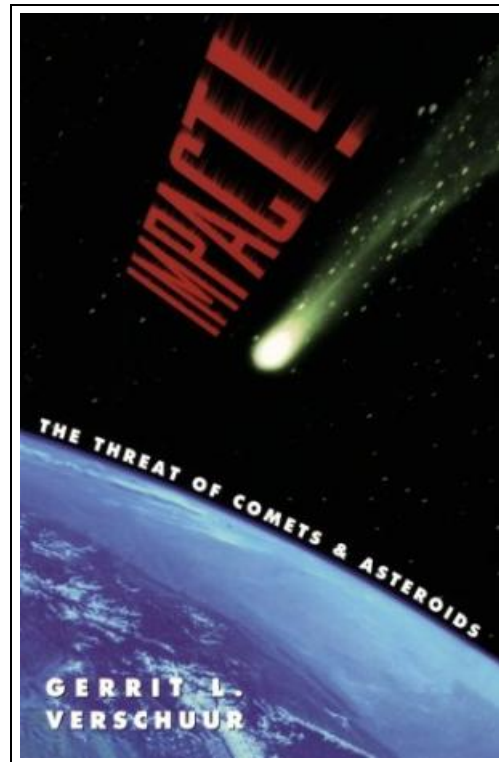


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IMPACT: THE THREAT OF COMETS AND ASTEROIDS

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Oxford University Press, USA. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 256 pages. Dimensions: 8.8in. x 5.9in. x 0.7in. Most scientists now agree that some sixty-five million years ago, an immense comet slammed into the Yucatan, detonating a blast twenty million times more powerful than the largest hydrogen bomb, punching a hole ten miles deep in the earth. Trillions of tons of rock were vaporized and launched into the atmosphere. For a thousand miles in all directions, vegetation burst into flames. There were tremendous blast waves, searing winds, showers of molten matter from the sky, earthquakes, and a terrible darkness that cut out sunlight for a year, enveloping the planet in freezing cold. Thousands of species of plants and animals were obliterated, including the dinosaurs, some of which may have become extinct in a matter of hours. In *Impact*, Gerrit L. Verschuur offers an eye-opening look at such catastrophic collisions with our planet. Perhaps more important, he paints an unsettling portrait of the possibility of new collisions with earth, exploring potential threats to our planet and describing what scientists are doing right now to prepare for this awful possibility. Every day something from space hits our planet, Verschuur reveals. In fact, about 10,000 tons of space debris fall to earth every year, mostly in meteoric form. The author recounts spectacular recent sightings, such as over Allende, Mexico, in 1969, when a fireball showered the region with four tons of fragments, and the twenty-six pound meteor that went through the trunk of a red Chevy Malibu in Peekskill, New York, in 1992 (the meteor was subsequently sold for 69,000 and the car itself fetched 10,000). But meteors are not the greatest threat to life on earth, the author points out. The major threats are asteroids and comets. The reader discovers that...

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