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The Amateur Radio Astronomer's Handbook

— John Potter Shields. An introduction for the general reader to radio astronomy. Discusses various types of radio astronomy systems and tells how to build your own radio telescope. Explains how to use your radio telescope for observing the sun, receiving signals from Jupiter and detecting meteors and meteor showers. Crown, 1986, 104 p., illus., paper, \$19.95.

Chernobyl and Nuclear Power in the USSR

— David R. Marples. This book analyzes the Soviet nuclear power industry with emphasis on the Ukraine's role in the USSR's nuclear program. Tells how the Soviet authorities released information about the Chernobyl nuclear accident over the first three weeks, looks at the energy questions facing the Soviet Union and explores why the Soviets are so heavily committed to the development of nuclear energy. Discusses Eastern Europe's part in the Soviet overall nuclear energy plan. Focuses on the Chernobyl disaster itself and its aftermath, analyzes the evacuation procedure, the cleanup campaign and the political repercussions of the tragedy and looks at the future of the nuclear industry and the impact of Chernobyl from the world dimension. St. Martin, 1986, 228 p., \$35, paper, \$14.95.

College: The Undergraduate Experience in America — Ernest L. Boyer. This report was prepared by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which studied colleges and universities and the students they serve. Pays particular attention to the way the structures and procedures of colleges affect the lives of students. The foreword indicates that eight problem areas were identified in the undergraduate college that urgently need to be examined and resolved for the American college to be a better institution and students better served. Harrow, 1987, 328 p., \$19.95.

Peterson First Guide to Insects of North America

— Christopher Leahy. These beautifully illustrated guides, abridged versions of the Peterson Field Guides, focus on the animals you are most likely to see in the field. This insect guide is based on *A Field Guide to the Insects of North America* by D.J. Borror and R.E. White. HM, 1987, 128 p., color/b&w illus. by Richard E. White, paper, \$3.95.

Peterson First Guide to Mammals of North America

— Peter Alden. This simplified, well-illustrated field guide is based on *A Field Guide to the Mammals of America North of Mexico* by W.H. Burt and R.P. Grossenheider, one of the Peterson Field Guide Series. HM, 1987, 128 p., color/b&w illus. by Richard P. Grossenheider, paper, \$3.95.

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GIANTS of Land, Sea & Air • Past and Present

By David Peters

Giant Ground Sloth

Megatherium americanum (extinct)

Extinct • Mammalia • Chordata

The giant ground sloth was a peaceful, tree-hoarding mammal that lived during the Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs from 10 million up to only 10,000 years ago. Its 24-foot length made it almost invulnerable to attack by the smallish predators of its time. Now, if anyone bothers may have hunted the giant ground sloth to extinction.

Native to South America, this massive animal was able to push trees over by brute strength so great that it was able to reach its probably used its long, curved claws to hook low branches and bring them close to its long tongue. Its claws were so long that a had to walk on its knuckles.

Doedicurus

Doedicurus demissus (extinct)

Extinct • Mammalia • Chordata

Doedicurus (*doe-dee-us*) was the largest of the glyptodonts, a family of armadillo-like mammals that lived in the Western Hemisphere during the Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs from 10 million to 1 million years ago. *Doedicurus* was 14 feet long, with a 3½-foot-high shell.

Unlike the armadillos with its shell of bony skin, glyptodonts had a shell made of bone, unique among mammals. The thick, impenetrable armor covered the head, back, and tail, with coarse hairs stuck out at joints in *Doedicurus*'s armor wherever skin was exposed. The animal had short, massive legs and strong claws for digging. It was a peaceful plant eater with small, peglike teeth. The long tail, ending in a mucilage spine, was an effective defensive weapon that could be swung at attackers.

This is a book about giants—about many of the biggest animals ever to inhabit the earth's land, seas and air. The giants are grouped according to either type or shape so that their similarities, differences and peculiarities can easily be seen.

All of the illustrations have been drawn to the same scale (1 inch = 22½ inches). If you hold the book 18 inches from your eyes, the illustrations will seem the same size as the actual animal would seem when viewed from a distance of 33¾ feet. Even with the facts and figures in front of us, it can be difficult to realize how immense these creatures are or were, and so every two-page spread includes an illustration of an average-size adult human couple drawn to the same scale.

— from the introduction

Knopf, 1986, 9½" x 13",

73 pages, hardcover, \$13.95 Recommended for ages 8 and up.

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