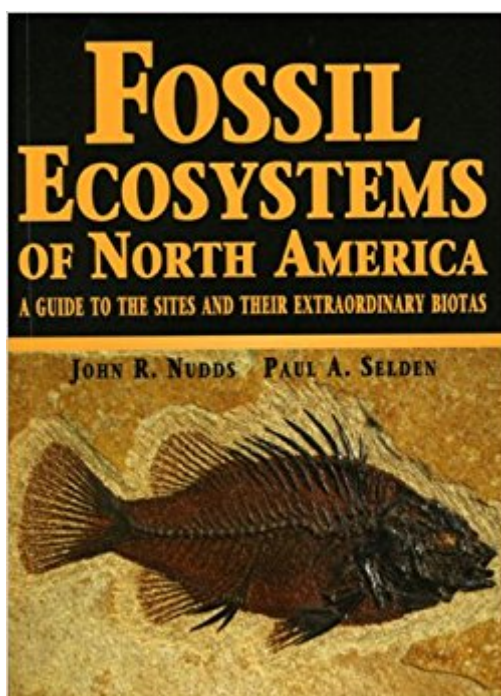


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Fossil Ecosystems Of North America: A Guide To The Sites And Their Extraordinary Biotas



Synopsis

The fossil record affords a fascinating glimpse at past environments and the kinds of plants and animals that inhabited them. Some sites, for instance, contain nearly complete preserved records of ancient life. Fourteen of these remarkable fossil depositories are found in North America, including Mistaken Point in Newfoundland, Mazon Creek in Illinois, and Rancho La Brea in Los Angeles. *Fossil Ecosystems of North America* describes these and eleven other sites that range across the continent. John R. Nudds and Paul A. Selden introduce each site and place the fossil findings in geologic and evolutionary context. They go on to describe the history of research at each site—the sedimentology, stratigraphy, biota, paleoecology—and offer comparisons to other localities of similar age or environment. *Fossil Ecosystems of North America* also includes an appendix of museums at which readers can see specimens from the sites and suggestions for visiting the sites in person. In some cases, new specimens can still be collected from these sites by professionals and amateurs alike. Accessible and informative, this guide to Fossil-Lagerstätten will appeal to expert scientists and adventuresome lay paleontologists alike.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"*Fossil Ecosystems of North America* provides an enjoyable journey to 14 extraordinary fossil localities. In their earlier *Evolution of Fossil Ecosystems* (CH, Sep'05, 43-0337), Nudds and Selden (both, Univ. of Manchester, UK) covered the world; here, they add localities and a focus. Each chapter provides background on why the site is important in the history of life and follows with a brief

accounting of the discovery of the particular locality. Next, the authors discuss the stratigraphic setting and taphonomy (i.e., what happened between death of the organisms and what is found today, and what contributed to the unusual preservation). Nudds and Selden provide a description and several images of the biota found, followed by a discussion of the clustering of organisms and what the bigger picture tells scientists about life interaction for those organisms. Finally, there is a brief comparison of the fossil locality with other relevant locations. Each chapter contains a list of suggested readings, and the appendix lists appropriate museums related to the finding and extra information on visiting the site (e.g., hours, costs, accessibility). Valuable for anyone wanting to learn about specially preserved clusters of organisms from throughout Earth's history." (Choice)"A beautifully produced book. Its glossy pages are crammed with exquisite full-color photographs of some of the most unique fossils ever unearthed and its engaging and detailed text, though scientific in nature, is generally not beyond the reach of interested lay readers. . . . This book will be of interest to anyone fascinated by fossils." (Danny A. Brass PRS)"[A] very engaging volume. . . . The comprehensive descriptions of biotas will make the book maximally useful (and interesting) to readers with widely varied taxonomic interests. . . . I recommend it." (Jeffrey V. Yule Quarterly Review of Biology)

John R. Nudds is senior lecturer in paleontology in the School of Earth, Atmospheric, and Environmental Sciences at the University of Manchester. Paul A. Selden is the Gulf-Hedberg Distinguished Professor of Invertebrate Paleontology and director of the Paleontological Institute at the University of Kansas.

This book is a gem, a work of art, a delicate microchip, whether you understand it or not. Much of the info is pretty deep and condensed for the interested layman but the size and layout--the paper, diagrams, charts, artwork, photos and particularly, the maps--makes this book a joy to hold and scan, without necessarily struggling to understand the nuances of geology within it. Either these authors have a background in the publisher's craft and art, or they just design books better at the University of Chicago Press, I don't know, but either way, this tiny book puts many of the mega-textbooks of the Cenozoic to shame.

As a far as a textbook goes its very interesting?

This new release is a very good overview on the fine fossil record of eachage from oldest to

youngest. Make no mistake, it has the pictorals of a coffee table book; but packed with information to enlighten the novice and the learned. Having visited most of the localities; I can make the statement that this book does a very good job of representing the locations, the fossils and the known information from studies. Excellent pictures and the quality of the graphics make it the next best thing to holding the very fossils of these famous locations. This book is well worth the price of this hardcopy. Bravo to John Nudds, Paul Seldon and all the contributors, efforts well done. - John A. Spina Jr. in NY

I had been waiting for this book for a year, but it was worth it. While a better title would probably attract more readers, the book is written with the collector in mind as well as documentation that should be required of undergraduates studying geology and paleontology. Since we rarely get a glimpse of the extraordinary prehistoric remains (fossils) in museum collections, I appreciate being able to see many via this profusely illustrated work. A wide-range of fossil material is presented, from nearly 2 billion year old microfossils (Gunflint Chert) to the Pleistocene lifeforms in the Rancho La Brea tar deposits in Los Angeles.

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