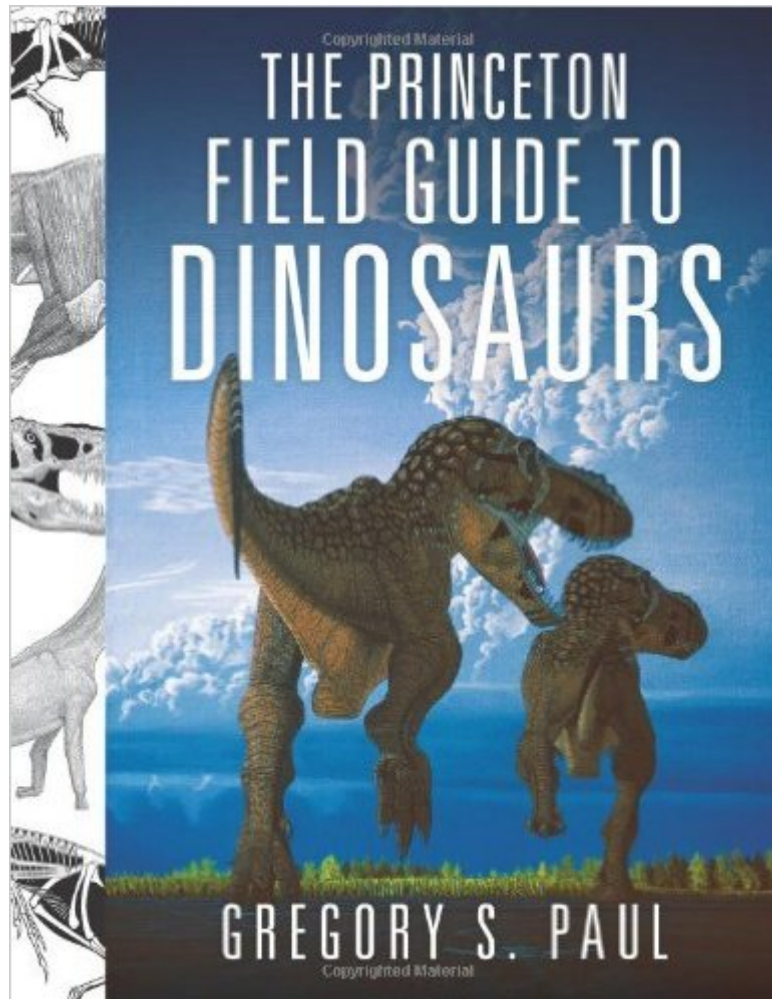


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The Princeton Field Guide To Dinosaurs (Princeton Field Guides)



Synopsis

This lavishly illustrated volume is the first authoritative dinosaur book in the style of a field guide. World-renowned dinosaur illustrator and researcher Gregory Paul provides comprehensive visual and textual coverage of the great Mesozoic animals that gave rise to the living dinosaurs, the birds. Incorporating the new discoveries and research that are radically transforming what we know about dinosaurs, this book is distinguished both by its scientific accuracy and the quality and quantity of its illustrations. It presents thorough descriptions of more than 735 dinosaur species and features more than 600 color and black-and-white images, including unique skeletal drawings, "life" studies, and scenic views--illustrations that depict the full range of dinosaurs, from small, feathered creatures to whale-sized supersauropods. Heavily illustrated species accounts of the major dinosaur groups are preceded by an extensive introduction that covers dinosaur history and biology, the extinction of nonavian dinosaurs, the origin of birds, and the history of dinosaur paleontology--and that also gives a taste of what it might be like to travel back to the time of the dinosaurs. The Princeton Field Guide to Dinosaurs is a must-have for anyone who loves dinosaurs, from the amateur enthusiast to the professional paleontologist. The first authoritative field guide to dinosaurs. Covers more than 735 species. Beautiful, large-format volume. Lavishly illustrated throughout, with more than 600 color and black-and-white drawings and figures, including: More than 130 color life studies, including scenic views. Close to 450 skeletal, skull, head, and muscle drawings. 8 color paleo-distribution maps. Color timeline. Describes anatomy, physiology, locomotion, reproduction, and growth of dinosaurs, as well as the origin of birds and the extinction of nonavian dinosaurs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gregory S. Paul's 1988 book, Predatory Dinosaurs of the World Predatory Dinosaurs of the World: A Complete Illustrated Guide, reignited my childhood interest in dinosaurs when I was a teenager. I read it cover to cover several times and carried it around for months and months, lingering over his exacting white-skeletons-on-black-soft-tissue reconstructions with my eyes, ruminating over the accompanying text, and wistfully wishing that the book didn't stop with the last theropod but went on to cover sauropods and everything else in the same level of detail. Now, some 22 years later, Paul releases what is probably his magnum opus: a big, bold 8 & 1/2 by 11 volume containing hundreds of reconstructions dozens of muscle studies and shaded skull drawings, and numerous fine color scenes. A feast for the eyes and an atlas for the imagination. Paul writes in the preface: "Producing this book has been particular satisfying in that it has given me the reason to achieve a long-term goal, to illustrate the skeletons of almost all dinosaur species for which there is sufficiently complete available." Thank you, Mr. Paul, from the bottom of our hearts! And thank you Princeton University Press for producing a durable big-format volume, the sort of thing that older boys can carry around on planes, trains, and automobiles . . .

This is one of the best dinosaur guides I've ever had the pleasure of reading. Lavishly illustrated, exhaustively researched, this guide is, in my humble opinion, the definitive guide to the prehistoric world. From well known dinosaurs such as *Tyrannosaurus rex* and *Allosaurus fragilis*, to obscure dinosaurs such as *Nothronychus mckinleyi* and *Cryolophosaurus ellioti*, there's something for everyone. The introductory section of the book really brings you into the frame of mind you would need to venture into the wilderness of the past as well as even a brief section on what would be needed if one were to travel to that far distant past. Even some of the more recent discoveries have made their way into this book, such as *Torosaurus* actually being fully developed adult *Triceratops horridus*. Other dinosaurs, such as "*Nanotyrannus*" suffered the same fate in the past, but have since been properly identified as juveniles, *Nanotyrannus* in fact being the juvenile of *Tyrannosaurus rex*. The only disappointment, and this is a tiny one as I will explain, is there is no section on pterosaurs. Now, I'm quite certain that this is because the pterosaurs are not dinosaurs at all, but are very simply flying lizards. Still, a mention would have been nice. All in all, I would definitely recommend this book to any dinosaur enthusiast.

"The Princeton Field Guide to Dinosaurs" is artistically superb yet science-heavy. This is no simple picture or "coffee table" book. Unique in its configuration (textbook-sized, but formatted not unlike a backyard birder's handbook), this "field guide" is really more akin to a single-volume dinosaur encyclopedia (or, as another reviewer pointed out, a dino desk reference). And that's not a bad thing. Dinosaurs of all shapes, sizes, and levels of fame (or obscurity) are ranked taxonomically and provided with detailed background information. Each species is not only illustrated in life-like artist's renditions, but skeletal systems are also depicted. This book is not quite as "pretty" as some of the other large paleo-books, but it's replete with information. Due to the technical nature of the book, I wouldn't necessarily recommend it for younger children or children who don't have an earnest academic interest in paleontology. Instead, I'd recommend "The Princeton Field Guide to Dinosaurs" for adult dinophiles -- "grown ups" who never grew out of their dinosaur "phase."

Like many, I was introduced to Greg Paul's artwork as a young teenager in the 1980s. His *Predatory Dinosaurs of the World* was my favorite book for years. This book is a bit of a letdown in that aside from the terrific skeletons, he offers no scale bars, zero information on the type specimens, the author(s) who named and described each taxon, or even the actual preserved elements. Stranger still, some taxa, known from reasonably complete specimens (*Coelurus*, *Dilong*, *Guanlong*, *Torvosaurus*, and *Tanycolagreus* for example) are not illustrated, while others that are known from similarly complete material (*Ornitholestes* and *Irritator*) are. Why? This is never addressed. Also, the color pencil drawings are absolutely amateurish and detract from the otherwise excellent art. Are these goofy little sketches really meant to convey an impression of the animals' heads? He's essentially traced the skulls, slapped in an eyeball, and presented it as a life portrait. Almost embarrassing. The text that accompanies the species descriptions appears to have been written by a child with a list of "enemies" provided for herbivores, and only the most cursory and useless description of the material: "most of the skull and minority of skeleton"...what exactly does that mean?! So overall, you're getting some nice skeletal drawings, a brief note of where and when the thing was found, and some shoddy color pencil sketches. For me, the skeletons are worthwhile, but others might like a bit more actual information, so this book will perhaps be lacking. On a final note, Greg Paul has recently declared that his guides should not be used as guides for artists wanting a skeletal reference upon which to draw or sculpt. So, be warned! This odd little man with an ego the size of Texas publishes some nice skeletal drawings, but if you use these references as a...you know...reference, he might sue you.

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