

natural forms of coastal defence and stress their transitional nature over time. Andrews *et al* use the context of Holocene sea level change to study the sedimentary evolution of the north Norfolk barrier coastline. It is an interesting paper that is well illustrated with numerous logs and cross sections adding clarity to the text. Their results show that the north Norfolk saltmarshes have kept pace with the relative sea level rise of the last 6-7 ka. They use work by French (1993) to suggest that they may be able to keep up with future accelerated relative sea level rise, but do warn of other changes to the geomorphology. They close their paper by highlighting a number of coastal management issues. Brew *et al* present work on the palaeocoastlines and Holocene sedimentary evolution in the Fenland embayment of eastern England.

The final section on 'regional-scale analysis' has two papers, both of which have Shennan and Lambeck as authors (amongst others). The first of the papers considers Holocene isostasy and relative sea-level on the east coast of England and the second discusses modelling the western North Sea palaeogeographies and tidal changes during the Holocene. Both of these papers are heavily illustrated, the former having twenty seven figures, and the latter containing a number of colour figures of palaeogeographic reconstruction for the North Sea as a whole, and at a higher resolution for the south west of the North Sea.

When glancing down the contents page you cannot help but notice that the editors names come up as authors in the chapters rather regularly. In a compilation like this you would expect it to some extent, but there are only seven chapters in which at least one of the editors are not authors. However, this does not appear to devalue the worth of this book. There is no doubt that it provides a substantial contribution to the field of geomorphology, and I have learnt a lot more about the interface between land and ocean, particularly around the eastern English coast. As with most of the Geological Society publications I have reviewed before the index appears accurate, even picking up a geographic region noted in a graph inside a map. I am glad to have had the chance to have reviewed this and believe it will hold a well used position on my book shelf.

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FRENCH, J.R. 1993. Numerical simulation of vertical marsh growth and adjustment to accelerated sea level rise, north Norfolk, UK. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms*, 18, 63-81.

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Handbook of Beach and Shoreface Morphodynamics. Short, A.D., (ed.), 1999. Chichester: Wiley, 379p. ISBN 0-471-96570-7 [US\$ 160.00]

This compilation, edited and co-authored by Andrew D. Short, contains fourteen chapters that are organized into five groups of related topics. The five parts feature discussion of

the following topical areas: (1) beach systems: definition and scope, (2) global variation in beach systems, (3) beach morphodynamics, (4) beach systems and impacts, and (5) large scale beach behavior. There are nine contributors to the volume, including Andy Short. Interestingly, all of the contributors were at various times part of the Coastal Studies Unit in the School of Geosciences at the University of Sydney from 1976 through 1998. Each of the contributors has, in his own right, become a world authority in coastal research and this fact alone makes the volume noteworthy. The contributors and their respective chapters are as follows: Andrew D. Short (Chapters 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13); Peter J. Cowell, David J. Hanslow, and Justin F. Meleo (Chapter 3); Troels Aagaard (Chapter 4), Gerhard Masselink (Chapters 4, 8, 9); Michael Hughes (Chapter 5); Ian Turner (Chapters 5, 8); and Patrick A. Hesp (Chapters 6, 11, 12, 14). The chapters in the various parts are as follows: (A) Chapter 1, Beaches; Chapter 2, Global Variation in beach Systems. (B) Chapter 3, The Shoreface; Chapter 4, The Surf Zone; Chapter 5, The Beachface; Chapter 6, The Beach Backshore and Beyond. (C) Chapter 7, Wave-Dominated Beaches; Chapter 8, The Effect of Tides on Beach Morphodynamics; Chapter 9, Embayed and Structurally Controlled Beaches. (D) Chapter 10, Beach Modification: Natural Impacts on Beach Morphodynamics; Chapter 11, Beach Ecology; Chapter 12, Beach and Dune Stratification; Chapter 13, Beach Hazards and Safety. (E) Chapter 14, Barrier Morphodynamics. From the list of topics, it is clear that the book covers a wide range of topics and yet is quite specific. The scope is narrow but the coverage is broad within the universe of beach morphodynamic topics. Each chapter is carefully organized and there is coherence between chapters, and even some cross-references between chapters that refer the reader to related topics. Andy Short is to be congratulated for maintaining uniformity of style throughout all of the chapters, including those in which he is not a co-author. The book thus reads well because the style of presentation and writing is consistent from one chapter to the next, an important consideration in multi-authored works.

The quality of halftones throughout the book is very good. Most of the photos are not overly reduced and I found them to be informative and illustrative of the points being made. There are numerous tables throughout the book that provide essential information in an easily understandable format. Many are combined with line drawings in an effort to illustrate morphodynamic interrelationships. Tabular data is fine, but many readers are image oriented and the authors have gone a long way to assist understanding in different formats.

For researchers interested in coastal morphodynamics and classification, this book is essential reading. If it were not for the outrageous price of the book, I would like to use it as a textbook in a graduate course. But, I would not expect students to cough up that much money for a text. Even for professionals who are used to spending more than one hundred dollars for a book, the price seems very steep. Regardless of the price, the book to me is indispensable and a required part of any serious researcher's library. It is impossible to single out chapters that are better than others. All of the chapters are good and evaluation of content comes down to the kind

of information that one requires. As an example, for my interests now, I find models useful for teaching and research viz. qualitative beach classifications (Table 1.4), three-dimensional sequence of wave-dominated beach changes for accretionary and erosional wave conditions (Figure 7.4), characterization of wave-dominated, microtidal beach types (Table 7.1), a generalized model of one, two, and three bar beach systems (Figure 7.14), frequency of outer and inner bar combinations on double bar beaches (Figure 7.15), classification of beaches on the basis of breaking wave height, *etc.* (Figure 8.14), impact of environmental parameters on beach type, stability, circulation, and bar number (Table 10.1), proposed sequence of seven southern Australian barrier types in relation to level of wave energy and rate, models of microtidal, wave-dominated beach types (Figure 13.3) and tide-modified beach types (Figure 13.4), examples of dunefield-dominated barrier types (Figure 14.12), and quantity, and time of sediment supply (Figure 14.20). Many other examples could be selected to illustrate various points; this is just a selection that seemed germane to some of my current interests. The point to be made, however, is that the book contains a wealth of information on a wide variety of topics related to the theme of each chapter. If one were to master everything in the book, he would be well equipped to research coastal morphodynamics from the tropics to polar regions.

This book, which I like very much, contains only a few annoyances that are worth mentioning. The high price, which is one of them, is a sticky point (see following comments). Another is the wording of the title, which in turn should reflect the contents and organization of the subject matter. I was, initially, a little puzzled by the word *handbook* in the title. I immediately thought this book would be like the *Practical Handbook of Marine Science* (Kennish, 1989) or the *Handbook of Coastal Processes and Erosion* (Komar, 1983). A handbook is commonly referred to as a ready reference or manual that covers a particular subject. It might include directions on how to do something or contain voluminous information in tabular form. The book edited by Mike Kennish, containing a systematic collection of selective physical, chemical, and biological reference data on the ocean, was close to what I perceive as a handbook. The book edited by Paul Komar was less so as it contained short chapters on specialized subfields within the selection of coastal processes and erosion topics. The book edited and authored by Andy Short, contains longer chapters that fit together as a coherent treatment of the subject in the format of a textbook. To me, the *Handbook of Beach and Shoreface Morphodynamics* is a textbook and not a handbook, as I understand the meaning of the latter term. Whether it is a handbook or textbook may be immaterial and the term handbook might just be an advertising gimmick. If that is the case, I am not sure what advantage is achieved by the designation of handbook. My last quibble concerns the subject index. The author and location indexes seem quite good, but the subject index is somewhat slim. I did a quick check on the term *berm* and found that the index lists two pages, 133 and 134. Opening the book at random and by quickly scanning the page I found the term on the additional pages 153 and 284. Yes, I know, picky, picky. It is

just a simple example and clearly minor. I had to struggle to find something to niggle about.

References for all chapters are collected into a single list to avoid repetitive listings in each chapter. Quality of production of the book is good throughout. In spite of the high quality of production, the publisher is not to be commended for offering the book at such a high price. Even in these days when many professors in the academy receive adequate salaries, the prices of books seem to increase at an ever-accelerating rate so that many potential users are simply priced out of the market. I received this gratis copy on the condition of a review. Although the subject matter is of definite interest to me and even though the book exhibits obvious scholarly merit, I would think more than twice about paying the steep price set by John Wiley & Sons. Trying to rationalize the high price from the publishers point of view, I agree that the subject matter of the book is specialized, but not so highly specialized that there will be few buyers. Yes, the potential readership is somewhat limited compared to a 'general audience' market but the publisher's asking price is, in my opinion, simply excessive. This is not good for the authors, as their intention is to get the information into the hands of as many people as possible. Although the price of the book is expensive for most researchers' personal collections, most large libraries can probably afford the purchase.

Because the information contained in this book is so relevant and important to our field, I would urge coastal researchers to purchase the book even if it means they have to acquire a small short-term loan to feed the bureaucracy at Wiley. This book will, in my opinion, become one of the classics in the field of coastal science because it contains information that is essential to increased understanding of evolution, maintenance, and degradation of the dune-beach-shoreface system. It also provides useful qualitative and quantitative models as well as information required for classificatory purposes. If you buy this book, in spite of the high price and Australian bias, you will not be disappointed in the product as it is of uniformly high caliber.

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