

# Atlas of the prehistoric world

by Douglas Palmer

[Discovery Channel Books](#), 1999, 224

p.  
ISBN 1-56331-829-6, \$35.00

This abundantly-illustrated book from Discovery Books is both readable by the general public and a pleasure for a university geological educator like me. The first segment, the Changing Globe, is the atlas which gives the work its name, covering the last 620 million years in earth's history in 18 double-page computer renderings which show land and sea, mountains and lowlands, and major global plate boundaries. The arrangement of the hemispheres, including modern continental positions in red and a mini-whole-world projection for each map, is helpful in getting oriented, particularly for those times when a hypothetical visitor in an orbiting time machine would not be able to recognize which modern continent or continental fragment was which. Each map has a Precambrian-to-present time line across its top to clarify exactly the time in earth history from which the glimpse of the past is taken and paragraphs covering special events for the period and their locations.

I have a basic familiarity with the continental arrangements through time, but found myself paging through and looking at the maps for fun. This is a great reference for orienting freshman students to global changes throughout earth history and for an introduction to the sequence of life history. It would also be a good choice for parents of upper elementary school and older children.

Part two, Ancient Worlds, covers the history of life from its origin through the rise of man, including pictures of fossils and reconstructions of ancient seafloors and landscapes. In each case, site locations are marked on an accompanying world map, putting the story of life history into global context better than any previous work I can recall. The pictures are spectacular. I particularly like the Cambrian Burgess Shale seafloor world and the Cretaceous-Tertiary asteroid impact.

Sites for reconstruction are chosen from all over the world (the author teaches at Cambridge in the UK). Some southern hemisphere sites are ones for which I had not previously seen reconstructions.

The breadth of data and amount of beautiful and colorful art work in this book are remarkable for the price, and the coverage is very good, up to the Tertiary, which gets short shrift, in keeping with the fact that it is a relatively short span of time. I would have liked to see it get a bit more emphasis, something for each epoch, as it is the time that directly shaped the modern world. Roughly 1/3 of the book is an Earth Fact File, which organizes information on basic concepts, definitions, early workers and the development of geologic thought, further reading, and other helpful background. In everything there must be a few quibbles. Mention of Charles Darwin, in the section on the geological time scale, for example, focuses on his overestimate for the age of Tertiary, and says nothing about the idea of organic evolution being at the heart of biostratigraphy. Although evolution is touched upon clearly in several areas, its prime role in life history is not as clearly emphasized as I would like to see. Kansas, with its relatively recent attacks on science teaching which mentions evolution, is not in Dr. Palmer's home nation, so the need to emphasize this point may seem less urgent to him. It is a small frustration that the discussion of continental positions for the future is not well illustrated, in such a generally lavishly illustrated book. Re page 203, the Dinosaur Society is defunct.

Websites could have been profitably expanded to include:

Burgess Shale Project-

<http://www.Scienceweb.org/burgess/contents.html>

Evolution-

<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/evolution.html>

Fossil Horses in Cyberspace-

<http://www.nps.gov/joda/horsetour.html>

Geological Society of America-

<http://www.geosociety.org>

List of State Fossils-

<http://www.intersurf.com/~heinrich/statefossil.html>

Museums in the USA-

<http://www.museumca.org/usa/index.html>

National Center for Science Education (keeps abreast of the evolution/creation controversy)-

<http://www4.nationalacademies.org/cfe/cfe.nsf>

Paleonet-

<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/Paleonet/>

Walking with dinosaurs-

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dinosaurs/webguide/index.shtml>

Websurfers Biweekly Earth Science Review-

<http://home.rmi.net/~michaelg/>

Copyright: Coquina Press

15 November 2000

<http://palaeo-electronica.org>

The Discovery Channel's Atlas of the Prehistoric World is a dynamic portrait of the Earth and the interplay among the various forces that shaped both the planet and the life upon it. Atlas of the Prehistoric World is divided into three major sections, each of which offers a distinctive look at our planet's pre-history. Accompanied by over 250 full-color photographs and illustrations and 68 maps, the Discovery Channel's Atlas of the Prehistoric World is a unique must-have resource for any family member. Find the Full PDF Here [http://bit.ly/pdfdl\\_ca](http://bit.ly/pdfdl_ca) 4 / 5 [http://bit.ly/pdfdl\\_ca](http://bit.ly/pdfdl_ca) You Can Download the PDF Here [http://bit.ly/pdfdl\\_ca](http://bit.ly/pdfdl_ca) Powered by TCPDF (www.tcpdf.org) 5 / 5 [http://bit.ly/pdfdl\\_ca](http://bit.ly/pdfdl_ca) <http://www.tcpdf.org>. What page of atlas shows the religions of the world? A general atlas does not normally show where religions are concentrated, though no doubt there are specialist ones or maps that do so. Share to: How many pages does Prehistoric Digital Poetry have? Prehistoric Digital Poetry has 408 pages. Share to: How many pages does The World Atlas of Wine have? The World Atlas of Wine has 320 pages. Share to: How many pages does The Times Atlas of World History have? The Times Atlas of World History has 360 pages. Share to: How many pages does An Atlas of Fantasy have? An Atlas of Fantasy has 210 pages. Share to: How many pages does Historical Atlas of the World have? Historical Atlas of the World has 170 pages. Share to Start by marking "Atlas of the Prehistoric World" as Want to Read: Want to Read saving | Want to Read. The maps provided do not show the complete landmass of each period. Each map only shows half of the Earth, and the other half is never shown in a separate map. Not being able to see the whole landmass for each period is a little annoying given that this is the main purpose for the book. The book provides very general and unnecessarily incomplete information on prehistoric Earth's many ages. ...more. flag Like · see review. May 24, 2015 Michael rated it it was ok.

Start by marking "Atlas of the Prehistoric World" as Want to Read: Want to Read savingâ€¦; Want to Read.Â The maps provided do not show the complete landmass of each period. Each map only shows half of the Earth, and the other half is never shown in a separate map. Not being able to see the whole landmass for each period is a little annoying given that this is the main purpose for the book. The book provides very general and unnecessarily incomplete information on prehistoric Earth's many ages. ...more. flag Like Â· see review. May 24, 2015 Michael rated it it was ok.