

New Titles

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is often a result of poor geologic exposure rather than of a lack of work. Consequently, well-studied areas and time bins are better discussed, such as the Karoo Basin in South Africa and the Germanic Basin and the Late Triassic period sites in the western United States. Other locations, such as the Late Triassic sites in Great Britain and the eastern United States, also receive greater coverage because they are the areas in which the authors conduct research. The latter area is especially important, because fossil finds are correlable with a global standard for magnetostatigraphy and its associated astronomically tuned timescale.

Chapter nine provides a detailed look into two specific localities. The Madygen (Kyrgyzstan) and the Solite Quarry (Virginia) provide unique glimpses into Late Triassic time, because they preserve a variety of fossils of plants and animals; however, they are especially extraordinary for their preservation of soft body parts, including those of insects. The book closes with chapters on biotic changes through the Triassic and the end-Triassic extinction event, which was one of the “big five” extinction events in Earth history. This extinction saw the end of many archosaurian lineages—most notably, a majority of the pseudosuchians—and gave way for the subsequent rise of the dinosaurs over the next 180 million years. Sues and Fraser discuss the various extinction hypotheses, including climate change, mass volcanism, and even bolide impacts, but are not able to conclusively side with any of these causes.

Triassic Life on Land thoroughly examines the current state of understanding regarding terrestrial ecosystems of the Triassic period. Although it is focused on vertebrate remains, the book also includes many in-depth sections on the plants and insects of the time, making this an extremely well-rounded reference. Furthermore, the book details many prominent topics currently debated by researchers, including the timing of recovery from the end-Permian extinction, the early appearance and

evolution of the dinosaurs, and the mode and timing of the end-Triassic extinction. *Triassic Life on Land* is well written and well edited, with many excellent figures. The content is mostly up to date, containing references as recent as 2009. As with any book on a subject that is the focus of much current research, there is already some out-of-date material; however, the amount of this material is minimal. In summary, *Triassic Life on Land* is the best technical reference available on the Triassic period and brings us forward from the days of “thecodonts” and *Coelophysis*.

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NEW TITLES

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Charles “Flip” Nicklin. University of Chicago Press, 2011. 192 pp., illus. \$40.00 (ISBN 9780226580999 cloth).

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