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# Nature Illuminated: Flora And Fauna From The Court Of Emperor Rudolf II (Getty Trust Publications: J. Paul Getty Museum)



## Synopsis

The court of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II produced nothing more amazing than the *Mira calligraphiae monumenta*, a brilliant demonstration of two arts--calligraphy and miniature painting. The project began when Rudolf's predecessor, Ferdinand I, commissioned master calligrapher Georg Bocskay to create a model book of calligraphy. A preeminent scribe, Bocskay assembled a vast selection of contemporary and historic scripts. Years later, at Rudolf's behest, miniaturist Joris Hoefnagel filled the spaces on each manuscript page with insects, fruits, flowers, and other botanical images. The combination of word and illustration is rare and, on its tiny scale, constitutes one of the marvels of the Central European Renaissance. *Nature Illuminated* reproduces forty-one pages from the original codex. Those who love and collect beautiful books will be endlessly fascinated by Hoefnagel's imagery and invention. The accompanying commentary identifies and explains the details of Hoefnagel's exquisitely crafted illuminations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you want to see colorful manuscripts that show a variety of medieval insects, plants, flowers, fruit, sea shells, initials, designs, and even a few animals, then this is the book for you. There are 41 full color manuscripts to choose from. At the end of the book, are descriptions of each manuscript, listing the medieval name for each. Example: The identifications of specimens proceed from top to bottom and from left to right. Common names have been provided whenever possible. In the case of the

insect identifications, British English common names have been used, since most of the specimens represented do not exist in the United States. Where a different American common name is known, it has been included following the British Name, separated by a slash. The names of higher taxonomic groups (families and orders) have been printed in roman type, while genus and species names appear in italics. Folio 1 Rotunda script in "trace letters" *Vinca minor* L.: Common periwinkle *Malus domestica* Borkh.: Common apple *Lacerta(?)*: Lizard Folio 5 Antiqua script *Matthiola incana* (L.) R. Br.: Gillyflower *Ephemeroptera*: Mayfly *Diptera Cyclorrhapha* *Heleomyzidae(?)*: Fly *Pulmonata* *Helicidae* *Cepaea* sp.: Garde Snail End Example. A great source of Medieval Nature.

I have never seen such an amazing compilation of manuscripts and calligraphic examples. I was blown away. The only problem is that the dang pages are so small!!! It seems like some detail is lost. This is a big problem for anyone who wants to master some the writing techniques. The Mira calligraphica is the same dang size so no help there either. If anyone knows where I can find larger views please let me know!!!! [vinson.gracia@gmail.com](mailto:vinson.gracia@gmail.com)

This is a great book for those who appreciate beauty in nature. I find that just paging through the gorgeous artwork of natural objects and flowing calligraphy is very soothing. The book is smaller than I expected but its content does not disappoint. Makes a wonderful gift for special friends. I bought my copy for myself but I might buy others in future as gifts for friends.

For such a small book, this is crammed with new ideas for both calligraphy and drawing from Nature. You have to look close, and have an idea of how techniques can be applied, but this book will serve as an inspiration for my work for years to come!

Years ago, when I was primary school (1960) 2nd class student our teacher made us a special note-book: Everybody wrote an alphabet and every friend painted them with natural ornament. I remember that years. This book is illuminated us with conservative knowledge. It's a pattern for humans and for our child. Everything in the world can place in same frame. Thank you Emperor Rudolf II and .

"Nature Illuminated" is wonderful collection of illuminated manuscripts from the Getty's extensive holdings. Perusing these pages shows that the chasm between (representative) art and science is

really not so great.

For anyone into botanical embroidery and illuminated manuscripts - this book is sure to please. Page after page of stunning botanical drawings accompanied by beautifully written texts. An inspiration for those in the decorative arts. Highly Recommended.

I love this book! Even though this is only in a small format, I find it to be a little gem! Not a lot of accompanying text but the information is concise. An excellent selection of botanical illumination of old manuscripts, each colour plate is a joy to behold. For what the book costs I would say that it's really worth having!

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