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My Favourite Animal Families

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

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My extreme youth was dominated by an Edwardian publication ? **The Zoo Book** ? a collection of fuzzy monochrome photographs of the inhabitants of what we then called London Zoo. Its extravagant landscape format and considerable weight demanded that two laps support it; the other one was invariably my dad?s. Any text completely passed me by. Here?s the 21st-century equivalent. Bloom?s photographs ? in the colourful wild ? are essential; Wilson?s text can be taken or left. A selection of winsomely or awesomely picturesque creatures is presented *en famille*. There are 13 mammals and a penguin.

Wilson ? hitherto purveyor of lightweight domestic comedy (c.f. **Jeremy James** and **Superdog**) ? decorates the impressively good pictures with a text that provides insights into the subjects? family life, including the surprising facts that cheetahs can?t roar, hippos can?t swim and rhino hide is very sensitive. A recurrent feature is that of the absentee father; for all the creatures here apart from Emperor penguins and zebras, paternity appears to consist of procreate and disappear.

It?s a fine and informative collection of images which will do best spread over two laps, with perhaps Dad interpreting the text and quietly congratulating himself on his presence. An eternally interesting subject and a wide age and appeal range make this an excellent addition to any family.

Running Order:

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