

## BOOK REVIEW

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### Review of: *Human and Nonhuman Bone Identification: A Concise Field Guide*

**REFERENCE:** France DL. **Human and nonhuman bone identification: a concise field guide.** Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2011, 285 pp.

*Human and Nonhuman Bone Identification: A Concise Field Guide* by Diane France contains the essential elements of *Human and Nonhuman Bone Identification: A Color Atlas* (France, 2009; CRC Press) in a shorter, spiral-bound volume that can be readily used in the field. The primary aim of this book is to provide visual and textual comparisons of adult mammalian gross anatomy. This smaller black-and-white version is an excellent option for professionals involved in law enforcement, medico-legal death investigation, and anthropology looking for a portable, yet thorough guide to distinguishing human and nonhuman bone, but it could also be used by anyone with an interest in mammalian bone identification with any level of experience.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I is an introduction to osteology that includes basic bone morphology, anatomical terminology, and comparisons between bipedal and quadrupedal skeletons, as well as basics of growth and development. This information is particularly important background material for those with limited experience in skeletal anatomy. The introduction also includes a photographic section on avian skeletal anatomy and a section on cleaning and preparing bone. Even though the section on bird bone is intended to be a brief introduction only, it could probably stand alone as a separate section; its location between growth and development and cleaning bones is not intuitive. The resolution of most of the images throughout the introduction is very good; the only exceptions are the two articulated human skeleton and bison skeleton images, which are somewhat pixelated.

Part II is a photographic guide to the major skeletal elements of 33 different mammals, including humans. Major mammalian orders represented include Order Primates (humans), Artiodactyla, Perissodactyla, Carnivora, Lagomorpha, Rodentia, Xenarthra, and Marsupialia. The guide is organized by skeletal element, with a brief introduction to each section identifying typical features of each element in human and nonhuman skeletons, followed by multiple views of each element. The images are accompanied by brief notes that point out important features useful for distinguishing between human and nonhuman bone as well as distinguishing between closely related mammalian species. The aspect of each image view is identified for many, but not all, elements. It appears that the paired bones are all from the left side, although this is not mentioned, other than for several avian elements in Part I. Although the images are necessarily small, the quality is very good, and important distinguishing features are clearly observed and identified. As in the original version, a visual index along the side of the page includes a small image of the skeletal element in that particular section, making it easy to locate each element in the guide quickly.

This field guide is very easy to use and is an excellent resource for forensic professionals for distinguishing between human and nonhuman bone; use of the guide also has applications in archeology and comparative anatomy for distinguishing among mammalian species. Students will particularly benefit from this economical version, as it is more likely to be included as a required book for both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses than the larger original volume, which is more appropriate as a classroom or library reference.

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