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The Man-eaters Of Tsavo



Synopsis

THE MAN-EATERS OF TSAVO is a great book recounting the story of a pair of man-eating predator lions that the author and his team killed, known as the Tsavo Man-eaters. Following the death of the lions, the book tells many stories concerning local wildlife (including other lions), local tribes, the discovery of the man-eaters' cave, and various hunting expeditions. There is also good advice to sports-men visiting Africa. Several publications about and studies of the man-eating lions of Tsavo have been inspired by Patterson's account. The book has been adapted to film three times - a monochrome British film of the 1950's, a 1952 3-D film titled Bwana Devil, and a 1996 color version called The Ghost and the Darkness, where Val Kilmer played the daring engineer who hunts down the lions of Tsavo.

Book Information

Paperback: 120 pages

Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (April 26, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 146107830X

ISBN-13: 978-1461078302

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars See all reviews (233 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,174,472 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Africa #95 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Cats, Lions & Tigers #1133 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Mammals

Customer Reviews

This is a fascinating book. The writer, Col. J.H. Patterson, was an engineer sent to Africa to work on the "Lunatic Express", a stretch of rail that spanned Africa. Several obstacles confronted him, not the last of which was a pair of mane-less lions that went on a man-eating spree that lightened the coolie labor force by about 30 workers and an unrecorded number of African workers. Several things become apparent as one reads this work: first, the unbelievable hubris of the British Empire, personified in the person of Patterson. By the end of the book, I was won over by this clearly Victorian man, who without any specific training simply sorted out whatever problem came his way, including the hunting and killing of the two lions. This feat in itself required a staggering amount of

courage and determination. This book is a glimpse into the soul, both good and bad, of the Empire on which the sun never set: Patterson was incredibly brave, smart, maybe even noble - and never once saw a native African as anything other than faithful or amusing.

The Man-Eaters of Tsavo by J. H. Patterson is available in several editions. It's sort of confusing which one to buy. Here are some notes on each edition:

The Man-Eaters of Tsavo (Peter Capstick Library Series). Publisher: St. Martins Press, 1985. 384 pages. When The Man-Eaters of Tsavo was originally published in 1907, it contained a wealth of photos and a map. Photos appeared on every two to three pages. These photos showed many local scenes, as well as the infamous lions. These photos are very valuable for establishing a sense of place that words alone can't do. Beware of inexpensive reprints that omit all the photos and the map. The quality of the photo reproductions is not great in the Capstick Library edition. But these are the best looking photos in any edition currently available. This edition is virtually identical to the original book. The page sequence is the same, with only the addition of some new preface pages. This is the book to buy; however, for some strange reason it's hard to find on . If you search for "tsavo", you'll find used copies of this book at horribly inflated prices. But this book is still in print. Search for "tsavo capstick" and you'll find it--along with very reasonably priced used copies (under \$10).

Man Eaters Of Tsavo [Hardcover]. Publisher: St. Martins Press, 1985. 384 pages. If you search for "tsavo" on , this is the hardcover edition of this book that you'll find. You'll likely see no trace of the Capstick edition. Well, it's the same book. Unfortunately, "Man Eaters of Tsavo [Hardcover]" is being sold like it's a collector's item, at inflated prices. Don't fall for this. Get the Capstick Library book listed above.

The Man-eaters of Tsavo. Publisher: SMK Books, 2009. 152 pages. If all you want is the text, if you don't care about seeing approximately 100 photographs, if you don't want a map, then this is a reasonably priced alternative. All the text from the original edition is compressed onto 152 pages, in a tiny font. The map and all photos have been removed. You can get a used hardcover copy of the Capstick Library book for only \$2 to \$3 more than the SMK book, so I would find it hard to justify buying the SMK edition.

The Man-Eaters of Tsavo: And Other East African Adventures (Classic Reprint). Publisher: Forgotten Books, 2010. 360 pages. This is a duplicate of the original book. A library copy was pulled and photographed page by page. The reproductions of the photographs from the original book are horribly muddy--and virtually worthless. Strangely, if you search for "tsavo" on , this book seems to be a reasonably priced alternative. So many people have apparently purchased this edition. Don't be fooled. Look for the Capstick Library book instead, which only costs a few dollars more and has better reproduction of the photos (as well as a few extra pages in the

preface). *The Lions of Tsavo: Exploring the Legacy of Africa's Notorious Man-Eaters* by Bruce D. Patterson This is a different Patterson entirely. And thus a different book. Bruce Patterson is a scientist who recently studied the lions of Tsavo, while J. H. Patterson is the hunter who shot the infamous Tsavo lions. The scientist's book is good. But you should be aware that this isn't the tale told by the hunter. *Ghosts of Tsavo : Stalking the Mystery Lions of East Africa* by Philip Caputo This a contemporary tale of a journalist following in J.H. Patterson's steps and investigating the lions of Tsavo. This is a good book. The first chapter is incredible as he retells the story of the lions that killed a mind-boggling number of railroad workers (possibly over 120 people died). The subsequent chapters are of a more personal nature as Caputo journeys to Africa and looks for the maneless Tsavo lions. I hope this helps!

I have been fascinated with lions for years, so when the movie 'The Ghost and the Darkness' came out, I had to see it. I had heard brief accounts of this story before, and found the movie most fascinating. However, the book told an even more interesting tale than the movie. In my opinion, if the account in the book had been faithfully followed in the film, it would have been even more exciting! Besides the Tsavo man-eaters story, there are other hair-raising stories about man-eating lions in the book. This book is basically a reprint of the 1907 edition with an excellent preface added. The preface goes into depth about the life of Colonel J.H. Patterson-- a most remarkable man. He went on to other notable adventures in his life after this incident.

This book, first published in 1907, tells the story of the predations of two huge lions on the workers who were constructing a railway from the East coast of Africa to the then new settlement of Nairobi. These killed and devoured 130 or so people, Indian workers, native Africans and they also dined on a number of Europeans as well. The author is a true Victorian and a man of his times who writes of his ordeal very well and without the nauseating political correctness of today. The story of his hunt and the building of the railroad is a great read. It is edited by Peter Capstick, a man who was arguably one of the last of the Great White Hunters. Much to the author's credit he does not belittle or demean the Indians or Africans in any way. He had a camera and took many remarkable photos and eventually became a naturalist of some repute. This book was also the inspiration for the movie *Ghost and the Darkness* which I thought was also quite good. The two lions he killed are in a museum in Chicago. For the Africa scholar who wants a bit of a different insight into Africa this is a fine addition to one's library.

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