



A Field Guide to Fantastical Beasts: An Atlas of Fabulous Creatures, Enchanted Beings, and Magical Monsters

Olento Salaperäinen

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A beautiful, illustrated guide to the most magical creatures of legend and myth.

Fairies, demons, four-legged fiends, and, of course, zombies: the world is filled with fantastical beings, beautiful and scary. Come meet them in this magnificently illustrated menagerie, which includes many creatures made famous by popular fantasy and sci-fi film franchises. Take a detailed look at everything from goblins, pixies, and gnomes to vampires and dragons, and discover their origins in literature, folklore, and ancient history.

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From Reader Review A Field Guide to Fantastical Beasts: An Atlas of Fabulous Creatures, Enchanted Beings, and Magical Monsters for online ebook

Hailey Thompson says

I greatly enjoyed this book. A lot of work went into it, finding the origin stories for each fantastic beast, who all believes in them and telling all the locations where they are found.

The book talks a bit about Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings, where the ideas for creatures/characters come from and where they got character names.

I'd recommend this book if you like mythology and/or like learning about these kind of beasts.

Brannigan says

Previously published at TheQwillery.com

Oleno Salaperäinen's A Field Guide To Fantastical Beasts is the perfect book to take with you on a fairy hunt into the woods. Salaperäinen groups the beasts by category: Fairies & and Little People, Demons & The Undead, Water Creatures, Hybrid Beasts, Humanoid Creatures and then The Sacred & The Divine; with about seven to ten creatures listed alphabetical in each of those subcategories.

Each beast has one to two pages of information about it with an illustration. Salaperäinen tells us where the beast originates from and some interesting tidbits from history. One that I found interesting for example is Gremlins weren't created until World War I. They gave pilots a lot of trouble, since the Gremlins like to eat and destroy engines and machinery. Salaperäinen also includes information about each beast and how they interact with pop culture. There's a great reference of Michael J. Fox's Teen Wolf in the Werewolf entry.

The art in the book is wonderfully folky and gives the book its very own characters. Salaperäinen also added a glossary, index and bibliography in the back in case you want to go deeper into the subject.

One of the weaknesses of the book is its limited scope of beasts. As a fan of all things mythical and fantastical, I want to learn about new creatures. I would be surprised if the everyday non-fantasy fan hasn't heard of each of the beasts. I will say that even though the entries are small they do pack a big punch of information.

A Field Guide To Fantastical Beasts is the perfect bestiary for young adults or people new to the subject. The only warning a parent or reader needs to be aware of is there is a subcategory dealing with Demons and the Undead, so depending on your own personal beliefs you may want to steer clear. Otherwise, I would feel comfortable suggesting this to Tweens and Adults.

Fantasy Literature says

4 stars from Bill, read the full review at FANTASY LITERATURE

Disclaimer: just so you know, some of the books we review are received free from publishers

A Field Guide to Fantastical Beasts, by Olento Salaperäinen, is a nice if basic introduction to 50 mythological/supernatural creatures, one suitable more for younger readers than older ones (say, high school or up) due to its relatively brief entries and often familiar subject matter.

The guide is encyclopedic in form, dividing the creatures into six basic groups: Fairies and Little People, Demons and the Undead, Water Creatures, Hybrid Beasts, Humanoid Creatures, and The Sacred and the Divine. The groups themselves are organized alphabetically, with each having between 7-10 creatures and 2-4 pages of description devoted to each creature. Each section also has a small sidebar that usually offers up a modern day (and often modern media) use of the creatures, such as how zombies were used in Shaun of the Dead, vampires in Twilight, and ogres in Shrek. A Field Guide to Fantastical Beasts is also lavishly illustrated, with a full-page illustration every other page. Finally, Salaperäinen includes a glossary, bibliography, and index.

Most of the fantastical beasts will be familiar to readers as all the old favorites are here, drawn mostly from Greek, British, and Norse mythologies and the classic monster movies (though Salaperäinen, of course, gives their more ancient antecedents). And so we have gorgons, sirens, griffins and centaurs; dwarves, elves, giants, and trolls; ghosts, mummies, vampires and zombies, to name a few. Non-western cultures do appear throughout, if in fewer numbers. And so we have the Chinese Quilin (head of a lion, body of a deer, a horse's hooves, an ox's tail, and the scales of a fish), the Egyptian Sphinx, the Tibetan Yeti, the Australian Aborigine's Rainbow Serpent, and a few others. Dragons appear, in both their western and eastern forms....**4 stars from Bill, read the full review at FANTASY LITERATURE**

K.D. Bissonette says

Wonderful and informative book!

Ami says

My ten-year-old and I enjoyed reading an entry or two each night together. I especially liked the origins and history, information from the different cultures and regions that had stories about each creature, and the modern culture and pop culture depictions and references (Rowling, Tolkien, Dahl...)

Loren Johnson says

Absolutely loved this! Read it bit by bit every night before bed, and it was a delight! Definitely worth a read for anyone who is interested in mythology! Extensive research has gone into the writing of it and the pictures are stunning. I enjoyed every minute.

Heidi says

This review was originally posted to This Is My Bookshelf

Don't you love it when a book comes from nowhere and surprises you?

I'd never seen this before, but when I place an order with The Book People I had the option of picking a free gift and thought I'd give this a go.

As the blurb states, this is a guide to all sorts of creatures. It covers a wide range of cultures and religions, world wide stories and local legends. For each, we discover the creatures origin and history along with examples from pop culture. All this is accompanied by beautiful illustrations.

If you're interested in folk lore, world culture or even just a fantasy fan I'd highly recommend this. It's something I know I'll just keep going back to.

All Things Urban Fantasy says

All Things Urban Fantasy

A Field Guide to Fantastical Beasts: An Atlas of Fabulous Creatures, Enchanted Beings, and Magical Monsters is a wonderfully illustrated book filled with descriptions of mostly familiar mythical creatures. Most of creatures are Northern and Western European save for a small handful of monsters. I would have preferred a bit more variety from other areas like Africa, Asia, and even Eastern Europe since most of the creatures in this book are so very familiar in literature and pop culture already.

As I continued reading the descriptions I came to the realization that this book might be for a younger audience not as familiar with these creatures which would fit with the slightly short descriptions [a page or two per creature]. Being nerdy about mythology and folklore, I wanted a deeper analysis. While slightly disappointing the descriptions were a nice refresher with some interesting facts I didn't know before and the illustrations were pretty adorable too.

I think it is a great book for young school aged kids to get them interested in myths and folklore. The writing is pretty simple and in no way talks down to the reader.

Stephanie says

So much fun! Perfect book to read for my Care of Magical Creatures OWL!

Kristina says

Geared toward younger readers or maybe adults who haven't read much fantasy, but I did learn a few new things. I particularly liked how it included the history of most of the creatures and how they have evolved over time. There were many entries that I wished were longer.

Hannah says

A nice place to start if you aren't too familiar with fairytale/mythological/etc. creatures. Features illustrations on each creature & pop culture tie ins. The illustrations are nice and helpful for the particularly strange beasts that are hard to imagine (i.e. the Qilin), but I wasn't a fan of the pop culture bits, mainly because they sometimes contained spoilers & inaccurate information.
