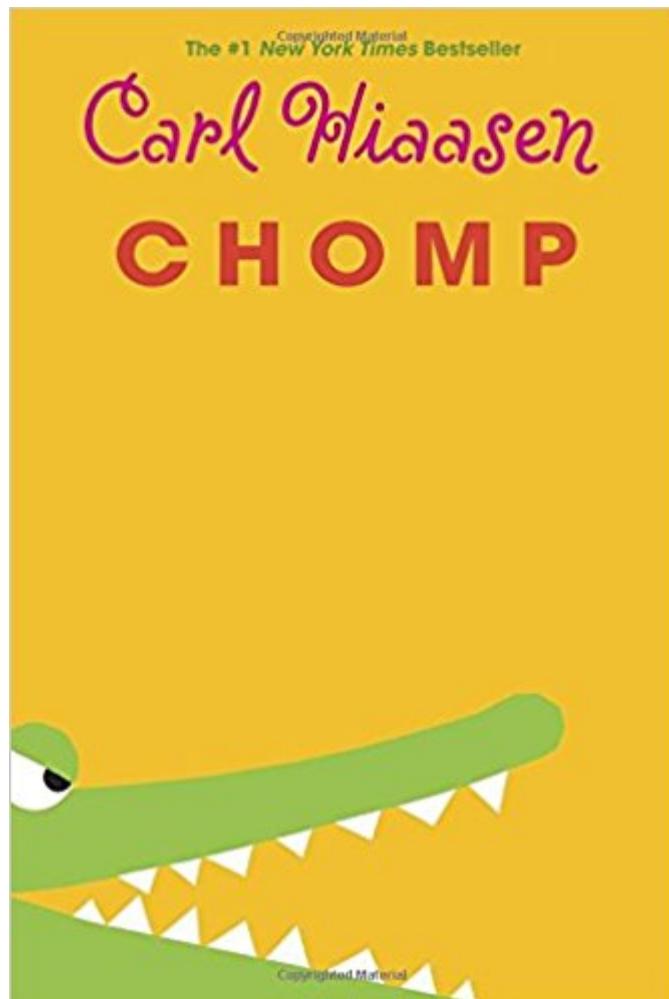


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Chomp



Synopsis

The hysterical #1 New York Times bestseller from Newbery honoree Carl Hiaasen featuring gators, snakes, bats that bite, and reality show hosts gone wild! When Wahoo Cray's dad, a professional animal wrangler, takes a job with a reality TV show called Expedition Survival!, Wahoo figures he'll have to do a bit of wrangling himself to keep his father from killing Derek Badger, the show's inept and egotistical star. But the job keeps getting more complicated: Derek Badger insists on using wild animals for his stunts; and Wahoo's acquired a shadow named Tuna, a girl who's sporting a shiner courtesy of her father and needs a place to hide out. They've only been on location in the Everglades for a day before Derek gets bitten by a bat and goes missing in a storm. Search parties head out and promptly get lost themselves. And then Tuna's dad shows up with a gun . . . It's anyone's guess who will actually survive Expedition Survival. . . . Only in Florida and in the fiction of its native son Carl Hiaasen, does a dead iguana fall from a palm tree and kill somebody. • "New York Post" Chomp is a delightful laugh-out-loud sendup of the surreality of TV that will be enjoyed by readers of all ages. • "Los Angeles Times" Chomp shines in its humorous, subtle tweaks on pop culture. . . . The real satisfaction, however, is not so much in the book's humor but in its truth. • "Time Out Chicago Kids

Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #9,413 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Environment #34 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Performing Arts #65 in Books > Children's Books > Mysteries & Detectives

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

Best Books of the Month for Kids, April 2012: Carl Hiaasen taps into a pop culture phenomenon in Chomp by taking on the popularity of reality television shows with one of his own, "Expedition Survival." • The Florida Everglades provide the perfect backdrop for a reality survival show and Mickey Cray, a wild animal wrangler, and his son Wahoo are hired to keep the pampered Expedition Survival! star from accidentally killing himself with the local wildlife. The Cray's are joined by a girl on the run from her abusive father and adventure, laughter, and even a mysterious disappearance follow. The eccentric characters and wacky humor that make Hiaasen's adult books so much fun to read carry over to the pages of Chomp and Wahoo's voice of reason in the cacophony of unpredictable adults is an appealing dynamic for young readers. --Seira Wilson

Exclusive: Q&A with Author Carl Hiaasen

Q. What do you enjoy most about writing for kids versus writing for adults? A. The best part about writing for kids is the piles of letters I get. Grown-ups might stop you in an airport and tell you they like the novels, but kids will sit down and write a three-page letter, complete with illustrations. They're sharp and perceptive, and they really love the irreverent point of view in the books.

Q. Chomp pokes fun at a survivalist reality TV show--what do you think about America's obsession with "reality" TV? A. Reality television taps into the same human impulse that makes you slow down on the highway to gawk at a six-car pile-up. Everybody does it and nobody wants to admit it. Beside Jon Stewart, the best comedy on television is Finding Bigfoot and some of these other reality shows. Infested! is another good one, particular the bedbug episode.

Q. As a native Floridian, what is the most exotic animal you've encountered? A. Poisonous snakes, gators, crocs, iguanas, black widow spiders, all that stuff. I tried to raise a couple of wild raccoons, which I would not recommend. I also used to breed rat snakes, which are beautiful animals. Even though Chomp takes place in the Everglades, I wouldn't call it a scary place--not nearly as scary as the lobby of the Orlando airport on a day when the Disney tours arrive.

Q. In Chomp, both Mickey and Wahoo are fearless when it comes to snakes and other wild beasts (and nutty people, for that matter)--do you have any animal phobias? A. Yeah, I'm not crazy about chihuahuas. My Labrador and I will go two or three blocks out of our way to avoid one. For some reason they always want to chew my ankles off.

Q. You named the two kids in Chomp after fish--Wahoo and Tuna--how did that come about? A. I just thought it would be cool to name a boy after Wahoo McDaniel, who played for the Dolphins when I was a kid. I'm not sure whether he was named after the fish, or after the wild noises he made when he

was a pro wrestler. As for Tuna, it's just a fun name that looks good on the page. "Big Tuna" is what they used to call Bill Parcells, the former Giants coach. He looks nothing like a tuna, by the way. Q. Did you know when you started writing that you would include a character who is being abused by a parent? A. My novels don't have wizards and dragon-hunters, just ordinary kids in the ordinary world. And the reality, sadly, is that some kids go home every night wondering if their mother or father is going to hurt them. That's Tuna's world, and I didn't have any qualms about portraying it that way. In *Scat* I had a character whose dad comes back very badly injured from Iraq. Again, that's real life for thousands and thousands of families in this country. Q. Can we assume you are going to keep writing for kids (we hope)? A. *Hoot* was going to be my one and only novel for kids, but now I'm sort of hooked on writing them. Young readers are just the coolest audience, and I feel so lucky that my novels have been so well-received. I don't see myself quitting. It's too much fun. Q. You clearly have the single word title thing going for your kids' books, is that just something you started with and stuck to, or is there more to the story? A. The novels for young readers have one-word titles because I want to distinguish them from the grown-up novels, which all have two-word titles like *Skinny Dip* and *Strip Tease*. It was a conscious decision. I have a son in middle school (and also grandchildren), and none of them are ready to read the Big Person novels yet. The one-word title lets the booksellers (and the parents) know that those are the kid-safe books. Q. What has been your most memorable moment as an author? A. I was at a book-signing in Boulder, Colorado, when a very nice woman told me she'd named her cancerous tumor after a character in one of my novels. It was quite astonishing. I was flattered (who wouldn't be?) but also a bit rattled. The happy ending was that her surgery had been successful and she was totally recovered. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Gr 6-9-Carl Hiaasen takes on reality TV in his latest novel (Knopf, 2012). *Wahoo Cray* is the assistant to his wild animal wrangler father. Their property holds everything from alligators to Bobcats that appear in TV shows and films. However, after Wahoo's father suffers a serious injury, debts pile up and his mother takes a temporary job in China. It also forces Wahoo and his father to accept a lucrative but questionable gig with the reality show, "Expedition Survival." James Van Der Beek's narration captures the cast of colorful characters in this fast-paced, humorous story. His vocal depiction of Wahoo is spot on, and he easily changes gears to play a variety of adults, including Wahoo's gruff but caring father. Derek Badger, the host of the reality show, is expertly drawn as a bumbling buffoon who has managed to convince viewers he is a survivalist. Van Der

Beek is at his best with Badger's character, making a fake Aussie accent sound almost, but not quite authentic. As the story moves from being about filming a TV show to an action tale complete with boat chases and a gun-toting baddie, the narrator keeps it all in check, easily changing voices, while also acting as an excellent tour guide of the Florida Everglades thanks to Hiassen's lyrically descriptive text. A fun listen.-Shari Fesko, Southfield Public Library, MI (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

What I love about Carl Hiassen is though he writes funny books, he never uses stupid, goody or extremely childish humor. He makes me laugh, even when I am rereading his books! I also love the settings of his 4 novels for kids, they are all in Florida. All the animals and wildlife and plantlife add to the story, and he incorporates them well. The characters are all great to read about as well, though in each book the MC is a boy and has a girl sidekick, though I don't really mind this little fact.

So funny, only two cuss words, I would defentaly recamend

it's a great book for kids of all ages. Cheesy adventure book with a stupid "survivalist"

I really liked this book. It was amazing .it had good detailed parts that was interesting and made it seem cool.The part I like the best was the end when Jared gordan tried to get his daughter .But he shot somebody .It was also cool when the we're all trapped in th woods and they were also looking for Derek badger who ran away because he got bitten by a mastiff bat

This book was awesome. I love how in all of Carl's books he always has some kind of mystery. He's books are also always hilarious. In this one, it is more funny than a mystery but you can still predict. In this book he gives more hints and the story comes together faster. SCAT is more of a mystery, or FLUSH. This one has lots of suspense where it's not "like who did it?" The question is "what is he going to do next?" But it still was a great book with lots of twists and turns.

If Carl writes it just buy it, his books are a lot of fun. If you want to read a book that'll have you laughing out loud, try one called Skin Tight. He's really good, if he writes it, I buy it, it's the same with Elmore Leonard, if he wrote it, I buy it.

Started out ok, but became sillier as it progressed to the point of being annoying. I sense the author really believes he has a sublime sense of humor, but the book falls (woefully) short of showcasing it.

"Chomp" should get five stars for the nifty cover design alone, but the witty and unflagging intelligence of the content certainly cements the rating. Social commentator and satirist Hiaasen takes aim at one of his favorite general categories of offender in this book--the Phony; in this case, an over-the-hill TV nature "explorer" with a penchant for making grisly meals of his animal costars. Much of the action is set in the Florida Everglades, where the self-named Derek Badger has come to shoot a survival flick that pits him against the local fauna. In most cases, Badger's fauna opponents are tame and rented, but this time around the big man (aiming for a major raise in his contract salary) insists on real wild animals in order to boost the action and excitement. In true Hiaasen fashion, things go downhill for the poser pretty quickly after that. The book has a full contingent of wonderful characters, with two high school age kids fronting as the main protagonists. The adults on board are a mix of principled and venal, but nothing as crazy wild as is the norm for some of Hiaasen's adult books. In many ways, the animal characters are the biggest stars and will certainly be a big hit with the young readers of the book. The cast includes a monster alligator (Alice), a humongous python (Beulah), a wild bat and a wild water snake. The basic message to the readers is even these fearsome creatures are not so dangerous if left alone and observed from a respectful distance. The author gives his story line enough edge to keep it interesting and moving along at a good pace, but no one suffers the kind of torments and painful death that is often on offer for villains in the adult books. Respect for animals, the absolute unacceptability of child abuse (and what to do about it) and the inside story of documentary film making are all themes explored in this great book for tweeners and above. The next time I tune into a PBS nature film starring a spray-tanned, grinning host who is never out of the frame for more than 10 seconds, I will be thinking of "Chomp" and Hiaasen's hilarious sendup of the genre. Highly recommended.

"Chomp" a Journey Through the Everglades!By Jake S. I thought Chomp, by Carl Hiaasen, was an excellent book (5 stars), and I am someone who doesn't like to read at all. The book takes place in the everglades and since I live in Florida and I am familiar with this area, this added to my enjoyment. The conflict is that the dad, an animal wrangler, was hit on the head with a frozen iguana and gets a head injury. The dad (Mickey) and son (Wahoo) are running low on money so they have to get dad working again for money. The resolution is: they come across a deal with a nature show, however, it is hard to go with because the people are a pain in the butt and don't treat animals

properly. The money is too good to pass up and they take it anyway. The problem solves it self with several animal attacks on the annoying host of the show, including a shaking with an alligator. The wacky events that happen to the host of the nature show, Derek Badger, keep your attention. Such as when he tries to eat a live bat and it bites him on the tongue. Out of nowhere a hostage situation forms. All of the people have to think on their feet to take down the gun man, but a couple people got shot. The book kept a face pace with underdogs ending up on top. Chomp covered child abuse, animal abuse, Florida wildlife issues, and environmental issues, all while weaving the story. This was a very good book and I highly recommend it to you.

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