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BIRD BOOK WITH TIES TO PHILADELPHIA NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

PHILADELPHIA—A book on tropical birds that recently won the 2010 International Book Award for best interior design relied heavily on the scientific expertise and hundreds of bird images from the Academy of Natural Sciences.

Albert Earl Gilbert, the Bridgewater, Conn., artist who was honored for his beautifully accurate illustrations in [Trogon: A Natural History of the Trogonidae](#), credited the Academy's Visual Resources for Ornithology (VIREO) for helping him accurately depict the colors of this threatened family of birds. Gilbert also made expeditions to rain forests around the world to paint these spectacularly beautiful [tropical birds](#), including the quetzal, the sacred bird of the ancient Mayans and Aztecs.

Trogon, published by Princeton University Press, also was a finalist for best cover design. The book was designed by Derrick I. Stone of Australia. The [winners](#) were announced May 18 by JPX Media in Los Angeles.

The book presents a definitive natural history of trogons at a time when tropical forests where they live are threatened by logging and land clearing. Gilbert said the book is intended not only to summarize and advance knowledge about trogons, but also to draw attention to the urgent need to protect the habitat of these magnificent birds. Gilbert's paintings are the first to accurately depict all species of trogons in their natural habitat and true colors.

"*Trogon* is a truly magnificent book in the great tradition of artists John Gould and John James Audubon, but with the most current scientific information," said Robert M. Peck, Academy senior fellow and curator of arts and artifacts. "The illustrations are absolutely stunning and represent a brilliant convergence of art and science."

VIREO Director Doug Wechsler said Gilbert made use of hundreds of images in the collection to accurately depict the beaks, feet, eyes and bare skin of many trogons. [VIREO](#) is the world's most comprehensive collection of ornithological images, with more than 150,000 photographs representing more than 7,000 species.

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The Academy of Natural Sciences, founded in 1812, is the oldest natural science research institution and museum in the Americas and a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences.

HOURS: Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Saturday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. ADMISSION: \$12 adults; \$10 children 3-12, seniors, college students, military personnel; from May 28–Sept. 6 military and up to 5 family members are free; free for members and children under 3. \$2 fee for Butterflies!