



The Dorling Kindersley Nature Encyclopedia

Books Reviewed:

[The Dorling Kindersley Nature Encyclopedia](#) [1]

Issue:

[117](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Ted Percy](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

A large author-editor team has been at work here, cooking up the collective nature-orientated knowledge of DK into what turns out to be a fairly splendid volume. They describe their achievement as providing 'detailed information on every major plant and animal group, arranged in an easy to follow order', and this is exactly what they have done. Moving from the general to the particular we start with what is Life, how do living things work, moving through Ecology and Taxonomy to Plants and then (for 144 pages out of a total of 300) Animals.

The pages teem with facts and pictures, many of the latter highly recognisable from previous appearances in DK productions and often retaining the freedom from scale which characterised these previous appearances. Freedom from scale is fine for teeth, kettles and lavatories but does not help if you want to compare the sizes of the angler fish and the five-bearded rockling (pp.188-9), oh, and the plural of 'pike' is 'pike' if it is fish 'pikes' were something used in the civil war and at Agincourt.

Occasionally the facts wobble a bit 'some (sheep shearers) can clip a lamb in less than a minute' may be true in theory but in practice nobody clips lambs 'they have not got enough wool. On the other hand the cross-referencing from every spread is very well done and helpful in building up that web of understanding that it must be the book's ambition to develop.

To be worth the price of, say, a weekend at a jazz festival or a Test Match day at Old Trafford, this book has to be both a reliable reference and a bountiful browse. It most certainly is the latter (when did you last see a Binturong (p.259) in full colour?) but purposive fact-finding may be less well rewarded.

Running Order:

75

Source URL (retrieved on Dec '19): <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/117/childrens-books/reviews/the-dorling-kindlersley-nature-encyclopedia>

Links:

[1] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-dorling-kindersley-nature-encyclopedia>

[2] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/117>

[3] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/ted-percy>