

Books

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Climbing Mount Improbable—Richard Dawkins. Probably the most astute popularizer of evolutionary biology, Dawkins once again weaves a persuasive argument on Darwin's behalf. This time, Dawkins assaults one of the most common dilemmas posed by creationists: How could the creatures of Earth, in all their diversity and complexity, arise without the help of a divine creator? Dawkins tracks the paths that lead to the top of this so-called Mount Improbable to show how improbability drives life forward and sparks the genetic "accidents" that enable complex forms to evolve. Originally published in hardcover in 1996. Norton, 340 p., b&w illus., paperback, \$14.95.

Eclipse! The What, Where, When, Why & How Guide to Watching Solar and Lunar Eclipses—Philip S. Harrington. The author's verve for eclipse watching is contagious as he explains how best to capture these phenomena on film, on video, and with the naked eye. The knowledge he imparts to the reader can be put to use as soon as Feb. 26, 1998, the date of the next solar eclipse visible from North America. Harrington meticulously charts the next 20 years' worth of eclipses, revealing where best to see each event, travel considerations, climatological characteristics, maps, and times. Wiley, 1997, 280 p., b&w photos/illus., paperback, \$14.95.

Heart and Blood: Living with Deer in America—Richard Nelson. The overpopulation of deer and its impact on people in both rural and suburban areas of the United States are a growing concern. Nelson's fascination with deer intensified when he lived in a small village on the northern Pacific Coast and took up subsistence hunting of the animal with his Eskimo and Indian peers. They believe that one must have a keen sense of the animal and its habits if one is to hunt successfully. That curiosity and quest for knowledge led Nelson to various parts of the country to study deer and how people, including farmers, ranchers, and suburbanites, live with and control these creatures. The fruits of his labors are laid out in this study, as is a look at the history of deer and humans. Knopf, 1997, 389 p., b&w illus., hardcover, \$27.50.

The Nutrition Bible: The Comprehensive, No-Nonsense Guide to Foods, Nutrients, Additives, Preservatives, Pollutants, and Everything Else We Eat and Drink—Jean Anderson and Barbara Deskins. In addition to comprehensive data on vitamins, minerals, and nutrients, this alphabetical primer provides information on specific foods. Recipes, nutritional values, historical facts, methods of production, the effects of nutrition on disease, and the threat of harmful bacteria such as, *E. coli* are all detailed as well. Originally published in hardcover in 1995. Quill, 1997, 470 p., paperback, \$17.00.

On the Surface of Things: Images of the Extraordinary in Science—Felice Frankel and George M. Whitesides. Professor Whitesides' experience tells him that "equations and scientific graphics rivet no one's attention." Thus this combined effort is a visual extravaganza that melds stunning macroscopic and stereomicroscopic photography of surfaces such as ferrofluid, ice crystals, and marble columns colored with lichen with intriguing text describing the scientific principles illustrated. In the process, concepts in chemistry, biology, and physics are imparted. Chronicle Bks, 1997, 160 p., color photos, paperback, \$22.95.

Random House Webster's Dictionary of Scientists—Sara Jenkins-Jones, ed. Minibiographies of 1,800 scientists span ancient to modern times. Accomplishments, background, and even an occasional quote or picture round out the synopses. A list of Nobel Prize winners and overviews of various fields make up the appendixes. RH, 1997, 522 p., b&w photos/illus., paperback, \$18.00.

Stonehenge: A New Interpretation of Prehistoric Man and the Cosmos—John North. According to North, the annual celebration of modern Druids at Stonehenge is mistimed—he believes the structure was dedicated to the winter solstice, not the summer one. And while they have religious implications, the stones are directed at the heavens for the purpose of scientific observation, not unlike that of modern astronomers. North's rather dense text represents 15 years of exhaustive research that encompasses the barrows, ditched enclosures, and chalk figures of other earthworks of the time, as well as ancient astronomy, to support his claims. Originally published in the UK in 1996. Free Pr, 1997, 609 p., b&w plates/illus., hardcover, \$35.00.

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