we read about how he drank foul water from a mud hole, we lick our lips. When we read of his discovery and helicopter flight to the hospital, our relief is genuine.

Even though I was quite familiar with the events, I was drawn into this book quickly. For those who have been in precarious situations and for armchair enthusiasts alike, it is easy to project oneself trapped in Aron's dilemma. His description of what he was thinking is perfectly juxtaposed against the deterioration of his body. We witness him become philosophical, but not spiritual, in a very honest rendition of what became important to him at the time. His love for his family may have been his salvation. We all know what happens in the end. The strength of this story is in the journey, not in the destination.

I read an interview with Aron in *Publishers Weekly* in which he describes how his editor helped him tone down what was deemed to be "over the top." His editor should have done more to help Aron de-emphasize his "background" noncritical adventures and quest for recreational adventure and achievement and instead focus on his qualities that are so brilliantly written as he describes his ordeal in the canyon. Midway through the volume, I felt that I was reading 2 books—1 describing the entrapment and 1 describing Aron's less profound adventures and misadventures. The 2 story lines are both stylistically and emotionally quite different and left me with 2 different impressions. Eventually, I became riveted to the entrapment and bypassed what at times seemed trivial and less worthy of so many pages. Furthermore, I found myself growing judgmental after Aron describes episodes of jumping into the Colorado River and nearly drowning, having a near-death experience in an avalanche, becoming trapped alone on a mountainside in a thunderstorm, and so on. It is as if he is building up to the "big one." These tales are the way that he explains his nature, but they speak more of luck than of character building. Having met the man in person, I feel more comfortable with my impression of him from that particular vantage point than from his penned self-analyses. If he were in any way reckless before, he does not seem reckless now.

This book is about more than making choices; it is about the will to live. Aron's hand was likely ruined the moment it was crushed. If he had been with a companion and if a rescue had been mounted as soon as possible, it still would have taken many hours to free him and, given the forces involved, the outcome would have likely been the same, perhaps without the dehydration and the postamputation infection. What makes this situation different is that he went through the experience alone and defied the odds that loomed against normal human physiology and endurance.

One of the tests of effective literature is how often you find yourself reminiscing or even imagining yourself to be a character. Weeks after reading Aron's book, I find myself aware of the taste of water and savoring the precious fluid as I gulp it down, rather than taking it for granted. When I cared for a teenager recently with a fracture dislocation of his ankle, I pictured the same injury in a solo hiker 50 miles into the backcountry. What would I do? My first-aid kit has been reconsidered and revised.

Aron informed me that he would like to pursue the career of an adventure writer. He certainly has written a very good first book. For him, there should be no issues of survivor's guilt. His actions cost him his hand but will undoubtedly save the hands, lives, and perhaps even souls of others. I wish him every success as an author, but for God's sake, Aron, be careful. I truly hope that he makes a swift transition to personal tales devoid of catastrophe or becomes like John Krakauer, who can spin a story from history and the experiences of others. Aron has already done us a huge service by sharing in a very straightforward manner what it is like to face near-certain death yet conquer your fears and move on. I will follow his career with great interest.

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Edible and Poisonous Mushrooms of the World

Ian R. Hall, Steven L. Stevenson, Peter K. Buchanan,
Wang Yun, and Anthony L. J. Cole
Portland, OR: Timber Press Inc, 2003
US \$39.95, 371 pages, hardcover

This book covers a broad spectrum of what is known about edible and poisonous mushrooms. However, not immediately apparent from the title is that this is an Australasian guide to mushrooms (expanded to include Asia). Although inclusive of a lot of information useful to a European or North American readership, this is not its area of major focus. Along these lines, it opens with a word of warning about confusing edible and poisonous mushrooms, written in English and translated into 5 Asian languages and, intriguingly, Maori.

The text is divided into sections that include cultivation, collecting, a listing of wild mushrooms, appendices, and a detailed bibliography. Each section is well written and extensively illustrated with color photos.

The purpose of the book is mostly educational. It seeks to serve as a reference text and not to be just a field guide. It includes a detailed presentation of many aspects of the mushroom, from commercial farming to

the harvesting of wild mushrooms, as well as poisoning, identification, photography, and even spore collection.

Overall, this is an excellent introduction for the mushroom enthusiast to expand his or her knowledge about mushrooms, and it is informative to anyone who has even a remote interest in this subject.

The book would be well placed as a “coffee-table book” thanks to its extensive collection of color prints. Equally, it makes a good reference text, affording the reader access to a broad range of topics related to mushrooms. One drawback is that it does not allow for easy identification of a particular mushroom. This is not aided by the fact that the explanation to the guide’s layout is found on page 121. This would have been better placed earlier in the book and probably could be better presented as a chart or table.

This book makes a fine addition to the library of anyone interested in mushrooms. Indeed, just browsing through it is a pleasure.

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Wolves of the World: Natural History and Conservation

Todd K. Fuller, PhD
Stillwater, MN: Voyageur Press Inc, 2004
US \$29.95, 132 pages, hardcover

In *Wolves of the World: Natural History and Conservation*, the author, a professor of Wilderness Ecology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, takes a scientific but easily understood approach to introducing wolves to the reader. This is a large-format or “coffee-table” book combining text with over 50 full-page color photographs by a variety of well-known nature photographers.

The beginning chapters are dedicated to the natural history and origins of wolves. Subjects include the taxonomy, morphology, and origin of these animals. This section describes the earliest fossil records of wolves, their physical appearance, and their dramatically changing distribution throughout the world.

The next section explores the behavior and intelligence of wolves. Chapters dedicated to how they communicate, interact with the environment, and what they eat give the reader a better understanding of their complex social structure. The section describes how wolves live and hunt in well-structured social groups. In addition, the chapter about how wolves communicate highlights their intelligence. For example, it is estimated that 6-week-old pups already use 11 different vocal signals.

The final chapters focus on the interaction between wolves and human beings. Wolves are on a short list of species that have a comparable ability to evoke a wide range of emotional response in human beings. To many of us, the wolf is the ultimate symbol of wilderness and freedom. In contrast, to many farmers, ranchers, and hunters, the wolf represents the ultimate threat to livestock and game.

The book describes some of the conservation efforts underway to save wolves. Included is a historical perspective of wolf populations throughout the world that is important to understanding the plight of wolves today. In North America, one of the most successful conservation programs is in Yellowstone National Park. After opening in 1872, the park’s policy of “predator control” had completely eliminated wolves by 1926. After their reintroduction in 1995 and 1996, wolves have flourished in Yellowstone National Park, and today Yellowstone serves as the premier viewing area for wolves in North America.

The photographs in the book are simply beautiful. All are full color, and many are full page. They show wolves living in their natural habitat, hunting, playing, and raising their young. The pictures of wolf pups are particularly evocative.

With its well-written text and beautiful photographs, *Wolves of the World: Natural History and Conservation* should appeal both to those interested in animal conservation and to anyone who appreciates the beauty and mystique of these magnificent animals.

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The Traveler’s Medical Guide, 3rd edition

Gary R. Fujimoto, MD; Marc R. Robin, ANP; and
Bradford L. Dessery, RN
Brooklyn Center, MN: Prairie Smoke Press, 2003
US \$24.95, 490 pages, softcover

An oddity in travel medicine is that practitioners see travelers before they leave on their trips and then again only should the travelers return home ill. Healthwise, travelers are more or less on their own during their trips, which is the time that they may need the practitioners the most. It is somewhat akin to a surgeon providing pre- and postoperative care but not performing the surgery.

But experience has shown that even with state-of-the-art communications it is not particularly helpful for home-based practitioners to try to help someone with a fever in Delhi or chest pain in Barcelona. This dilemma