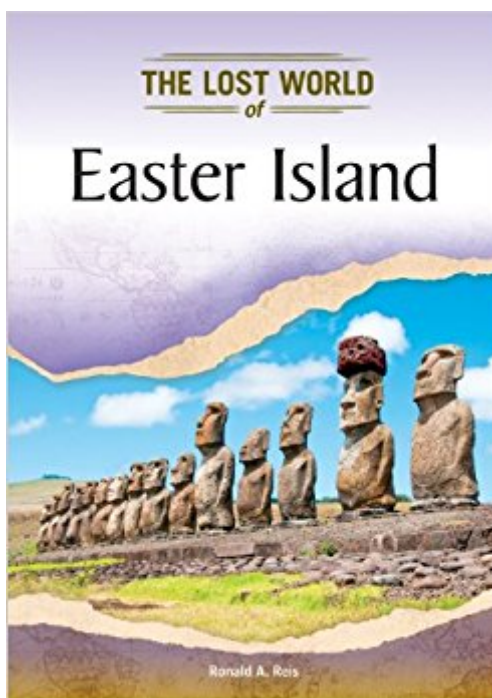


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# Easter Island (Lost Worlds And Mysterious Civilizations)



## Synopsis

Easter Island is a true land of mystery. One of the most remotely inhabited places on Earth, this 64-square-mile speck in the South Pacific is more than 1,000 miles from anywhere else, yet Polynesian voyagers managed to settle Easter Island a thousand years ago. No one knows why the Moai, nearly a thousand megalithic volcanic statues, were carved, transported, and erected--or why they were all found facedown by European explorers. In addition, did a Stone Age population of less than 10,000 actually deforest the land, causing environmental devastation? There were as many as 16 million Chilean palms covering 70 percent of the island when the settlers first appeared, but Westerners in the early 18th century were astonished by the total absence of trees. Furthermore, the islanders adopted a new cult based on the worship of birds and in the process, annually elected a "sacred birdman" in a competition that may have been the most dangerous of its kind anywhere in the world. Though the island is one of the most studied and probed places on the planet, Easter Island remains one of the most mysterious places on the planet. Read in this new title about this fascinating place.

## Book Information

Series: Lost Worlds and Mysterious Civilizations

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## Customer Reviews

This title in the Lost Worlds and Mysterious Civilizations series is so complete it could easily be titled, Everything You Wanted to Know about Easter Island. Beginning with the journey of King Hotu Matu'ā and several hundred followers, who set out as long as a millennium before Columbus took to the sea, the book spends much of its time explaining the mysteries of Easter Island. How were the moai, the almost 1,000 volcanic statues that ring the island, carved and

transported by a society with prehistoric technology? What was their purpose? Why were some toppled? The writing style is dry and suffers from some repetition—the subject of the 16 million palm trees that covered the island and its eventual deforestation comes up more than once. The color photographs give the book a lively note. Sidebars, too, add interest by covering topics like cannibalism, leprosy, and missionaries’s attempts to regulate islanders’s sex lives. This one won’t grab browsers, but report writers will find it extremely useful. Grades 8-12.

--Ilene Cooper

Ronald A. Reis has written young adult biographies as well as books on the Dust Bowl, the Empire State Building, the New York City subway system, African Americans and the Civil War, and the World Trade Organization for Chelsea House. He is the technology department chair at Los Angeles Valley College.

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