Elizabeth Hale, "Entry on: Mythological Creatures: A Classical Bestiary: Tales of Strange Beings, Fabulous Creatures, Fearsome Beasts, & Hideous Monsters from Ancient Greek Mythology by Lynn Curlee ", peer-reviewed by Miriam Riverlea and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/488. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Lynn Curlee

Mythological Creatures: A Classical Bestiary: Tales of Strange Beings, Fabulous Creatures, Fearsome Beasts, & Hideous Monsters from Ancient Greek Mythology

United States (2008)

TAGS: Argos / Argus Panoptes (Giant) Centaur(s) Cerberus Chimera / Chimaera Cyclops / Cyclopes Golden Fleece Griffins / Gryphons Harpies Medusa Minotaur Pan Pegasus Phoenix (Bird) Sphinx Talos (Automaton) Triton



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.



General information	
Title of the work	Mythological Creatures: A Classical Bestiary: Tales of Strange Beings, Fabulous Creatures, Fearsome Beasts, & Hideous Monsters from Ancient Greek Mythology
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2008
First Edition Details	Lynn Curlee, *Mythological Creatures: A Classical Bestiary: Tales of strange beings, fabulous creatures, fearsome beasts, & hideous monsters from Ancient Greek mythology.* New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2008, 36 pp.
ISBN	9781416914532
Genre	Myths, Picture books
Target Audience	Children (ages 7–10)
Author of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Miriam Riverlea, University of New England, mriverlea@gmail.com Daniel A. Nkemleke, University of Yaoundé 1, nkemlekedan@yahoo.com

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Lynn Curlee , b. 1947
(Author)

Lynn Curlee (1947) is an American artist and illustrator. His first illustrated book was *Horses with Wings* (1993), by Dennis Haseley. His style is highly polished and colourful, and many of his books have architectural topics (e.g. *Rushmore: Monument for the Ages*, *Seven Wonders of the Ancient World*, *Capital*, *Parthenon*). He lives in Jamesport, New York.

Bio prepared by Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Additional information

Summary

In this picture book, a series of mythological creatures from Ancient Greek mythology is presented. It begins with a prologue, explaining the context for the Greek myths, and putting monster stories in context alongside gods, kings and heroes. The story of each mythological creature is outlined in the text, and accompanied by a picture showing key elements from its myth.

Pan, the God of Nature (2–3). Discusses the myth of Pan and Syrinx; illustration shows Pan playing his reeds by the river at twilight.

Centaurs (4–5). Shows three centaurs, one drinking, one holding a club, one adjusting a wristband.Talks about the battle with the Lapiths, and about the wisdom of Chiron.

Triton, the Herald of Poseidon (6–7). Discusses Triton's role as Poseidon's herald. Shows Triton riding a hippocampus, blowing on a spiral shell trumpet.

Gryphons (8–9). Discusses the Gryhons of Persia, with bodies of lions and the heads of huge birds. Discusses how Zeus kept a pair of Gryphons on Mount Olympus, and how Hera used them to draw her golden sky chariot. Shows two Gryphons against a golden sky.

Argus, the Watchman with One Hundred Eyes (10–11). This describes the story of Io. In this image, Argues is a bald-headed man, whose body has eyes dotted over it. He sits on a block of stone, while Io the cow looks at him nervously. None of his eyes appear to be looking at Io. In the foreground stands a peacock, the symbol of Juno, tail closed.

The Sphinx (12–13). Describes Oedipus's encounter with the Sphinx of Thebes. Image shows the Sphinx on the left, looking at Oedipus, who is looking down thoughtfully, chin on hand.

Polyphemus, the Cyclops (14–15). Describes Odysseus's encounter with Cyclops. Image shows Polyphemus holding two of Odysseus's soldiers overhead in his hands, blood streaming down his wrists, mouth open in a (possibly sad) snarl.

The Ram with a Golden Fleece (16–17). Explains the origin of the

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Golden Fleece (Phrixus, Helle). Image shows the fleece hanging from an olive tree, with a coiled serpent below. In the distance a small boat is passing, perhaps hinting at the Argo?

The Harpies (18–19). Tells the story of the Argo, King Phineus of Thrace and the twins Calais and Zetes, who helped chase away the Harpies. Image shows three Harpies, hovering around the food on King Phineus' table.

Talus, the Bronze Giant (20–21). Tells the story of Argonauts' encounter with Talus, and Medea's sorcery. Image shows the Argo in the front, with Talus reclining on a cliff top, ichor pouring from the weak spot in his ankle.

The Minotaur (22–23). Tells the story of Theseus, Ariadne and the Minotaur. Image shows the Minotaur, poised with an axe, with red eyes. Only the bull's head is visible; he is wearing a tunic.

The Gorgon Medusa (24–25). Tells the story of Perseus and Medusa.Image shows Perseus, hiding his face with one hand, holding the decapitated head of Medusa in the other. Her face has a frozen stare, blood drips from her neck, and the snakes appear to still be writhing in her hair.

The Chimera (26–27). Tells the story of Bellerophon and the Chimera. Image shows the Chimera in the mouth of a cave, with its three heads breathing smoke from their nostrils. In the cave are a human skull and bones.

Pegasus, the Winged Horse (28–29). Tells of the origin of Pegasus. Image shows Pegasus flying up to Olympus, against a sunset.

Cerberus, the Watchdog of Hades (30–31). Tells the story of Orpheus, and image shows Orpheus playing his lyre to Cerberus. One head is turned quietly to Orpheus, one faces the viewer, one snarls. The two latter heads are drooling a green liquid.

The Phoenix (32–33). Tells the legend of the Phoenix and its relation to Helios. Image shows a Phoenix, wings spread, with a bright sun glowing in its breast.

Epilogue (34–35). The book has an epilogue, which d`iscusses the Golden Age of Greece, the transition of its mythology under the

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

	Roman Empire, the Decline and Fall of Rome, the rise of Christianity, the rebirth of classical learning in the Renaissance. 'Greek mythology is one of the grandest traditions of Western civilization. We no longer believe in the old gods and heroes, and we know that Gorgons and Minotaurs and winged horses did not exist, but we still find great beauty and profound truths about human nature in the timeless stories that were first told many ages ago. The ancient Greeks had a wonderful notion – the poet flies upon the wings of Pegasus, and in our imaginations so can we.' (35) The image accompanying this page shows incense burning in a three-legged burner, framed by the base of two large columns, with drapery, a helmet, a shield and a spear in the wings.
Analysis	This book offers an introduction to the famous monsters of Greek mythology. Each short story (on a single page) is accompanied by the image. The stories are simply told, and the images are highly stylized, and deliberately attractive in colouring and design.Lighting is soft, the creatures are carefully framed, like emblems, and seen at twilight or at sunset, suggesting an atmosphere of nostalgia. The tone of the book encourages reflection, and lingering in the story and the idea of the ancient world as one of beauty, but the violence of the myths is not shirked, as the frequent appearance of blood and weapons indicates. The book is not comprehensive, and there are several omissions, such as the beasts of Heracles' labours, Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Argos / Argus Panoptes (Giant) Centaur(s) Cerberus Chimera / Chimaera Cyclops / Cyclopes Golden Fleece Griffins / Gryphons Harpies Medusa Minotaur Pan Pegasus Phoenix (Bird) Sphinx Talos (Automaton) Triton
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Knowledge Learning

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Elizabeth Hale, "Entry on: Mythological Creatures: A Classical Bestiary: Tales of Strange Beings, Fabulous Creatures, Fearsome Beasts, & Hideous Monsters from Ancient Greek Mythology by Lynn Curlee ", peer-reviewed by Miriam Riverlea and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/488. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.