



Australia's Lost World: Prehistoric Animals of Riversleigh

Michael Archer, Suzanne Hand, Henk Godthelp

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In Queensland, in northeast Australia, lies one of the most significant fossil deposits in the world—Riversleigh. Here, the remains of many thousands of weird and wonderful prehistoric animals have been superbly preserved in the limestone outcrops. There are marsupial lions, carnivorous kangaroos, 23-foot long pythons, primitive platypuses, and early ancestors of the now extinct Tasmanian tiger. So important is this site to our understanding of what has happened to Australia and its living cargo over the last 25 million years that Riversleigh has been inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Michael Archer, Suzanne J. Hand, and Henk Godthelp, the principal scientists on a remarkable excavation since 1976, explain the vast environmental and geographic changes that have occurred in this area since Australia broke away from the supercontinent of Gondwana, and how the animals on board this continental raft evolved through the ages. Photographs and evocative artwork bring to life the teeming tropical world that once existed in the now arid wastes of Riversleigh, and the authors discuss some of the unusual techniques used on a dig. They describe how to recognize fossils, how to date them, and how to reconstruct extinct animals from them. Originally published as *Riversleigh: The Story of Animals in Ancient Rainforests of Inland Australia*, this award-winning book is being issued for the first time in the United States.

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