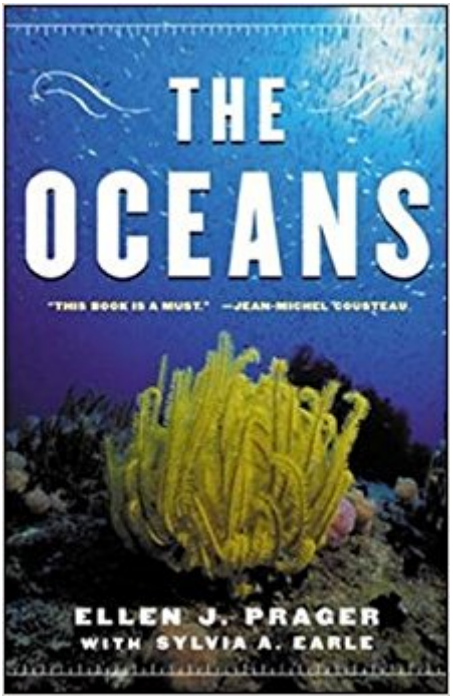
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The Oceans



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Synopsis

"[An] absorbing survey of oceanography . . . [this] elegant study is an excellent resource."Ã Â- Ã Â- Publishers Weekly A fascinating examination of the earth’s oceans This exhaustive overview of oceanography captures the excitement of discovery in the making. The Oceans opens up the world of ocean science to the general reader and raises significant questions about the future of the ancient, nurturing ocean itself. The oceans cover more than 70 percent of the globe, yet less than 5 percent of that expanse has been explored. But, as Drs. Prager and Earle show in this vivid survey of ocean research, our knowledge is suddenly accelerating: various dives, soundings, computer analyses, and other probes are uncovering amazing facts about the 142 million square miles beneath the seas.

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Customer Reviews

Over two-thirds of the earth is covered by bodies of water that many believe hold the secrets to the beginnings of life. In this absorbing survey of oceanography, Prager (Furious Earth) and Earle (The Living Ocean: Understanding and Protecting Marine Biodiversity) chronicle the development of the science of oceans and the evolution of life within the briny deep and shallow estuaries. The authors narrate the "grand epic" of life’s evolution from its earliest beginnings (between 4.5 and 1 billion years ago) to the flowering of sea life in the Cambrian period (about 550 million years ago). They examine the geological evidence of life’s development, and the physical and chemical properties of the ocean-- the effects of oceans on climate, coastal upwellings, deep-sea circulation, rip currents

and rogue waves--as well as the beauties and mysteries of sea life and, through accounts of various marine biomes, microbes and mammals, the tremendous diversity of marine life. Throughout, Prager and Earle debunk myths about the existence of Jaws-like sharks and other marine creatures. Finally, they contend that if the oceans continue to be exploited in the ways they have been over just the past 30 years, they may die. Therefore, the authors argue, governments must give high priority to the study of oceans simply because "to preserve the sea is to preserve life on Earth." This elegant study is an excellent resource for scientists, teachers and all lovers of the ocean. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Scientists and divers, Prager and Earle are well licensed to condense oceanographic knowledge in an overview of the subject that inculcates the integrality of the ocean to geological history. They proceed chronologically through the paleontological divisions of time (Paleozoic, Cenozoic, etc.) before turning to the aspects of today’s ocean. They relate how the ocean arrived at its present chemical composition; how its currents and thereby global climate have been affected by the earth’s rotation and the positions of drifting continents; and how vital the ocean has been to life’s evolutionary epic. While considering each of these topics in oceanography--oceanic chemistry, geology, and biology--Prager and Earle recount the initial scientific investigations of the sea, such as the three-year voyage of the Challenger in the 1870s. They combine the development of the planet, the history of science, and an awareness of environmental stresses on the oceans to produce a worthy introduction to the 72 percent of Earth that is submerged. Readers seeking acquaintance with the basic, current interpretation of oceanic evolution need look no further. Gilbert TaylorCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is amazing! Dr. Prager does a fantastic job in telling the story of the oceans. It is very easy to read and the use of simple examples is superb. We’ve been using The Oceans as the textbook for an Introduction to Oceanography undergraduate course and the students seem pleased to read it. It’s definitely a book that anybody can read and enjoy!

Good read

In almost new condition. Very impressed.

I can see why this took me two times to finish. The book is divided into two parts. The first 180 pages or so is mostly about oceanography, while the last 110 pages is about marine biology. While the former was fairly extensive in its coverage, the latter appeared as an afterthought. Chapters cover the ocean’s past, the ocean of today, oceans and climate, and the geology and biology of the sea. The writing was either ok or read like a high school paper. The section on marine biology wasn’t very helpful. I’d suggest actually reading a marine biology textbook or a popular work on the oceans (e.g. the DK guide Ocean or the BBC’s Blue Planet book). You learn pretty much nothing about taxonomy. The book includes color plates and a few black-and-white illustrations scattered here and there. There’s also a section on sources and suggested reading and an index.This book could have used an editor and fact-checker. She uses redundant phrases (e.g. "past history" and "later subsequent") and doesn’t appear to be quite sure what some the animals she mentions are. For example, she thinks Mesozoic marine reptiles are sea-going dinosaurs and that killer whales and pilot whales are "dolphin-sized whales" (even though they’re both in the dolphin family Delphinidae). She also claims that giant squid get to 72 feet and whale sharks to 60 feet. Oh, and Sylvia Earle only wrote the preface and afterword. Quotes of hers appear at the beginning of each chapter and are scattered throughout the book. I guess she’s a brand now or something.So, despite being pretty boring and having the appearance of just having been thrown together, it is a decent introduction to oceanography but a really bad, lazy attempt at marine biology. Borrow it at a library but don’t bother buy it.

The humble sea cucumber has a novel defense when attacked by a predator. It summons up its strength, and shoots all of its internal organs out its, uh, rear end directly into the face of its assailant. The dazed, disgusted fish, covered with a mucky mess, wanders off looking elsewhere for its lunch. Amazingly the sea cucumber has the ability to then regenerate all of its internal organs.This book generally covers the same topics found in an introductory text of Oceanography. Oriented toward the general reader it skips the math, the chemical formulas, and other aspects of hard science that might frighten away the non-scientist. The first section takes one through the ocean’s development from the Precambrian era to the present time. We then study the composition of the ocean, its currents and climate. After reading about tsunamis you will understand why the science in the movie The Poseidon Adventure was, um, all wet. In the ocean geology section, plate tectonics are discussed, and we read an interesting discourse on how Hawaii developed as a chain of small islands.The largest section of the book deals with the ocean’s biology. What is its

best-designed fish (the tuna)? Why are fish able to drink salt water while we humans cannot tolerate it? When we say that a certain fish lives to a certain age how do we know that? We study its ears - read the book for the details.The material presented was so fascinating that I often became frustrated. I found myself crying out, "Don’t stop now; tell me more about that." When the author mentions that the Portuguese Man-Of-War was actually a colony of various organisms, I wanted to know more about how this could be. But, as usual, I was led off to another interesting topic. Another trivial complaint: while the book has some pictures and drawings, I frequently wished there were more of them. In the "news you can use" category I think she should have spent some time discussing formation and destruction of beaches (suggested reading on this topic: Against The Tide by Cornelia Dean).I like to read science books, but I become increasingly depressed about some of what I read in those dedicated to the biological and earth sciences. Almost every author spends some time discussing the damage we humans are causing to the environment. Ellen Prager will have you close to tears when she tells you how we are destroying our marine environment.

very good . the speed is so amazing. I would recommend this to anyone looking for a good price on an essential tool for cooking great food at home. Would make a great gift too! will purchase again. send it to my boyfriend ,

my neighbor love it, as described . Sturdy, well balanced, great value very nice . very fast, receive it next day,

This text gives a good overview of the various scientific disciplines that collectively make up oceanography and technical discussions are kept at a level that won’t overwhelm science-phobes but will keep the interest of those more familiar with chemistry, geology, physics, and biology.On the down side, the text is somewhat dry and the author seems a little reluctant to inject much of her personality into the book. Those that don’t care for the more cutesy pop-sci writers like Gould might find this a relief, but the prose seems more appropriate for a text book than for a popular overview. That said, the book is still highly readable and enjoyable, and is recommended.

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