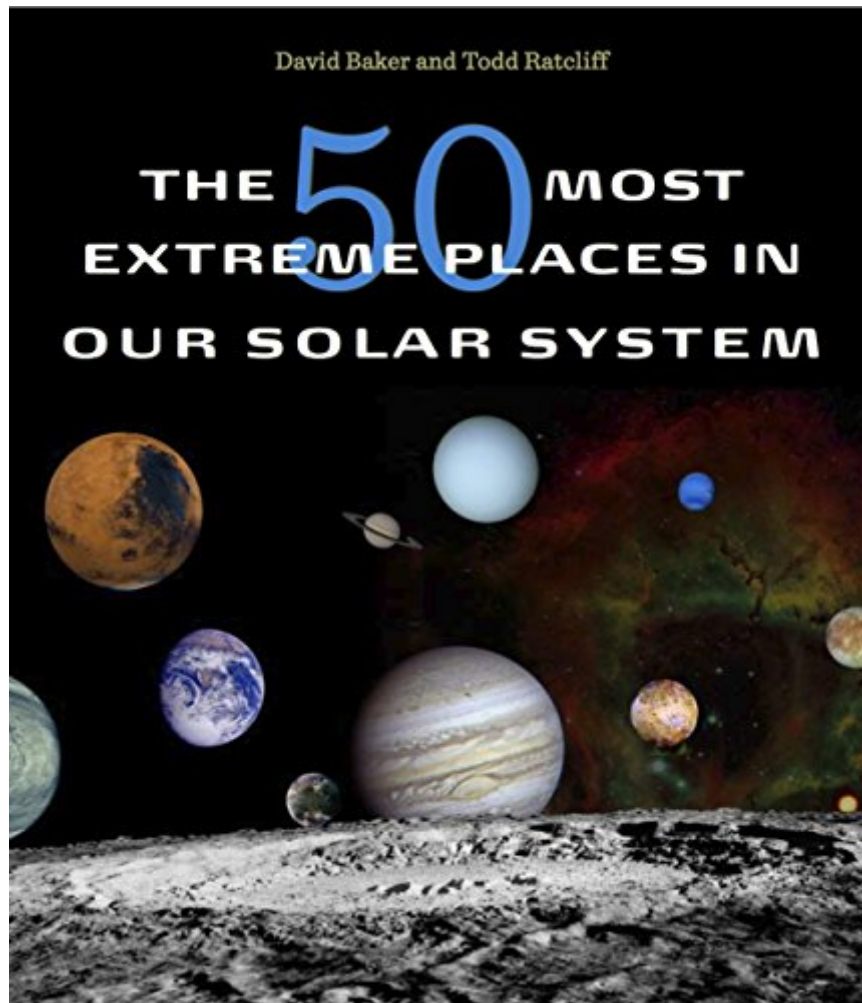




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The 50 Most Extreme Places In Our Solar System



Synopsis

The extreme events that we hear about daily—hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions—are extreme in purely human terms, in the devastation they do. But this book moves our understanding of the extreme into extraterrestrial dimensions and gives us an awe-inspiring sense of what our solar system at its utmost can do. Martian dust devils taller than Mount Everest. A hurricane that lasts over 340 years. Volcanoes with “lava” colder than Antarctica. Hail made of diamonds. Here, as the authors say, the “WOW” factor is restored to our understanding of scientific discovery, as we witness the grandeur and the weirdness that inspire researchers to dig deeper and go ever farther into the mysteries of the universe. The 50 Most Extreme Places in Our Solar System combines a fascination with natural disasters and the mesmerizing allure of outer space to take readers on a journey that will forever change the way they view our solar system. Full of dazzling photographs from NASA’s most recent observations, this book explores extreme regions on Earth and beyond—giant turbulent storms, explosive volcanoes, and the possibility of life surviving in harsh conditions. More than a collection of facts, the book conveys the dynamism of science as a process of exploration and discovery. As they amuse and entertain, David Baker and Todd Ratcliff, two experts in planetary science, highlight recent developments and unresolved mysteries and strive, at every turn, to answer that important scientific question: “Why?”

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The 50 most extreme places in the solar system copyright by Harvard University , this book is an example of so many modern science books which contain inaccurate information and are poorly proofread for example on page number 144 we read , "a single lightning bolt unleashes enough electrical energy to power the entire United States for a year " I thought this is impossible, and after doing a small amount of research on the Internet it turns out a single lightning bolt on the average could power 56 houses for one day so how could a book copyrighted by Harvard make such a glaring error ? I've come across the same thing and many so-called science books that are published these days..... to these people actually read to the books they write, or are they outsourced for proofreading?

I was skeptical that I would enjoy this book, but it was recommended to me by a friend and I decided to give it a try. Needless to say, I'm glad I did. The text is informal, but informative -- it feels like your rocket-scientist Uncle is explaining complex facts and ideas to you in layman's terms. I've always loved looking up at the night sky, but I've never really taken an interest in planetary science. This book went a long way in helping me understand just how complex and interesting the Solar System really is. While the book does cover the "50 most extreme places" in the Solar System, it's structured more like a collection of short 2-6 page essays covering specific topics than a 'Top 10' list. All the sections are packed with interesting trivia [e.g. winds on Neptune can reach 1,000 miles per hour, Mercury has an average temperature of 336 degrees but has ice deposits, etc]. I think anyone age 10+ would find the book interesting, and the 10-and-under crowd will definitely enjoy the pictures. Some sections are more complex than others, so there's enough to keep both the highly-knowledgeable and casual reader entertained. All the sections of the book are self-contained, so you can read the book cover-to-cover or pick out an individual topic and spend 5-10 minutes reading only that section. As other reviewers have noted, the images are absolutely terrific. The most interesting thing I discovered reading through this book is not how much we know about the Solar System, but how much we don't know about it. The book includes a glossary of terms in the back as well as a bibliography, if you're serious about learning some real planetary science. My only real criticism of the book is that I wish it were physically bigger, so they could have made the pictures larger. That being said, the book fits nicely on a coffee table and makes for fun conversation when someone reads a chapter like "Stinkiest Place -- The Rotten Egg of Io". If you're the kind of person

who tends to look at the stars and wonder what's going on up there, this book is for you.

Our solar system is vast, complex and surprising. This book is a great way to learn about it. The volume includes a number of photos and illustrations. Readers learn of the sometimes planet-wide dust storms on Mars, a world containing a mountain that dwarfs Everest. They explore the icy rings of Saturn, the numerous moons of the outer planets, the enormous thermonuclear furnace that is our sun, the mystery of comets and asteroids, the environment at the distance edges of our solar system. Some of the chapters deal with earth and help us understand the uniqueness of our planet, where countless forms of life not only exist but thrive. The chapters are short and sometimes it feels like the authors have just gotten started when that section suddenly ends and it's off to a different topic. It would have been good to explore some of these subjects in more detail. On occasion the writing has too much of a gee-whiz tone but otherwise the authors do a great job of communicating the wonders of planetary science at a layman's level. The book left me with the feeling that each planet, each moon is unique and each continually offers something new to discover.

Great book for both those just getting into astronomy and planetary science as well as those who are long time enthusiasts like myself. There are a lot of great pictures and diagrams that add depth and help the reader really get an understanding of the phenomena being described. The text is well-written, informative and often witty or just plain funny. While this can be easily digested by youngsters, there is enough scientific depth in each section to teach you something that you certainly didn't know. Personal favorite "extremes" were extreme impact craters, Jupiter's magnetosphere and Frankenmoon.

The photographs in this book are outstanding ! The topics presented are fascinating. This book provides an excellent overview of how vastly different the planets and other objects in our solar system are. I especially like the fact that each topic is only about 5 pages including illustrations. So there is enough explanation on each topic to provide an understanding, but not so much scientific jargon so the "layman" would get lost. (My six year old enjoys the book as well) The book is slightly smaller in size (not pages) than I would have liked since the photographs are so interesting. It would be great to have this available in an oversized book. I strongly recommend this book. It is an excellent value for the money !

I'm sorry, but I was disappointed in this book. If you keep up with science, especially planetary

science, at all, there's really not much in here that you don't already know. I'm really surprised that so far, I'm the only disenter here. I gave it three stars because it's well written, despite, or considering, the brevity. It's a great throne volume; nice little 4-5 page episodes to get you through the needed time. Most of the pictures are a little small for my taste. It's no coffee table book.

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