

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them: Movie Review



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On July 15, 2011, the last *Harry Potter* Movie, *The Deathly Hallows Part 2*, was released. Now, five years later, a new film the world of *Harry Potter* has been released.

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them, a fictional textbook written by Newt Scamander, was first mentioned on page 67 of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's*

Stone as one of the textbooks Harry needed to purchase for his first year at Hogwarts.

In 2001, Rowling published *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* under the pen name Newt Scamander, as a companion book to the Harry Potter series. On September 12, 2014, Rowling announced that there would be a film version made, and would be the first of five films focusing around main character Newt Scamander. Instead of following the book, which was written in textbook format, the movie *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* gives fans the story behind the book and how it came to be. The story takes place around 70 years before the start of Harry's story, when the Dark Wizard Grindelwald was at the height of his power.

The film, which takes place in the 1920s, focuses on Newt Scamander, a slightly awkward British wizard who has spent years traveling the world and learning about magical creatures, in order to prove that they shouldn't be exterminated. We learn that he was a Hufflepuff expelled from Hogwarts for "endangering human life" in an accident pertaining to a magical creature. We also learn that one of his professors, a certain Albus Dumbledore, argued vehemently against this expulsion.

Newt travels to New York City with a magical case full of magical creatures, some of which accidentally escape and land him in trouble with the American wizarding community, which was already having troubles with the no-majs (the American version of muggles). However, several unforeseeable plot twists complicate the story.

Throughout the movie we learn about various magical creatures, both new and old, as well as about the American wizarding community. It's revealed that North America has their own wizarding school, Ilvermorny School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, and America has very different laws pertaining to no-majs than the UK does.

When I first heard about this movie several months ago, I immediately made plans to see it. I've grown up with Harry Potter and *still* love it, and now there's more? I almost couldn't believe it. I'm pretty sure that before going to see the movie, I annoyed my friends half to death because I wouldn't shut up about it.

And when I finally saw it, I was far from disappointed. In fact, it was better than I expected. J.K. Rowling has done it again. She's created a wonderful extension to the world of *Harry Potter*, giving it more depth and meaning than ever before. The

addition of several new magical theories, such as the Obscurus—the result of a young witch or wizard suppressing their power to the point where it explodes out of them as a dark, unstable, uncontrollable force that often causes the deaths of those nearby. It played a large part in the movie and promises to do so in the later films.

It also introduced more magical creatures, both new—such as the Demiguise, which can turn invisible—and old, like the Niffler, a treasure loving creature mentioned several times in the *Harry Potter* series. I'm amazed at J.K. Rowling's ability to create such a diverse and fascinating world. She's put so much of her life into these stories it leaves me breathless. And *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* was no exception.

And I have a feeling that the sequel, which is to be released on November 16, 2018, won't let us down.

So, will I continue to be a die-hard Potterhead?

Always.