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Book Of The Spider



Synopsis

THE FASCINATING TRUTH BEHIND WEB WEAVERS Despite Little Miss Muffet's well-documented confrontation, most spiders are quite harmless--except to smaller bugs. In THE BOOK OF THE SPIDER, spider specialist Paul Hillyard explores the engaging world of arachnids--especially the funny and often absurd ways in which humans respond to more than 35,000 known species of spiders. Covering the complete spider spectrum, from folklore and myths to ancient scientific studies to techno-spiders building webs in outer space, the author reveals a captivating social history of the most misunderstood of God's creatures. THE BOOK OF THE SPIDER answers a number of questions, both obvious and obscure, all fascinating: How can humans forecast weather by observing a spider's actions? Why is black-widow venom more dangerous than a rattlesnake bite? Why are spiderwebs often used to dress wounds and coagulate blood? What's the best cooking method for spider a la carte?

Book Information

Paperback: 218 pages

Publisher: Harper Perennial; First Edition Thus edition (March 1, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0380730758

ISBN-13: 978-0380730759

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 5.2 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,663,644 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in Â Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Field Guides > Insects & Spiders #1126 in Â Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Insects & Spiders #2462 in Â Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Reference

Customer Reviews

This is not what you would call an information book, although there is plenty of excellent information in it, from a guy who really knows his spiders. It's more of a casual stroll through the sometimes unpleasant but never boring world of spiders, plucking the juiciest tidbits of information as it goes. If you need a systematic overview, this isn't the book for you. But as a good read that takes you through the highs (web-building) and the lows (how they eat) of the spider world, it's unbeatable. One more thing: the design of the book (inside) is a delight. Unfortunately this edition

does not have the original cover, which was excellent.

Only 3% of the human population enjoys spiders! If you are one of those rare folks or a lay scientist this little gem of a book will charm and educate you with hundreds of fascinating facts. The prodigious talents and feats of many different types of spiders are described accurately and precisely. Written in a conversational style the varied topics of facts, history, myth, are explored with an often whimsical and affectionate eye. Astound your friends with little known spider facts, recite lengthy, descriptive spider poems to your loved one. Includes an extensive bibliography for further research. It's a keeper for me, I look forward to impressing my grandchildren, having already amazed my 14-y/o for years with my spider facts and stories...

About the only point of contention is that the author feels as many people love spiders as hate them! (Does he really believe that?) Outside of that small complaint, this is among the best creepy crawly books out there! Starting out with the mythological birth of spiders in Lucretius's "Metamorphosis", you'll learn all about the truly weird creatures we have labelled "Arachnids". From the Tarantula dance to Darwin's comment on some very strange specimens, to gossamer skies, and various poisons, you can't miss with this one! Includes some nifty drawings, too! So if you have any interest in the huge Spider species, check this book out!

If you love spiders, if you know a good deal about them, if you're new to the arachnid section of the invertebrate world, or even if you're afraid of spiders, this book is for you. Everything you could want to know about spiders is in here- from basic anatomy to behaviour to the history of Arachnology. Hillyard covers every spider myth from around the world- including variations on each one! I have to say, the references are one of the best features. I found several books and spider-oriented people I didn't know were out there and can now broaden my spider knowledge even further.

I was never arachnophobic, but I had a fairly serious fear of spiders for a long time. Although I'm not quite an arachnophile yet, "The Book of the Spider" was a fascinating read that helped me to overcome much of my fear of spiders. After reading in this book that some spiders play dead when frightened, I observed a little spider outside my house doing just that when I got too close to him. It was almost...cute! :3 Highly recommended to people who are looking to learn and become braver, while being entertained at the same time!

Paul Hillyard is a well-known arachnologist from the London Natural History Museum. In "The Book of the Spider" he has given us all an appetizer, which will serve to wet our appetites for more on this fascinating subject (often viewed with horror by arachnophobes). I could say that he has left a lot out (many worthy arachnologists were not included in his mini biographies), but for the size of the book he covers a lot! I also think that his style will get young people interested, as well as fascinate older people who have little acquaintance with the subject. Not just a dry compilation of facts (which it might easily have been, if made longer), but a great piece of advocacy for the less loved of the natural world. This book includes tidbits on the tarantella craze, Anansi the spider trickster, Spider Woman, spider venoms, webs, spider behavior, and of course short biographies on arachnologists, including the French biologist, Eugene Simon, who wrote his first book on spiders at the age of 16! As a professional arachnologist who has spent much of my life studying these amazing arachnids I find this work a delightful introduction to the subject and recommend it highly.

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