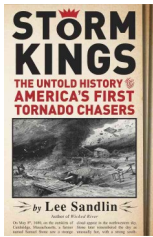


Information, Answers & Reviews

# America's First Tornado Scientists and What They Taught Us



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I was afraid this would be another macho book about reckless men roaming the plains chasing tornadoes during storm season. Instead it turned out to be a wonderful compendium of tornado lore through the centuries. Also included are biographies of some of our most important weather scientists.

*Storm Kings* begins with a description of how during the 1600s New England settlers called any phenomenon that happened in the sky meteors including: meteors (of course), lightning, thunder, rainbows, comets, clouds in the shape of hands and faces, etc. Although the science behind tornadoes was not understood and barely documented then, many colonists recognized that the weather in America was much more violent than in their home countries.

When a tornado swooped down near Cambridge, MA in 1680, two farming families were shocked when one lost a servant and another a barn during the storm. They were so frightened by this event that one wrote to Increase Mather (the father of Cotton) asking about it. Increase, who was a self-educated weather expert, had no answers so he wrote to a scientific association in Europe. No one replied to his inquiry, but Benjamin Franklin found this letter seventy years later when he became interested in the study of weather and electricity. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 18, 2013

[Storm Kings: The Untold History of America's First Tornado Chasers](#)

[Science](#)

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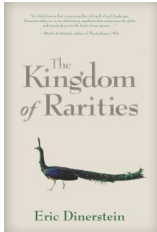
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## The Kingdom of Rarities



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In another life, I would love to become a wildlife biologist; it combines things I loves such as working with animals, walking, observing deeply, and travel. This book does all of the above plus makes you more curious about the flora and fauna around us. Why are robins common and not Kirtland's warblers? Why are deer abundant and not jaguars? Eric Dinerstein, the author, started his scientific career studying tigers and later rhinoceroses. He is now Chief Scientist at the World Wildlife Fund. In *The Kingdom of Rarities*, he travels to many continents to explore the rare creatures and plants living there.

One of the places he and his scientific team visit is Irian Jaya, a remote island on the Indonesian archipelago. It combines two aspects of places that often give homes to rare creatures: remoteness, and being situated on an island. Another factor that makes Irian Jaya home to rarities is its geology; its steep mountains and gorges serve as barriers to invasive species which have become common on many other islands. The description of Dinerstein's flight to this research spot is compelling; it was incredibly risky just to land a plane there. But well worth it because the scientists found many rare creatures quite close to them and not shy at all with humans. The scientists were amazed by how many species divided their habitats vertically.

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Posted by Dory L. on July 11, 2013

[The Kingdom of Rarities](#)

[Science & Nature](#)

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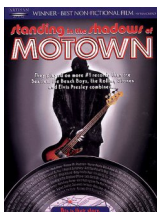
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## Always Heard, Never Known



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This is the story of a band that everyone has heard and yet most people don't even know their name. They played on more hit records than Elvis, than The Beach Boys, than The Rolling Stones or the Beatles combined. They were responsible for the driving beat of the Motown hit factory. The riffs you remember to so many songs were arranged and performed by them; yet if I mentioned some of their names, James Jamerson, Richard Allen, Joe Messina, to name a few there would be no flash of recognition in your mind. [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on July 10, 2013

[Standing in the Shadows of Motown](#)

[Rock Music](#)

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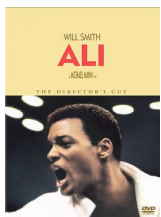
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[Sights and Sounds](#)

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## Ali



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I visited the [Muhammad Ali Center](#) in Louisville this past weekend, so it naturally occurred to me to watch [Ali](#) again afterwards. While the film is noticeably uneven as a bio-pic, it does cover the most notable part of Ali's boxing career from his first fight with [Sonny Liston](#) to his "[Rumble in the Jungle](#)" with [George Foreman](#). The film also delves into his [relationship with The Nation of Islam](#), his fight against being [drafted](#) into the Vietnam War, his appearances on television with [Howard Cosell](#), and so on. [Read more](#)

Posted by Brandon R. on July 9, 2013

[Sights and Sounds](#)

[Information, Answers & Reviews](#)

[Brandon R.'s blog](#)[Log in](#) to post comments

## Madame Tussaud and Read Alikes



[Madame Tussaud](#) is a historical fiction book by Michelle Moran based on the real Marie

Tussaud, a sculptress and museum owner in Paris. Apprenticed by her uncle, Marie learns the art of wax sculpting amid the politics, court intrigue, and massacres leading up to and during the French Revolution. Marie needs the museum to be profitable, but is often torn by personal loyalties and her desire for success. It was really refreshing to read a historical book with a strong female character who does more than sit around in fancy dresses and flirt with famous men. With a little digging, I uncovered a few more books that fit this description - historical fiction with strong women who earn income, love to learn, and are passionate about their careers!

[Read more](#)

Posted by sbowman on July 9, 2013

[Historical](#)

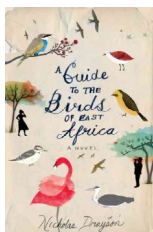
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## A Guide to the Birds of East Africa



[view in catalog](#)

Every Tuesday at 8:30 a.m., a group of ardent birders meets at the Nairobi Museum to search for some avian wildlife together. Mr. Malik, a retired businessman and owner of the Jolly Man Manufacturing Club, squeezes bird-watching into his schedule though he does have other commitments.

The leader of the group is the beautiful and charming widow, Rose Mbikwa, who came to Africa from England and never left to her parents' great consternation. Her husband was arrested for political activity and later died in a mysterious light plane accident.

On this day, Rose announces that she is leaving for England for an eye operation. Also a new birder has joined the group, an old school acquaintance of Mr. Malik's from long-ago. Harry Kahn keeps calling Malik by old nicknames, ones Malik did not like in the old days and likes even less now. Complicating the plot--both really like Rose. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 8, 2013

[A Guide to the Birds of East Africa](#)

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