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THE LOST WORLD

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



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SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE



COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

PAN BOOKS LTD : LONDON

About this book



THE LOST WORLD, one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most famous novels, is the story of four men's expedition to a remote plateau in South America, cut off from the surrounding country by unscalable perpendicular cliffs. Here, in an area the size of the English county of Sussex, strange creatures long extinct in the outside world have survived from prehistoric times, including the huge pterodactyl, half bat, half bird; the reptile-headed iguanodon, forty feet high; the terrifying carnivorous dinosaur; and the horrible ape-men. The adventures of Professors Challenger and Summerlee, Lord John Roxton, and the journalist Malone are breathlessly exciting, and lead up to the climax of their return to London to confound their sceptical critics.

The idea for the tale was suggested to the author by the fossilized footprints of a prehistoric monster found near his home on the Sussex Downs; he then read Professor Ray Lankester's book on extinct animals. He took the name of Professor Challenger from the wooden ship on which Sir Charles Wyville Thomson (the zoology professor whose lectures he had attended when he was a medical student at Edinburgh University) had dredged the seas for new forms of animal life; but he gave Challenger the black beard and booming voice of another former Edinburgh professor. Conan Doyle enjoyed the character whom he thus created so much that he imitated him in real life, and, according to his biographer, Mr. John Dickson Carr, "made Challenger a completely uninhibited version of himself." *The Lost World*, first serialized in the *Strand* magazine, was an immediate success and was later filmed.

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