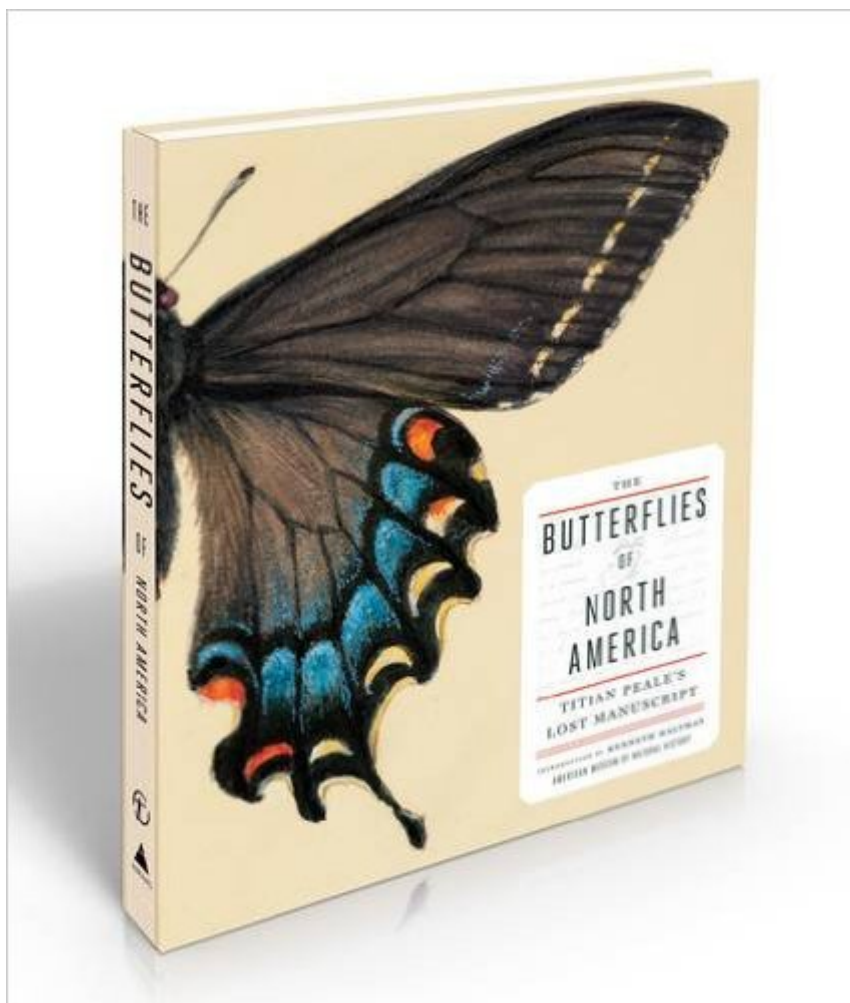


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The Butterflies Of North America: Titian Peale's Lost Manuscript



Synopsis

The American artist and naturalist Titian Ramsay Peale II (1799–1885) had a passion for butterflies, and throughout his long life he wrote and illustrated an ambitious and comprehensive manuscript. The book, along with a companion volume on caterpillars, was never published, and it resides today in the Rare Book Collection of the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Now Peale's color plates, lovingly prepared for the printer by the artist more than 100 years ago, will be published for the first time in this beautiful volume. At last, Peale's life work, equivalent in scope and beauty to Audubon's Birds of North America, will be available to a wide audience. The book includes a foreword by Ellen V. Futter and text by Kenneth Haltman and David A. Grimaldi that describes the art and science Peale brought to his extraordinary work. Also see: The Butterflies of Titian Ramsay Peale Notecards (978-1-4197-1806-9), The Butterflies of Titian Ramsay Peale Journal (978-1-4197-1805-2), and The Butterflies of Titian Ramsay Peale 2016 Wall Calendar (978-1-4197-1754-3)

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

On 25 August the New York Times devoted more than half a page in its Tuesday "Science Times" to heralding the imminent release of "The Butterflies of North America: Titian Peale's Lost Manuscript." That review was positive and noted that the volume was "mainly an art volume." Even so, the illustrated review could not adequately convey what a very extraordinary book the American Museum of Natural History, working with the top-flight art publisher Abrams, has offered us at a quite reasonable price. The book's several hundred color illustrations--lost to public view for 130

years after the death of Peale--are the star of the book. Also attractive are roughly a dozen page reproductions of Peale's field notebooks and the two pages of a "Prospectus" he produced, unsuccessfully it should be noted, to sell his study of the butterflies. Lifting the book beyond a simply beautiful catalogue of butterfly and caterpillar paintings is new material added by experts, chief among them Kenneth Haltman, who provided an excellent 13-page introduction. This essay covers a history of Peale's butterfly study and a biography of the artist, as well as an assessment of his work as a naturalist and the scientific quality of the butterfly illustrations. The "Butterflies of North America" will appeal in the first instance to lovers of butterflies and caterpillars. But it offers as well valuable information regarding the plants on which the insects feed, and it should inspire all who rejoice in the natural world.

high quality printed, on matt paper. plates are sharp. colours are vivid, so closer as possible to the original paintings. didn't like the fragile unbound spine of book. the American Museum of Natural History, is to be congratulated for sharing this masterpiece with us. hopefully more gems from their unique library of illustrated works will follow.

I don't know how wide the appeal of this book will be. The artist was a member of a quite remarkable American family of artists. This manuscript was not lost, a better word would be ignored, but it was in museum care most of the time from when the intended original publication aborted. This is really two manuscripts, because this book includes one on caterpillars. People interested in the Peale family, in American natural history illustration or in butterflies and moths would likely be interested. There is an excellent preface, but not a great deal of text otherwise. The insects are by no means all American; a number range--says the notes--into Cuba, Mexico and elsewhere. The detail is excellent in two ways. One, the original graphics were extraordinary and two, this volume presents them very well. One warning: the original pages have developed brown spots and other blemishes that come with time and the materials then used, and these are shown in this book on many of the pages; this will look like some messy reader left fingerprints on the copy you read. Another detail that gives this volume a remarkably personal touch is the inclusion of some of Peale's field note with his comments. The drawings are often in pencil next to the painted materials. These generally show the caterpillar, chrysalis, male and female adults and posed with a plant the insects feed on. All are nicely drawn.

I love this beautiful work that should be on the shelf of anyone who loves nature, in general, and

butterflies, in particular. My copy arrived with some slight damage as back book binding was pulling loose from the book.

This 3 star review is the result of an average between a top ranking 5 star for content, and a low ranking for binding. Its an expensive book, and the content is completely wonderful. I am so glad to have these images. However, I was shocked at the nature of the binding. How shocked-I returned it the first time because I thought there was some factory error, but the replacement book was put together the same way. The signatures of the book (the groups of pages) are exposed in the binding, that is, there is no book spine covering. The front cover of the book wants to pull free of the endpapers, and the raised bands across the exposed spine look like bands of glue. Everyone that has seen this has remarked on this-mostly, "what happened to the binding?" I don't think the binding is going to hold up to much handling, so be very careful with this. I can't tell if the signatures are stitched, but I can see that the edges are glued on the very edge, another indicator they are going to separate easily with handling. The content on the other hand...is wonderful. Expensive book, disappointing binding. The plates are beautiful, and so interesting to see this wide range of diversity that once was present-fascinating to see the species that are now thought to be extinct, and to recognize so many that are still with us.

Wonderful book Interesting binding that lets the book lie flat. Unusual in mass produced books. the content is also well done. Great reproductions with just enough explanatory text to supplement.

A beautiful book. All the plates are labeled. Each plate has the three stages of the butterfly and on the plants they prefer. This is a manuscript painted by an artist but areal scientific base. I will treasure it.

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