



Taking Wing: Archaeopteryx and the Evolution of Bird Flight

By Pat Shipman

SIMON SCHUSTER, United States, 1999. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 232 x 151 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. Prologue: A Flight of FancyThere are seven specimens, and a feather. It is not much to document the origin of bird flight. Strictly speaking, these specimens are not the entire body of evidence. There are, of course, other fossil birds, not to mention bats, pterodactyls, and insects that have a few things to say about bird flight. And there are living creatures, mathematical models, and aerodynamic theories to help us understand this amazing evolutionary accomplishment. Nonetheless, these seven specimens are crucial. They lie at the heart of complex debates that began with the discovery of the first specimen of Archaeopteryx more than 130 years ago and continue up until today. These few, special fossils have served as the basis for brilliant deductions, wild speculations, penetrating analyses, and amazing insights. They have revealed -- and continue to reveal -- not only the pathway through which birds and bird flight may have originated, but they also tell us much about the strengths and weaknesses of science and scientists. Only seven precious specimens: as I have learned of them, I have been...



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