



# The Earth from the Air for Children

Books Reviewed:

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Most 'from the air' books succeed by rendering the familiar unrecognisable, thereby provoking a curiosity, the satisfaction of which reveals new unsuspected facts and features. This one reveals far more, and the phrase 'in a new light' will never be more apposite. Arthus-Bertrand is obsessed by aerial views of unusual terrestrial features and has travelled the world - in what **Scotland on Sunday** dubbed 'the most comprehensive work of aerial photography ever published' - indulging this obsession. Using a cameramanship that **The Amateur Photographer** describes as 'little short of sensational' Bertrand uses light to extraordinarily creative effect as he shows us scarlet ibis in Venezuela, a mosaic of drying dates in Egypt, drying salt and carpets in Morocco and our own Uffington white horse. Every spread is a surprise and delight; such is the photographer's skill that the accompanying text passes almost unnoticed (and the nauseating introduction - this is 'for children', remember - is better left unnoticed). Just by studying the pictures (34 but it seems like twice that) we learn more about varieties of natural form and ways of human life than may be got from a dozen well-meaning publishers' series. This is a filleted version of Bertrand's previous **Earth from the Air** which sent **Scotland on Sunday** so rhapsodic and which the publishers call 'the world's most famous photography project'. Being a **Herald** reader, I'd never heard of it, but filleted or not the 'for children' bit is unhelpfully misleading. This book is a fine experience for what George Formby called 'folks of every age', and, as with what Mr Formby advised us to put on the ice, 'it'll never go bad.' At the price of a decent 'cafetiere, this is remarkable value. It's a coffee-table book of the highest quality which, while rendering conversation superfluous, will stimulate buckets of it. I bet this guy listens to John Coltrane and Miles Davis!

Running Order:

39

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