

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910820420703321
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Titolo	Camel // Robert Irwin
Pubbl/distr/stampa	London, U.K., : Reaktion Books, Ltd., 2010
ISBN	1-282-97925-6 9786612979255 1-86189-734-0
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (234 p.)
Collana	Animal
Altri autori (Persone)	BurtJonathan
Disciplina	599.736 636.295
Soggetti	Camels Camels - History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 198-219) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Camel Cover; Imprint page; Contents; Introduction; 1 Physiology and Psychology; 2 Ancestors of the Camel; 3 Practical Camel; 4 Camels in the Medieval World of Islam; 5 The Beauty of the Beast: Literature and Art; 6 The Camel's Role in History; 7 Modernity's Camel; Timeline of the Camel; References; Select Bibliography; Associations and Websites; Acknowledgements; Photo Acknowledgements; Index
Sommario/riassunto	A distinct symbol of the desert and the Middle East, the camel was once unkindly described as "half snake, half folding bedstead." But in the eyes of many the camel is a creature of great beauty. This is most evident in the Arab world, where the camel has played a central role in the historical development of Arabic society-where an elaborate vocabulary and extensive literature have been devoted to it. In Camel, Robert Irwin explores why the camel has fascinated so many cultures, including those cultivated in locales where camels are not indigenous