

Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway

Kirk R. Johnson

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Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway (Fulcrum, 978-1-55591-451-6) takes Paleobotanist Kirk R. Johnson and mural artist Ray Troll all over the Rocky Mountain states. The hawk-eyed Curator of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science rarely misses a fossil, even from his truck moving at highway speed. This is one of a tiny handful of books equally useful to adults and twelve-year olds. It's a funny, stealthily informative account of wandering dinosaur mavens meeting others of their kind, and also discovering ancient creatures and plants never seen before.

Neither man is happy at the prospect of skipping meals. Wherever they are in their travels, no matter how fascinating the ex-cavation or the hike, Alaskan surrealist Troll sees that they unearth a decent diner. Johnson uses food metaphors to simplify ex-planations of geological principles. The nature of sedimentary layers compare aptly to a stack of pancakes or the curving lines of a rip-cut onion. Troll's drawings show extinct monsters in natural settings, but also inexplicably marauding through the modern world. Normally one would have to go to the Creation Museum to see the masters of two epochs living side by side.

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