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Britannica Illustrated Science Library.

16v. 2008. 1,664p. illus. Encyclopaedia Britannica,
\$425 (978 159339 3823) 500. Gr. 5-9.

This set covers subjects pertaining to the fields of earth science, life science, and physical science. Each volume is devoted to a single topic and could serve as a stand-alone title. The topics covered by the individual volumes include *Birds*; *Energy and Movement*; *Evolution and Genetics*; *Fish and Amphibians*; *Invertebrates*; *Mammals*; *Plants, Algae, and Fungi*; *Reptiles and Dinosaurs*; *Rocks and Minerals*; *Space Exploration*; *Technology*; *Universe*; *Weather and Climate*; *Volcanoes and Earthquakes*; and two volumes on the human body.

The set is correlated to the fifth- through ninth-grade science curriculum. Each volume begins with a brief introduction to the subject matter. Following the introduction, the volumes are then generally arranged into four or five sections or chapters. For example, the chapters in *Fish and Amphibians* are "General Characteristics," "Life in the Water," "Diversity," "Amphibians," and "People, Fish, and Amphibians." Each chapter contains a series of double-page spreads on specific topics and includes a mini table of contents to guide users in navigation.

The layout of all of the volumes is vibrant and attractive. There are more than 1,000 colorful graphics appearing in each book, and large, vivid photographs and computer-generated images appear on every page. The stunning visual layout places this set in a class by itself and makes it especially appealing for casual browsers. All of the illustrations include annotations that nicely supplement the minimal text. In addition, the text is written for the less well-informed reader and should be accessible to all. Each of the volumes concludes with a glossary providing full definitions as well as a volume index. There is no comprehensive index.

This set would be a worthwhile addition to any science collection serving students in grades five through nine. It complements more traditional science encyclopedias such as the 13-volume *World Book Student Discovery Science Encyclopedia* (2005), which offers short entries (including biographies) in an A-Z format as well as more than 60 science experiments. -Maren Ostergard