

Paleontology and Geology of Laetoli: Human Evolution in Context: Volume 2: Fossil Hominins and the Associated Fauna

Terry Harrison (ed.)

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This book is the second of two volumes presenting paleontological and geological data gathered from Laetoli and associated localities on the Eyasi Plateau in Northern Tanzania during field work performed from 1998 to 2005. This volume covers the hominin and other faunal remains that have been recovered. Harrison introduces the studies in Chapter 1, but for a more in-depth look at the history of excavations at Laetoli or geology of Laetoli, researchers will need Volume 1 (Harrison 2011).

The fossils are presented in chapters devoted to a class, order, family, species or specimen. Chapter 2 covers rodents, and Denys has performed an extensive analysis with comparison to specimens from six different museum reference collections. Chapter 3 presents an analysis of changes in the morphology of the lower third premolar of *Serengetilagus praecapensis*, by comparing remains recovered from the Upper Ndolanya and Upper Laetolil Beds. Chapter 4 contains an in-depth description of Macrocelidea fossils from the Upper Laetolil Beds.

The editor covers the primate fossils of Laetoli in three chapters, Galagidae (Chapter 5), Cercopithecidae (Chapter 6) and Hominins (Chapter 7). Harrison has presented evidence that the galagid material from Laetoli is from a species sufficiently distinct from extant members of Galagidae to be placed in its own genus—*Laetolia* (this volume). Of special note for paleoanthropologists, Harrison has compiled a comprehensive table listing the hominin

fossil specimens that have been recovered at Laetoli since 1935, along with their stratigraphic position. There is an in-depth presentation of the newly recovered hominin materials as well. The editor also examines Orycteropodidae, the Laetoli aardvark in Chapter 10 and Tortoises in Chapter 17.

Chapter 8 covers the Carnivora specimens in lovely detail. Proboscidea are examined in Chapter 9, and Perissodactyla specimens are discussed in Chapter 11 (Rhinocerotidae) and Chapter 12 (Equidae). Artiodactyla fossils are examined in Chapter 13 (Suidae), Chapter 14 (Giraffidae), and Chapter 15 (Bovidae). Amphibia and Squamata are covered in Chapter 17, and Aves in Chapter 18. Insecta are discussed in Chapter 19 (Beetles), Chapter 20 (Lepidoptera), and Chapter 21 (Termites). Last but not least, Chapter 22 presents Laetoli's Gastropoda specimens.

A quite commendable amount of work and detail has gone into all of the research presented in this volume. It is a must-have for any university library supporting paleontological researchers, and, along with Volume 1, provides important data for paleoanthropologists as well.

REFERENCES

- Harrison, T. (ed.). 2011. *Paleontology and Geology of Laetoli: Human Evolution in Context. Volume 1: Geology, Geochronology, Paleoecology and Paleoenvironment*, New York, Springer.