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**Ancestors: In Search of Human Origins** — Donald Johanson, Lenora Johanson, and Blake Edgar. Donald Johanson, the discoverer of "Lucy," the oldest skeleton of any erect human ancestor, returns to Hadar and to Australia with his wife, Lenora, who produced the NOVA series for which this book is a companion. There, he demonstrates how paleoanthropologists do their work. Stirring photos highlight pages of first-hand accounts of intriguing discoveries and analysis of the most heated debates surrounding the field. For example, why did hominids begin to walk upright? When did *Homo sapiens* evolve? Villard Bks, 1994, 339 p., b&w photos and illus. and color photos, hardcover, \$27.50.

**The Billion-Dollar Molecule: One Company's Quest for the Perfect Drug** — Barry Werth. This inside account of the biotechnology industry focuses on a small company called Vertex, whose founder, a prominent organic chemist named Joshua Boger, set out to design drugs "atom by atom." Boger's goal is to create an immune-system-suppressing drug devoid of dangerous side effects and useful for organ transplants and AIDS patients. Such a drug could be one of the most profitable drugs of all time. This tome depicts the politics and challenges of launching and building this kind of venture. S&S, 1994, 445 p., hardcover, \$25.00.



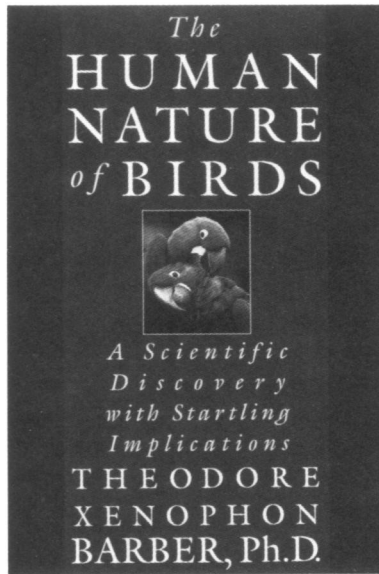
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St. Martin's Press, 1993, 226 pages,  
5 1/2" x 8 1/2", hardcover, \$19.95

**The Modern Backpacker's Handbook: An Environmental Guide** — Glenn Randall. Tips for every conceivable element of the backpacking experience, including buying and maintaining a tent, keeping warm, backpacking with children, and packing a bag, make up this thorough companion for hikers of all ages and levels of experience. However, the central theme is about how to backpack safely and comfortably without despoiling the wilderness. Randall gives special advice about choosing the proper trail and using environmentally friendly latrines, cooking techniques, and campsites. Lyons & Burford, 1994, 192 p., b&w illus., paperback, \$14.95.

**Ninety-nine More Maggots, Mites, and Munchers** — May R. Berenbaum. Descriptive, witty, and intriguing passages offer an appreciative look at a multitude of insects, some commonly thought of as pests and others so obscure that most people do not even know they exist. This book proves fascinating reading for novice entomologists and the merely curious. Revelations include reasons for the boxelder bug's fascination with the boxelder tree, why certain honey ants gorge on nectar until they nearly burst, and the attributes of elephant lice that distinguish them from other lice. U of Ill Pr, 1993, 285 p., b&w illus., paperback, \$13.95.

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**Was George Washington Really the Father of Our Country? A Clinical Geneticist Looks at World History** — Robert Marion. In an effort to spice up his talks to medical students, Marion researched prominent figures who apparently suffered from the often obscure genetic deficiencies about which he lectured. Here he brings together a bevy of historical leaders and the conditions that plagued them, such as Czar Nicholas of Russia's son's hemophilia, which may have influenced the Russian Revolution, and John F. Kennedy's successful battle with Addison's disease, which could have contributed to his feeling of invincibility. These lively accounts make a variety of genetic disorders not only interesting but also very understandable. Addison-Wesley, 1994, 206 p., b&w photos and illus., hardcover, \$22.95.

**Water-Wise Gardening: America's Backyard Revolution** — Thomas Christopher. On average, home landscaping consumes as much as 50 percent of all water available in many American municipalities, Christopher reports. Since realistically no community can afford this kind of water expenditure, xeriscaping is becoming a popular landscaping technique across the country. The author interviews people from Santa Barbara to Austin to New York City who use a multitude of methods for successfully growing all kinds of fruits, vegetables, and flowers while using minimal amounts of water. Christopher provides tips for maintaining a xeriscaped garden, in addition to ideas for starting one, such as cultivating native plants that fit naturally within the confines of the local water table. S&S, 1994, 271 p., color plates, hardcover, \$25.00.

Theodore Barber, a behavioral scientist, has a new assessment of what we know about the avian kingdom. His conclusion is revolutionary: that birds have been clearly, consistently, and scientifically shown to possess intelligence comparable to — and in some cases superior to that of humans. Through carefully researched case studies, he illustrates how scientists have proven, often against their own expectations, that birds can:

- Make and use tools
- Recognize and work with abstract concepts
- Show grief, joy, compassion, and even altruism
- Create musical compositions
- Perform intricate mathematical calculations in navigation
- Even form friendships with human beings.

Barber contends that though these discoveries were all made by independent scientific researchers, the hoary taboo against anthropomorphism has prevented any detailed consideration of intelligence in the animal kingdom. *The Human Nature of Birds* will reverse that denial.

— from St. Martin's Press

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HumNatBirdsH

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ copy(ies) of *The Human Nature of Birds*. I include a check payable to Science News Books for \$19.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling (total \$21.95) for each copy. Domestic orders only.

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