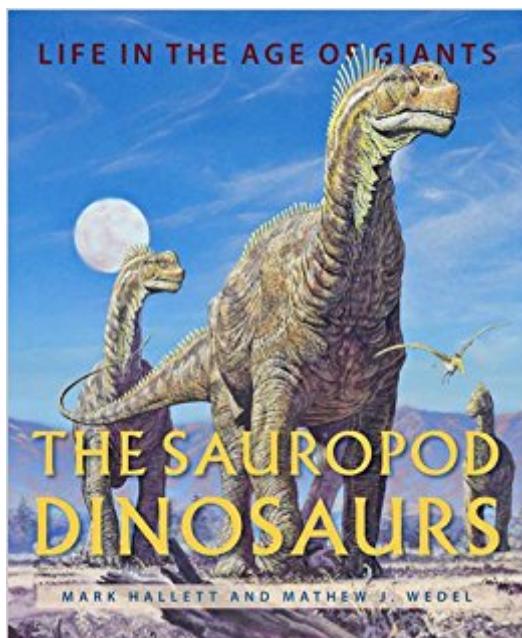


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# The Sauropod Dinosaurs: Life In The Age Of Giants



## Synopsis

From The Land Before Time to Jurassic Park, images of fantastically large, long-necked, plant-eating dinosaurs have captured our imaginations. These are the sauropods: centerpieces of museums and gentle giants of the distant past. Imagine what it must have been like to crest a hill and see in the valley below not just one sauropod, but an entire herd, feeding its way across the landscape. The most massive land animals ever to have lived, sauropods roamed widely across the continents through most of the "Age of Dinosaurs" from about 220 to 65 million years ago. They reached incredible sizes, giving rise to the question: Why were they so big? Early guesses suggested that they gained protection from predators by virtue of their size, which also allowed them to reach the tops of trees in order to eat leaves and conifer needles. More recent hypotheses hold that they needed a long and complicated digestive tract due to their consumption of low-nutrient food sources: size was an offshoot of that need. Whatever the explanation, there is little doubt that natural selection produced something extraordinary when the Sauropoda diversified into a wide variety of species. This book combines majestic artwork and the best of paleontological research to resurrect the lives of sauropods. The Sauropod Dinosaurs shows how these amazing creatures raised and defended their young, traveled in groups, and interacted with the rich diversity of Mesozoic plants and animals. Beautiful enough to sit on the coffee table, the book also serves as the best reference available on these bygone giants. Anyone with a passion for dinosaurs or prehistoric life will cherish this once-in-a-generation masterpiece. The book includes the following features:

- Over 200 full-color illustrations
- More than 100 color photographs from museums, field sites, and collections around the world
- Thoughtfully placed drawings and charts
- Clearly written text reviewed by major sauropod researchers
- Descriptions of the latest sauropod concepts and discoveries
- A field guide to major groups of sauropods
- Detailed skeletal reconstructions and anatomical restorations
- A comprehensive glossary

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"... the book is exceedingly well written—the text is captivating, without resorting to hyperbole or oversimplification. Recommended." (Choice)"Every time you open this book you will find something new and interesting about these giant animals!" (Raif (age 6!) Kid's Book Buzz)

Naturalist Mark Hallett's art and writing has appeared in Life, Smithsonian Magazine, and National Geographic. An artistic consultant for Jurassic Park and Dinosaur, he has created dinosaur art and models for the Walt Disney Company and Universal Studios. Mathew J. Wedel is a well-recognized sauropod expert and an associate professor of anatomy at Western University of Health Sciences. He has coauthored papers naming the sauropods—*Sauroposeidon* and *Brontomerus*.

This book is great beyond words! Wedel's information is very informative and scholarly, Hallet's illustrations are fantastic! His artwork really adds and enhances the text, he is also very detailed when it comes to sauropod anatomy and possible appearance. Hallet and Wedel cover everything in this volume that you could ask about sauropod paleobiology, topics range from diet to reproduction to name just a few. There are previous sauropod volumes, "Thunder-Lizards: The Sauropodomorph Dinosaurs;" by Tidwell and Carpenter. There is also, "The Sauropods: Evolution and Paleobiology" by Curry-Rodgers and Wilson. Both are indeed great sauropod books, and both are technical. Hallet and Wedel's volume is the sauropod volume I have been looking for, it is a popular book, but as mentioned above is a great volume to for any dinosaur lover, be it amateur or professional. This is the book on Sauropods!!!

Wow! What a stunning book. Overflowing with Mark Hallett's amazing artwork, Mathew Wedel's writing is both scholarly and accessible to more casual readers. Given the advances in research in recent years, this is a "must-have" for both professionals and amateurs.

This is a good book. Its target is serious amateurs, and the authors do their best to write in English rather than in jargon. The authors aren't afraid of detail, however, nor the use of scientific terms when appropriate. As an adult with a long interest but no expertise in dinosaur paleontology, I found it informative and very interesting. (Things have certainly changed since the books I read growing up!) This book, with its focus limited to the sauropods, offers much more detail than others I have read. Several things stand out: The illustrations and sidebars are good and very informative. They are also an important part of the book, and I recommend the print edition for that reason; my Kindle often struggles with technical diagrams. The authors do a good job in making clear that the different species and genera of sauropods are different, with differing anatomies, likely behaviors, adaptations, and preferences. The authors do a generally good job in explaining why skeletal differences matter, and what they might mean for how the living animal acted. The broad array of topics is welcome, and the authors' willingness to use informed speculation allows them to present the sauropods as plausible living animals. For the most part, the speculation is clearly labelled as such. Of course, it's not a perfect book. At times the writing is awkward, and sometimes topics aren't as thoroughly developed as one would like. There are some errors (in my edition at least) in numbers and metric to English units. Occasionally too some points of reference would be nice. For example, in discussing extinct trees and the browsing levels of different species, it might have been nice to include the average heights of some modern trees for comparison.

An excellent book on sauropods for the scientifically literate reader. The authors take time to explain concepts of cladistics, anatomy and physiology, yet incorporate recent research into these magnificent animals. Lots of illustrations and sidebars help as well. Although I would not recommend it as a first book on sauropods, it is a must for any serious dinosaur enthusiast... I learned a lot! Also, key references are provided for those who want to delve into the scientific literature. The only flaw I saw was some typos in converting metric into English units or vice versa. Hopefully JHU press will publish similar volumes on other major groups of dinosaurs... looking forward!

Sauropods remain the most recognizable of the dinosaurs, with their graceful necks, and massive bodies. Yet it's easy for one to assume that they all were basically the same gargantuan vegetarians plodding along antediluvian landscapes munching on plants. However Hallet and Wedel dispel the image of sameness by showing how sauropods were extraordinarily diverse and perhaps the most successful terrestrial herbivore group of all time. Life in the age of Giants gives the reader an

excellent view of sauropod anatomy, evolution and behavior. The excellent text is accompanied by excellent art and diagrams by renowned paleoartist Mark Hallet. The few complaints that can be raised at the book are incredibly minor. The first being the refusal of the accepted ideas on sauropod nostrils being extended by long tubes to the end of the snout and not restricted to the nares at the top of the skull. The second being even more minor, the lack of acceptance regarding the validation of *Brontosaurus* as a genus in 2015.

I asked Matt Wedel how long it took to create this book. From concept to published book he said it was "about 5 years." It shows. The book is visually appealing; design and illustrations are excellent. The writing is very accessible ... while hardly elementary, it is certainly something you can read to your kids. The index and citations are first-rate, too. I found it completely engaging. It is a different take on a "reference" book.

This was a gift for our nephews, 9 and 4. We were concerned it might be a little over their heads, but they are very advanced, especially in their knowledge of dinos. They love all the illustrations and they will no doubt grow into the wealth of information. We liked it, too - had an advance look at a library copy - and were especially impressed with the glossary.

I never felt the need for a book strictly on sauropods but this one was worth every penny. New updated info on this amazing family of animals as well as tons of gorgeous art by the very talented Mark Hallett. Reading this will give you a new found love and respect for these incredible animals. Every dino lover needs this on the shelf!

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