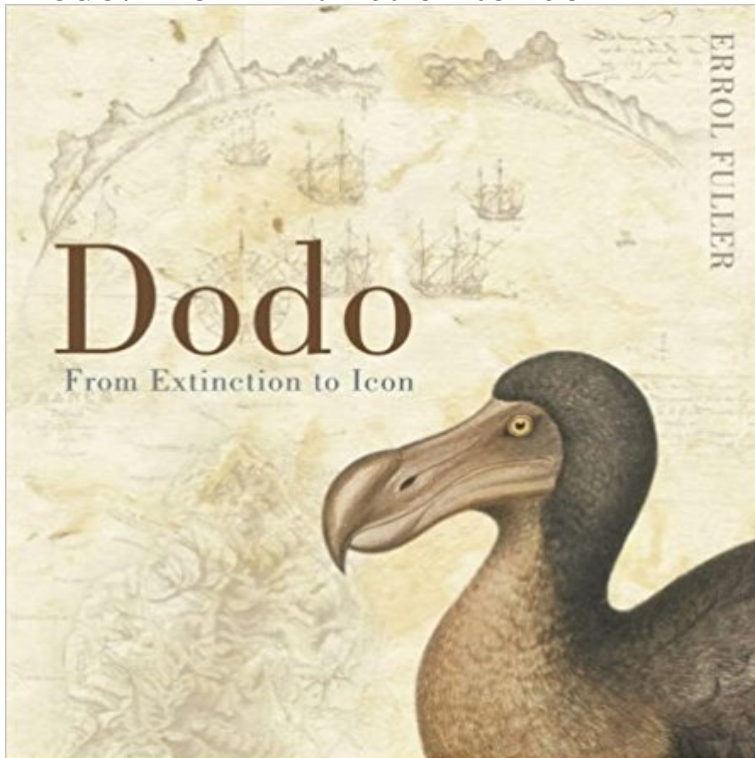


Dodo: From Extinction to Icon



A comprehensive illustrated guide to the dodo: its history, natural history, and its literary and cultural legacy. The extinction of the dodo from the shores of Mauritius followed closely on the arrival of Dutch and Portuguese sailors on the island in the 16th century. Using a diverse number of sources, the author describes the behaviour and myths surrounding this unusual and iconic bird. The first three chapters investigate the dodo's natural history through the use of historical documents, illustrations, paintings, old drawings and literary sources. Its behaviour is examined in the quotes from 16 of the written reports by travellers to the island, and the anatomy of the dodo is investigated from the bone records kept by anatomists and naturalists from the 16th to the 19th centuries. The mythology surrounding the dodo has grown ever since it became extinct. Lewis Carroll's use of the dodo in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* elevated the bird to iconic status and sparked a spate of Dodo characters in newspapers, adverts and cartoons. In chapter four, the author investigates how man incorporated the image of the dodo into literature and the arts to become the powerful cultural icon that it is today. He then looks more closely at two other species: the Solitary Dodo, from the island of Rodrigues in the Indian Ocean and the White Dodo of the Reunion Island. Both are now extinct, but are thought to have been related to the Mauritian Dodo.

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