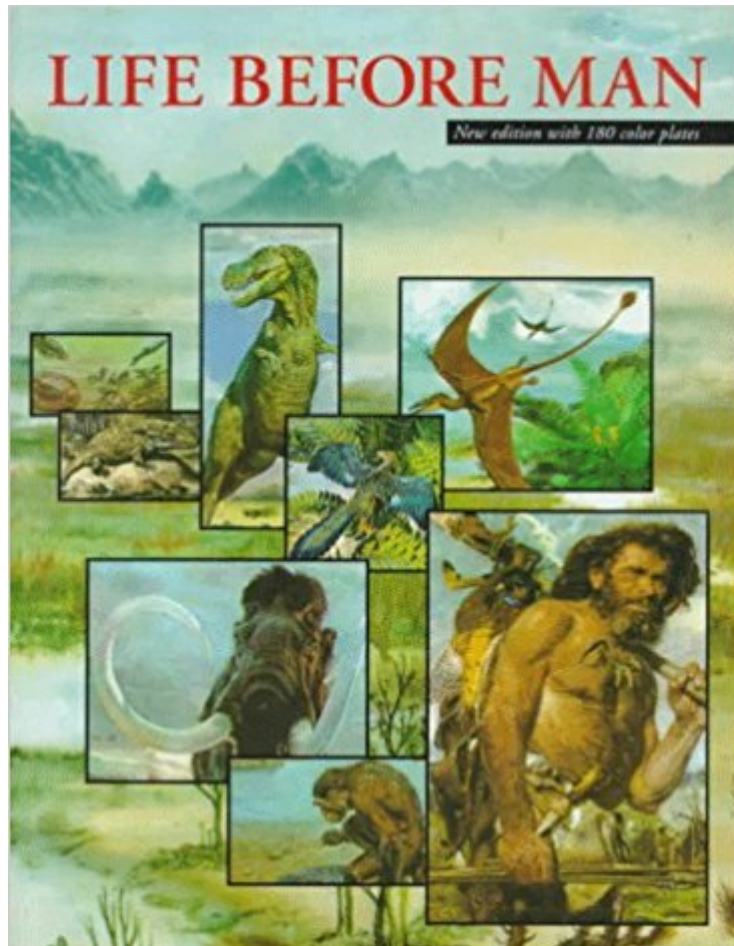




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Life Before Man



Synopsis

This is an introduction to the panorama of life on Earth, from its earliest beginnings more than 3000 million years ago to the arrival of Homo sapiens and the introduction of settled farming, 5000 years ago. The text is accompanied by a sequence of over 160 specially commissioned illustrations, showing the conditions on Earth in its early days and the strange animal life that once roamed its surface or moved in its seas. Beginning with an account of the various theories that seek to explain the birth of the solar system and its planets, the book continues with a detailed explanation of the evolution of living things, from the first signs of single-celled life to the arrival of marine vertebrates, from the appearance of dinosaurs to the emergence of the ape-like ancestors of modern man. Time charts show the sequence of geological eras and the points at which various forms of life first appeared.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Thames & Hudson; Rev Sub edition (June 1996)

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This book is very special, although it is old and may not continue the today's vision of the dinosaurs (for example, the Apatosaur is living in water) it is fun to see the old visions of the prehistoric. And this edition is completely updated, with the latest facts. The text is completely different from that of the old edition. It is also fun to see the new illustrations, although those are not made by Burian himself. I am a great enthusiast of his prehistoric paintings, and I think they are very inspiring, because I like to paint own dinos in aquarelle. Over all, Life Before Man is a classic in illustrated natural history books. The only thing I miss is that some of the old paintings are gone and has been replaced by others. Life Before Man covers the history of the Earth, from a time with

volcanoes to the dawn of man. So, sit down and enjoy this exciting adventure under 3000 million years!

This is a fantastic book! Though originally published in 1972, before a lot of the recent finds and revelations about dinosaurs, it is very consistent with the generally knowledge about various standard species. There are ample charts, graphs, and explanations that are easy to read but far from juvenile. I must confess I bought the book mainly for the illustrations (233, with 180 in color) by Zdenek Burian, which, though are not the highest quality, are still marvelous to look at. But after a casual flip through, I can see myself reading a lot of it because it is so darned interesting. If you can find a good-very good copy at a decent price, and want to add either to your art reference collection or dinosaur library, I don't think you will be disappointed in your purchase!

Zdenek Burian was without doubt one of the greatest of all prehistoric life artists. In a genre that's artists work being dated constantly by new scientific discovery, Burian's work may scientifically date but as wildlife art it remains along with Charles Knight's work at the summit of fossil reconstruction art. The only thing stopping this getting 5 stars is the reproduction quality of some of the plates being inconsistent, otherwise it's fantastic

The 233 illustrations in this book easily make the cover price seem trivial. Mr. Burian was one of the finest prehistoric illustrators ever. These paintings and drawings were previously printed in several earlier works and combined here.

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