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Marshall Cavendish

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From School Library Journal Grade 5-8 Complementing the broader but more simply written *Wildlife and Plants of the World* (Marshall Cavendish, 1998), this set offers researchers close looks at 84 types of living things, from viruses and giant centipedes to humans and gray whales. The emphasis is on physical structures and systems. Each entry opens with a discussion of its subject's taxonomy and goes on to examine external anatomy and then, separately, each major internal system. In addition, 10 longer general articles on systems or cell biology are embedded in the alphabetically arranged contents. The final volume cumulates the individual volume indexes, adding six specialized indexes along with lists of further resources, plus short overview articles on the taxonomic groupings and the history of anatomical study. Along with frequent side boxes, including some dubbed "Connections" that have inter-volume cross-references, each entry is well-stocked with both sharply reproduced color photos and labeled, accurately detailed art. Though the coverage isn't exactly evenhanded, with just 10 articles devoted to plants or fungi and 30 to mammals alone, this set makes a useful choice for collections supporting strong science curricula as a more focused alternative to the 24-volume *International Wildlife Encyclopedia* (Marshall Cavendish, 2002). John Peters, New York Public Library Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist This set offers an introduction to the external and internal anatomies of 84 organisms. Included are many different life-forms, such as animals, plants, viruses, bacteria, and fungi, although the focus is on mammals. Each volume begins with a comprehensive table of contents. In addition, the first volume offers a thematic outline of the contents that arranges the articles into nine major categories. Articles appear alphabetically by common name for the species being described and average 10 pages in length. The articles begin by detailing the taxonomy of the particular species or group of species. This information is also presented visually, usually in the form of a classification or family tree. Next, a "Featured Systems" box gives a brief outline of the article. Detailed information is then presented on the external anatomy and body systems of the organism, including the skeletal, muscular, nervous, circulatory and respiratory, digestive and excretory, and reproductive systems. Ten overview articles cover various body systems, cell biology, and genetics. Each article concludes with a brief list of resources that offers both book titles and Web sites for more information. The articles are complemented by information boxes that highlight specific topics, such as genetics and evolution. Some articles also offer a "Connections" box that directs readers to other entries in the set. For example, Ant refers the reader to Honeybee in order to compare the stingers of the two. The strength of this set is in its illustrations. More than 2,000 colorful drawings bring the subject to life. All of the illustrations include annotations that nicely complement the text. In addition, the many systems drawings are clearly labeled. The layout also lends itself to browsing for the reader with only a general interest. Volume 11 offers a comprehensive index along with indexes of behaviors, habitats, and ecology; biological classification; biological systems; geographical place-names; microbiology, cell biology, and genetics; and scientific names. Articles on the diversity of life and comparative anatomy are also found in volume 11, as are a glossary and a list of resources that includes Internet sites, books, and journals. This set would be an asset in public and school libraries. Although the illustrations may draw younger students, the somewhat technical text makes the set more suitable for the upper level of the targeted audience of middle- and high-schoolers. Maren Ostergard Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved