

REF: 231

See also: REF 236  
updated version 2011

# The Paragon Multimedia DVD, VHS Collection

Title: **The War of the Worlds** [H.G.Wells] [Original]

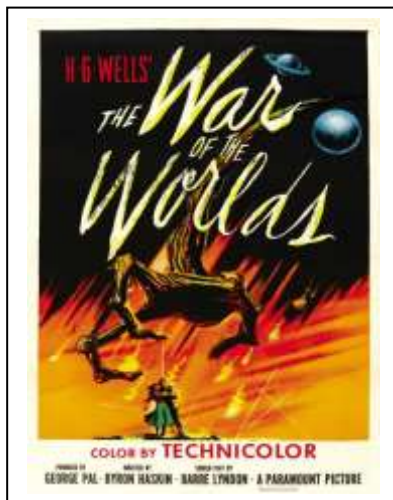
Special Director Collector Edition

With booklet

Release Date: 16/08/2010



Library Image



ISBN: 5014437872630

## Information

Release Title: **The War of the Worlds** 03<sup>rd</sup> April 1953 Storyline

(London Premiere) (United Kingdom)

Publication: H.G.Wells 1898 novel

Origin: United States

AKA: Also known as - H.G. Wells' the War of the Worlds

Release date: United States – 26<sup>th</sup> August 1953

Genres: Action, Sci-Fi, Thriller

Disc Nos. 1

Certification: PG

Duration: 1h 25m (82mins)

Region Code:

Region:

Product Code:

MPN:

EAN: 9317731151033

UPC: 0097360530377

Languages: English, Spanish

Filming locations: Westminster Presbyterian Church - 1757 North Lake Avenue, Pasadena, California, USA (First church Forrester searches)

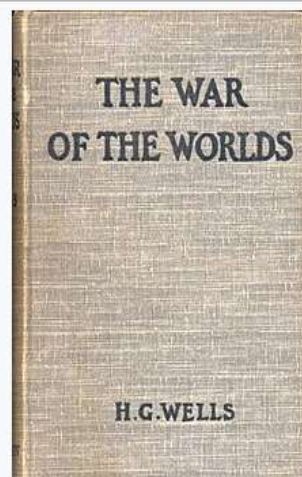
Buckinghamshire, England, UK (opening scene)

Sound mix: Dolby Digital

Pal – 2005 Colour

Aspect Ratio: 2.39:1

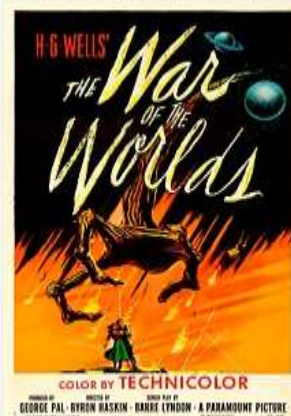
*The War of the Worlds*



1898 UK first edition

Author	H. G. Wells
Country	United Kingdom
Language	English
Genre	Science fiction
Publisher	William Heinemann (UK) Harper & Bros (US)
Publication date	1898 <sup>[1]</sup>
Pages	287
Text	<a href="#">The War of the Worlds at Wikisource</a>

*The War of the Worlds*



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Byron Haskin
Screenplay by	Barré Lyndon
Based on	<i>The War of the Worlds</i> by H. G. Wells
Produced by	George Pal
Starring	Gene Barry Ann Robinson
Cinematography	George Barnes
Edited by	Everett Douglas
Music by	Leith Stevens
Distributed by	Paramount Pictures
Release dates	April 3, 1953 (London) <sup>[1]</sup> August 13, 1953 (New York) <sup>[2]</sup>
Running time	85 minutes <sup>[3]</sup>
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$2 million
Box office	\$2 million (US rentals) <sup>[4]</sup>

# 1 - Title: The War of the Worlds

## Storyline

Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those of the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.

—H. G. Wells (1898), *The War of the Worlds*  
The coming of the Martians

First Martian emerging from the cylinder that had fallen from the sky. Illustration by Henrique Alvim Corrêa  
The novel opens in the mid-1890s, with aliens on Mars plotting an invasion of Earth because their resources were dwindling. The main narrative begins when an object thought to be a meteor lands on Horsell Common, near the narrator's home. It turns out to be an artificial cylinder. Martians emerge briefly, but have difficulty coping with Earth's atmosphere and gravity. When humans approach the cylinder with a white flag, the Martians incinerate them. Military forces arrive that night.

The next day, the narrator takes his wife to safety in Leatherhead by means of a dog-cart rented from the local pub landlord, but returns home by himself immediately after in order to return the vehicle. That night, he sees a three-legged Martian "fighting-machine" (tripod), armed with a heat-ray and a chemical weapon: the poisonous "black smoke". Tripods have wiped out the army around the cylinder and destroyed most of Woking. The narrator approaches his own house and finds the landlord dead in the front garden, killed by a Martian attack. While keeping watch from an upper floor window, he offers shelter to an artilleryman who has fled after his company was wiped out attacking the cylinder. The narrator and the artilleryman try to escape back towards Leatherhead, but are separated during a Martian attack between Shepperton and Weybridge. As refugees try to cross the river Wey, the army destroys a tripod with artillery fire, and the Martians retreat. The narrator travels to Walton, where he meets a curate.

Martians discharging Heat-Rays in the Thames Valley. Illustration by Henrique Alvim Corrêa  
The Martians attack again and people begin to flee London, including the narrator's brother, who travels with a Mrs Elphinstone and her sister-in-law to keep them safe. They reach the coast and buy passage to Continental Europe. Tripods attack, but a torpedo ram, HMS Thunder Child, destroys two of them before being destroyed itself (a third is either destroyed in the detonation of the ship ammunition stores, or flees unseen in the resultant smoke), and the evacuation fleet escapes. Soon, all organised resistance collapses, and Martians roam the shattered landscape unhindered.

### The Earth under the Martians

At the beginning of Book Two, the narrator and the curate witness a Martian machine seizing people and tossing them into a carrier. The narrator realises that the Martian invaders may have plans for their victims. When a fifth Martian cylinder lands, both men are trapped beneath the ruins of a house. The narrator describes Martian anatomy and how they use living creatures' blood to nourish themselves. The two men's relationship deteriorates, and eventually, the narrator knocks the curate unconscious. A Martian removes the curate's body, but the narrator escapes detection.

The Martians abandon the cylinder's crater, and the narrator emerges from the collapsed house and heads for West London. En route, he finds Martian red weed everywhere, prickly vegetation spreading wherever there is abundant water, but slowly dying. On Putney Heath, he encounters the artilleryman again. After abandoning him, he begins to go mad from his trauma, finally attempting suicide by approaching a stationary fighting machine. To his surprise, he discovers that all the Martians have been killed by an onslaught of earthly pathogens, to which they had no immunity.

The narrator suffers a nervous breakdown and is nursed back to health by a kind family. Eventually, he returns to Woking, and discovers that his wife has survived. In the last chapter, he reflects on the Martian invasion, its impact on humanity's view of itself and the future, and the effect it has had on his mind.

Quick Storyline: Byron Haskin directs this 1950s adaptation of the novel by H.G. Wells. Set in 1950s California, when Martians try to invade America, they strike terror into the hearts of the people with their sleek, stylish spaceships and fearful death rays. The military do their best, but their cannons and fighters planes appear useless against such a formidable foe.

**Note: Review** – A little dated and comes across a little naïve concerning actor’s dialogue and script, ideal for those film buffs looking for nostalgia – option, view and compare the latest revision **Ref: 236** in the Paragon Collection.

## Cast

Director: Byron Haskin  
Producer: George Pal  
Writer: Barre Lyndon  
Music: Leith Stevens  
Actor: Gene Barry  
Actor: Les Tremayne  
Actor: Henry Brandon  
Actor: Jack Kruschen  
Actor: Sandro Giglio  
Actor: Paul Birch  
Actor: Ann Robinson  
Actor: Robert Cornthwaite  
Actor: William Phipps  
Actor: Vernon Rich  
Actor: House Stevenson  
Actor: Paul Frees  
Actor: Carolyn Jones  
Art Designer: Albert Nozaki  
Art Designer: Hal Pereira  
Editor: Everett Douglas  
Cinematographer: George Barnes  
Special FX A/V: George Pal <sup>Wiki</sup>

## Legacy Version

**The 1988** War of the Worlds TV series is a sequel to the Pal film. Ann Robinson reprises her role as Sylvia Van Buren in three episodes. Robinson also reprises her role in two other films, first as Dr. Van Buren in 1988's *Midnight Movie Massacre* and then as Dr. Sylvia Van Buren in 2005's *The Naked Monster*.

**The Asylum's 2005** direct-to-DVD H. G. Wells' War of the Worlds has mild references to the Pal version. The Martian's mouth has three tongues that closely resemble the three Martian fingers in the Pal film. The Asylum film has scenes of power outages after the aliens' arrival via meteorite-ships. As in the Pal film, refugees hide in the mountains, instead of hiding underground as in the Wells novel, and the protagonist actively tries to fight the aliens by biological means.

**Steven Spielberg's 2005** version, War of the Worlds, although an adaptation of the Wells novel, has several references to the 1953 film. Gene Barry and Ann Robinson have cameo appearances near the end, and the invading aliens have three-fingered hands but are reptilian, walking tripods. A long, snaking, alien camera probe is deployed by the invaders. In his 2018 film *Ready Player One*, Spielberg included a fallen Martian war machine more akin to the 1953 film.

## 4K restoration

In 2018, a new, fully restored 4K Dolby Vision transfer from the original three-strip Technicolor negatives was published on iTunes. In July 2020, the film was reissued on Blu-ray and DVD by The Criterion Collection in the United States using the same 4K remaster and restoration. The Blu-ray documentation says the transfer process and careful colour and contrast calibrations allowed the special effects to be restored to Technicolor release print quality.

## Parents Guide

### Certification

Argentina:13 Australia:G (original rating) Australia:PG (1984, re-rating) Canada:G Canada:PG (Ontario) Canada:PG (tv rating) Denmark:15 Finland:K-16 France:Tous publics Iceland:12 India:U Italy:T Japan:PG-12 (video rating) Mexico:B Netherlands:12 Norway:9 (recommended rating) Norway:16 (1953, cinema rating) Poland:NC (self-applied) Russia:12+ Spain:A Sweden:15 (cut) United Kingdom:X (original rating) United Kingdom:PG (1986, re-rating) United States:TV-PG (TV rating) United States:G (1977, certificate #16011) United States:Passed (1953, National Board of Review) United States:Approved (1953, pca #16011) West Germany:16 (nf)

**Sex & Nudity** –None **Violence & Gore** – Mild, **Profanity** –None, **Alcohol, Drugs & Smoking** – None **Frightening & Intense Scenes** –Moderate



Drive-in advertisement from 1953.



Theatrical re-release poster

