



# Birds and Beasts of Ancient Latin America

*Elizabeth P. Benson*

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## **Birds and Beasts of Ancient Latin America** Elizabeth P. Benson

Elizabeth P. Benson provides an engaging overview of the depiction of animals in the pre-Columbian art of Latin America. Drawing on an extensive set of images (many of them previously unpublished) from the collections of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and the Florida Museum of Natural History, she examines the practical, ritualistic, and mythic importance of animals in pre-Columbian life as well as the meanings that animals still have for the modern descendants of those indigenous peoples. Conveniently arranged by animal groups and beautifully illustrated, Benson's survey encompasses all artistic media and spans the pre-Columbian cultures of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Providing information on animals and the beliefs surrounding them, the cultural contexts of their depiction, and the cultures to which they were important, *Birds and Beasts of Ancient Latin America* will appeal to archaeologists, cultural historians, and anthropologists; to anyone interested in pre-Columbian art and mythology; and to modern-day bird and animal lovers.

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