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Vertebrate Life (6th Edition)



Synopsis

Widely praised for its comprehensive coverage and exceptionally clear writing style, this best-selling exploration of vertebrate life is the only accurate and up-to-date treatment of vertebrates that employs a phylogenetic perspective and focuses on how vertebrates work, integrating ecology, behavior, anatomy, and physiology in an evolutionary context. A new chapter on conservation draws together information about the basic biology of vertebrates and shows how it is essential for biological and regulatory decisions that affect the survival of species. Discussions of anatomy, physiology, and behavior are placed in an evolutionary context, showing readers how animals work and how they got to be the way they are. Contains information about conservation and endangered species status related to the basic biology of the groups stresses the importance of good biological information for management and legislation. Features a Cladistic perspective

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Vertebrate Life would serve as an excellent upper-level college textbook to anyone interested in becoming informed about vertebrates. Professionally, I am a physicist, who after visiting the American Museum of Natural History's Hall of Vertebrates, wanted to learn more about the subject. Even after reading Vertebrate Life, I don't think that I could point out the squamate bone on a fossilized skull. On the other hand, with 733 pages, it is unfair to criticize this book about a lack of coverage! The authors provide several pages of excellent references at the end of each chapter. So, if I really wanted to be able to identify a squamate bone, I'm sure that I could have found out

from one of references. However, I was troubled by a number of typos, some of them serious. Figure 15-3 appears to have the second half of the figure repeated as the first half. It would have been nice to see missing illustrations. Figure 3-6b identifies the Otic capsule as "Optic capsule" at one point. This confused me for a while. Even with all this, I was fascinated by what I read, and read the entire book, cover to cover, all 733 pages worth. For the serious student of our natural world, I would recommend spending full price for this book, and plan on spending more than a few hours with it.

As the product description hints, this text is organized around the evolutionary innovations that gave rise to modern (and extinct) vertebrate lineages. The narrative style of the chapters, with names like "Living on Land" and "Ectothermy: A Low-Cost Approach to Life" makes a potentially bewildering array of material very approachable. While this book relies somewhat heavily (as it probably should) on cladograms, these are well-explained in the text--few taxa are represented on a phylogeny and then left hanging as loose ends, and the various defining innovations are clearly described. I purchased this book (actually the International Edition, which did not differ in any way except the cover from the more expensive version), for a Natural History of the Vertebrates class in the fall of 2010 at NMSU, and it provided a good backdrop for the lectures and discussions. I have no intention of reselling it; it is a truly great reference to keep on hand. One very minor gripe: the photographs are all black-and-white, and the drawings and other figures are represented only in various shades of blue. This was not a real problem, and completely understandable given the price of the edition I bought, but, as others have said, such a book really ought to have some color photos in it at the price it goes for.

My professor had requested the latest edition of this book but there is literally no need since the only differences between this edition and the next one are some rephrased chapters and a change in their order...I saved money and performed well in the course :) I rented it by the way.

The book is fairly well written, the paper used in the book is fairly poor quality, and the illustrations definitely could have been in color. It's just another kick in the teeth to get a \$100+ text that can't even be produced to the quality standards of coffee table books!

They make it really easy to use this book by adding chapter summaries and such. The pages do seem crammed to me and that was not easy on the eyes. However, I believe that allows for this

book to be on the smaller side of textbooks. Although I don't totally love the subject, when I needed clarification on a lecture topic, this book did help with that. But I wasn't running to crack this open for knowledge and definitely needed my glasses to read (especially the little captions on the illustrations).

Bought this book to accompany what my teacher was teaching in Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy. While it is a very detailed and complicated book to read, it did help clarify some details the professor left out. It is exactly like the U.S. version, just paperback and black & white.

Very lengthy explanations, depends on the class how useful. My professor had no slides, no did he record his lectures so all you had was the notes you took. Book was able to give me a secondary place to go to if I did not understand something or was just missing information. Can be a little difficult to sift through and does go on tangents occasionally but all of the information you need is there.

It was the international edition when this photo is the original one. Also the listing said hard cover and it is a soft cover that I was told after my purchase. It's the same book edition and is in great condition otherwise.

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