



# The Cambridge Planetary Handbook

By Michael E. Bakich

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The Cambridge Planetary Handbook is an invaluable reference text, bringing together key facts and data on the planets and their satellites, discoverers and researchers. It summarises many centuries' worth of data, from the earliest observations of the planets through to the most recent spaceprobe findings. The author discusses the history, mythology and theories of the main objects in our solar system, and provides a comprehensive information section with accurate and up-to-date data on the planets. The book contains excellent photography and explanatory illustrations, along with numerous historical drawings from Galileo, Huygens, Herschel and other astronomers. This book is a must for all astronomy enthusiasts, as well as academic researchers, students and teachers. Those unfamiliar with the sky will find this a user-friendly guide written in clear, non-technical language.

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Combining both recent knowledge and historical background about the planets of the solar system, this source will be a valuable addition to the astronomy collections of both academic and public libraries. The author also wrote *The Cambridge Guide to the Constellations* (Cambridge, 1995).

The book is arranged in two parts. Part one presents planetary data, such as atmospheric pressure, composition, and future conjunctions and transits. Part two contains a summary on each planet, including its moons. These summaries cover cloud and atmospheric conditions, surface features, historical early ideas about each planet, and recent discoveries from the Hubble Space Telescope and other data collected in the "late 1990s." The planetary information is supplemented by historical photographs, illustrations, and portraits. Appendixes provide very brief biographies of selected astronomers and a glossary.

The handbook is well suited for amateur astronomers and students of astronomy. Readers with less technical background may need to refer to a scientific dictionary, and professional astronomers may find the coverage too popular. This title makes a nice companion to *Encyclopedia of the Solar System* [RBB Mr 15 99]. For instance, *The Cambridge Planetary Handbook* provides data on the surface gravity of the planets, while *Encyclopedia of the Solar System* provides a discussion of Newton's laws of motion and the universal law of gravity.

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#### Review

'Combining both recent knowledge and historical background about the planets of the solar system, this source will be a valuable addition to the astronomy collections of both academic and public libraries ... The new volume is arranged in two parts. Part one presents planetary data, such as atmospheric pressure, composition, and future conjunctions and transits. Part two contains a summary on each planet, including its moons ... The handbook is well suited for amateur astronomers and students of astronomy.' Booklist

'... an excellent book ... The Cambridge Planetary Handbook is a credit to both author and publisher, and good value for money.' Mark Williamson, Earth Space Review

'This book is a must for all astronomy enthusiasts, as well as academic researchers, students and teachers. Those unfamiliar with the sky will find this a user-friendly guide written in clear, non-technical language.' Europe and Astronomy

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