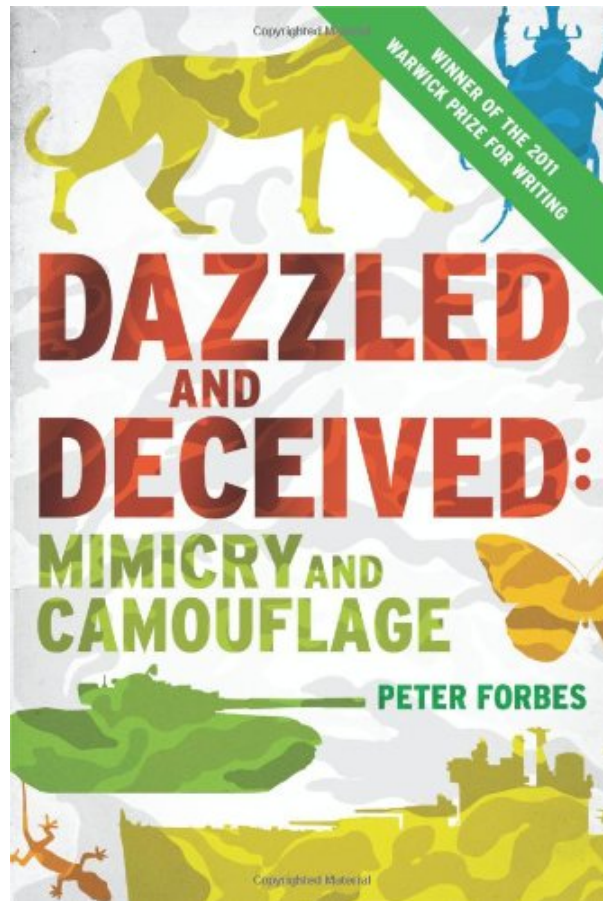
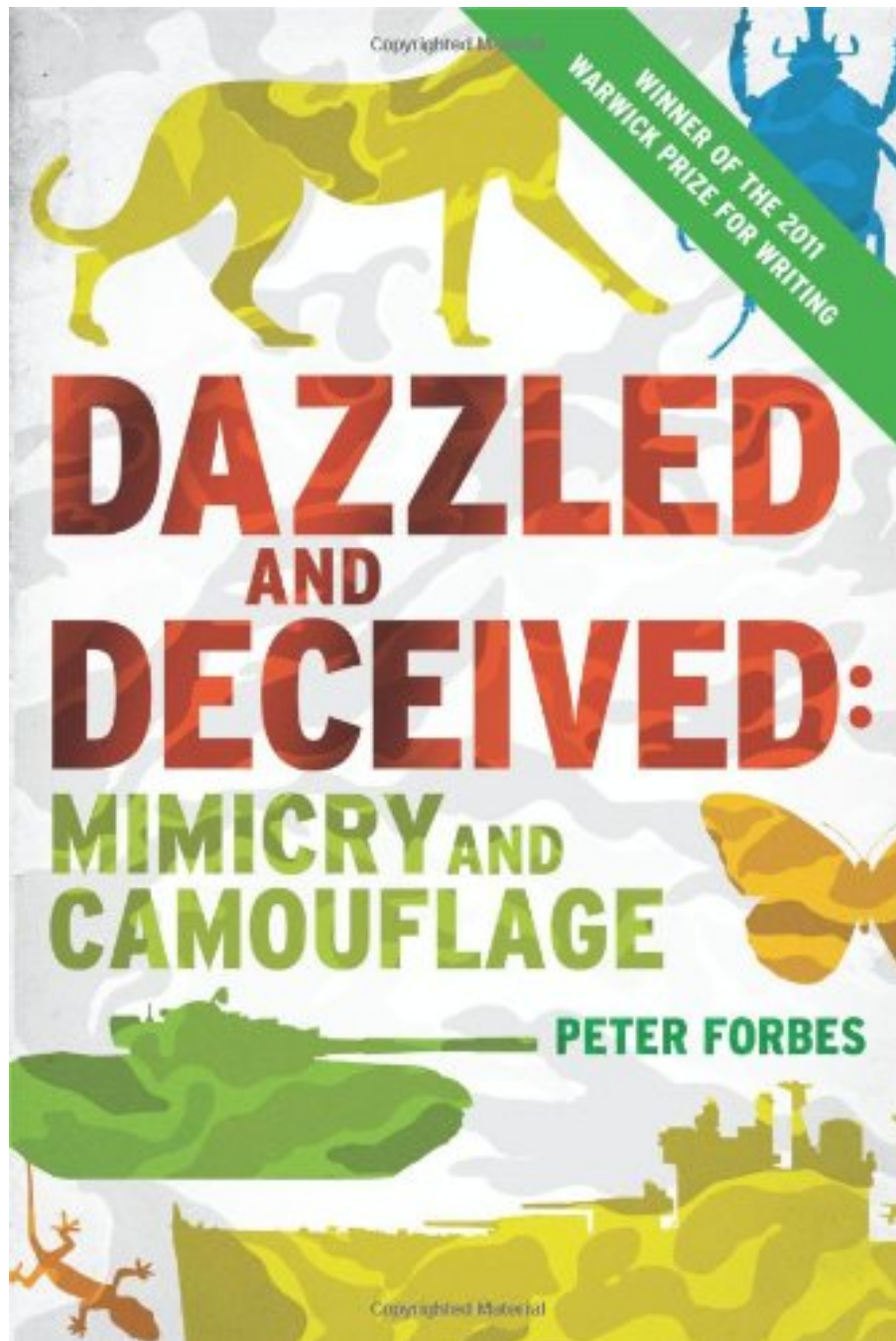


DAZZLED AND DECEIVED: MIMICRY AND CAMOUFLAGE BY PETER FORBES



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DAZZLED AND DECEIVED: MIMICRY AND CAMOUFLAGE

BY PETER FORBES PDF

'Dazzled and Deceived' tells the unique and fascinating story of mimicry and camouflage in science, art, warfare and the natural world. Discovered in the 1850s by Henry Walter Bates and Alfred Russel Wallace, the phenomenon of mimicry was seized upon as the first independent validation of Darwin's theory of natural selection.

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Camouflage in Art, War, and Nature

By Rob Hardy

Some animals like to sport bright colors, as if they want to be seen. Others favor drab colors, as if they want to blend in and avoid recognition. There must be advantages to both strategies. Soldiers used to sport bright red clothing in the field, and now tend to go with grey and olive blotches, if they are in forest, and beige spotty patterns if they are on sand. The invisible hand of evolution is at work in the natural world and the visible one of tacticians is at work in the military one, both hands working on the vital competition of appearances. There aren't so many soldiers who are still trying to stand out, but the animals who do so, and plenty of soldiers and sailors and animals who try to blend in, all come under the attention of *Dazzled and Deceived: Mimicry and Camouflage* (Yale University Press) by Peter Forbes. The effort toward understanding military and natural camouflage has been not just separate efforts by naturalists and soldiers, but combined work in the field, joined also by artists and even a magician. Just as you would suspect, there are plenty of surprises in this book, along with a fine introduction to the evolution of mimicry down to the current biochemical understandings.

Forbes spends much of the book on butterflies, like *Leptalis*, which use camouflage in a distinct way. They mimic the bright colors and patterns of another butterfly, the *Heliconidae*. What was the advantage of looking like another butterfly? The imitated *Heliconidae* sported bright colors as a sort of warning; it wanted to be seen and recognized, because it tasted bad and was unpalatable. The more recognizable it was, the more often bird predators would leave it alone. But *Leptalis*, on the other hand, was tasty. It displayed the warning colors and markings of *Heliconidae*, but in the case of *Leptalis*, the warnings were false. False or true, the warnings helped give each butterfly a better chance of surviving and passing on its genes. The false imitation warnings were complicated enough (and occur in other species like snakes, not just insects), but there were true imitation warnings as well. Unrelated species of bad-tasting butterflies (and even moths) shared colors and markings. Their true warnings reinforced each other every time a bird tried to eat one and learned how bad a creature with such appearance tasted. In the 1890s, a cranky New England painter burst into the realm of naturalists who were concerned with camouflage and mimicry. Abbott H. Thayer

thought that only an artist could rightly appreciate the profundity of the deceptive pictures made by birds and animals. He obsessively insisted that coloration was for no other purpose than to obscure the animal; he didn't accept that colors might be bright for the purpose of warning. He was dogmatic and pugnacious about his discoveries of coloration, and took it upon himself to advise the US Navy about how to disguise its ships during the Spanish-American War. His ideas were ignored, but he did patent the idea of countershading ships, and went on to design disruptive coloration for them. He teamed with the Scots zoologist John Graham Kerr to have British ships painted in "dazzle" patterns, bold darks and lights that obscured the form of the ship and even made it look as if it were on a different heading from its true one. The interplay between military tacticians, naturalists, and artists (which, given the personalities involved, was often angry) gives Forbes a background to tell a broad story about camouflage, including how tanks were hidden in the African campaign of World War Two, and how the flamboyant magician Jasper Maskelyne helped troops and equipment disappear (or was it all hocus-pocus?).

Much of Forbes's book describes the science and scientists working out how chromosomes have activated the chemistry that, for instance, turns inheritance into particular wing colors. There are good profiles of artists and scientists. It is a pleasure, for instance, to read about Miriam Rothschild, who was a member of the famous banking family, and used some of her fortune to equip a laboratory in her home where she investigated how inedible monarch butterflies got their toxins. She worked out how caterpillars evolved an invulnerability to toxins of particular milkweed plants, and not only did this make the plants their particular field of forage, they absorbed the toxins into their own systems to make them toxic in turn. She tested the toxins on starlings - the birds vomited. He explains how the animal most famous for blending in, the chameleon, actually is more likely to change its colors for the purpose of standing out, like for signaling aggressiveness between males. He writes admiringly of the best trickster in nature, the octopus, that "compendium of every camouflage and mimicry technique known." Ranging into art, military tactics, field biology, evolution, and biochemistry, Forbes has given a unique look into the hidden techniques of natural and artificial camouflage. Natural and artistic and military techniques, he shows, don't follow any particular advancement or grand design; they all in their fashion take their chances, make choices, and do experiments.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

DAZZLED AND DECEIVED: MIMICRY AND CAMOUFLAGE

By Robert A. Lynn

DAZZLED AND DECEIVED: MIMICRY AND CAMOUFLAGE

PETER FORBES

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009

HARDCOVER, \$[...], 304 PAGES, COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS, DIAGRAMS

Generally the concept of camouflage implies that an individual (a soldier) or an object (a tank) appears at a precise point of time (the fight) altered to such an extent-posing himself as something quite different (a landscape, a forest)-that he or it in this context of appearing isn't recognizable in his/its being as the authentic other (the threatening) or keeps a low profile. First of all, this precise point of time is given in an unusual situation, and for this reason camouflage from the trompe-l'oeil, the optical illusion produced in the 19th Century by a certain painting technique, from the military history in the Second World War and from the observation of nature. It's revealing that camouflage is emerging with a new optical paradigm in the First World War (trenches, air reconnaissance, submarine war) that makes necessary new forms of dissimulation and also changes with the technologies up to the modern day Stealth bombers that are nearly invisible to today's radar. In the difference to the forms of mimicry to be found at plants and animals, man is able to mislead not only by disguising but also by language like an agent of the U.S. Secret Service. The term "camouflage" is also covering situations in which politicians present things in a distorted way, or in which managers gloss over their balance sheets. Forged objects or documents like passports or visas do certainly

belong to the standard repertoire of dissimulation but they are assigned to the methods of forgery and include a complex procedure going beyond optical effects. In the Nazi-era, the adaptation of the Nazi style layout helped Communist and Libertarian underground journals to find some circulation. The animal kingdom provides examples of all the essential principles of camouflage: the chameleon, whose colors change to merge with its setting; the zebra, whose vivid stripes disrupt its outline and make it more difficult for predators to sight from a distance; and the stick insect that pretends to be what it's not. Creativity in the art of disguise was spurred in World War I by the threats of aerial reconnaissance and long-range enemy fire. Aircraft and ships were painted with lozenge and zigzag patterns to make them more difficult to target. Artists were involved in creating these patterns, and were influenced in turn by the extraordinary painted vessels, said to be like floating cubist paintings. In 1919, the Chelsea Arts Club of London, inspired by wartime camouflage patterns, staged the Dazzle Ball, the first known example of camouflage influencing popular culture. Since then, artists from Pablo Picasso to Andy Warhol to Bridget Riley have explored the themes and extremes of camouflage and optical illusion, while camouflage patterns in clothes and accessories have filtered from the street to high fashion and back again. Uniforms made from camouflage-printed textiles were first developed before World War II, and teams of artists, designers, and scientists worked together to create ever more sophisticated modes of camouflage and disguise. Today's high-tech research on textiles that are resistant to infrared and thermal detection shows a new direction in the future of camouflage. While there are far more technical books on the subject, which are crammed with military jargon, **DAZZLED AND DECEIVED: MIMICRY AND CAMOUFLAGE** is a book that quickly covers the subject, and highlights the beauty of camouflage.

Lt. Colonel Robert A. Lynn, Florida Guard
Orlando, Florida

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... really helped me in my research and was a great source of information

By Timothy

This book really helped me in my research and was a great source of information.
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