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Frog (Animal)



Synopsis

As Kermit the Frog taught us, it's not easy being green. With good reason, since you'll likely be dissected in biology class or have your legs gobbled up by a hungry Frenchman. And yet, these slimy creatures have captured our imagination, appearing in everything from fairytales about frog princes to Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Jeremy Fisher* and Arnold Lebel's *Frog and Toad*. They even appear as a tasty chocolate snack in the Harry Potter series. Examining the significant role played by this slippery amphibian in art, literature, and popular culture, Charlotte Sleigh gives us an entertaining and sometimes shocking account of this both loved and misunderstood animal. Weaving the natural history of the frog together with its mythology, this witty book answers questions like why frogs have been so prominent in science throughout the years and what place the frog holds in religion. Sleigh also explores the frog's many faces—the devilish and comic, sophisticated and chauvinist, the revolting and delicious. Featuring many images of frogs from nature and culture, *Frog* is the fiftieth entry into the Animal series and will draw pet owners, frog-leg devourers, and seekers of princes alike.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Charlotte Sleigh is a senior lecturer in the history of science at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. She is the author of *Ant*, also published by Reaktion books.

"Frog" is one of a series of 51 small paperback books from English publisher Reaktion Books ranging from "Ant" to "Wolf" that presents a layman's introduction to the variety, biology, history, and evolution of frogs and toads. Its contents range from the historical difficulties in classifying these amphibians to their metamorphosis, immense variety of lifestyles, food preferences, and sources of medicines and poisons. Curiously, it says nothing about their endangerment by global warming. It finishes with References, a Select Bibliography, and a list of Associations and Websites. It is suitable for a general audience aged 15 on.

The usual kind of book in this series, but the formula usually works, and this entry in the series is one of the better ones. It is extremely well illustrated, and quite well written. If you are looking for biology or research, this is not your book. It does look at natural history of frogs rather well, but it is as much about the cultural idea of frog as anything. Froggy goes a'courtin is one familiar aspect, and the old British nasty nickname for the French, "Frogs," is another aspect. You may never have considered the frog as a candidate for literature and art, but Sleigh informs us that the frog does indeed feature in art, literature and film. Frogs tend to not be taken particularly seriously, perhaps because of their usual small size and overall look, as if a cartoonist had designed them. They've also been victim of thousands of high school and college labs. And more seriously, frogs are increasingly endangered and some have gone extinct. An excellent read about frogs.

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