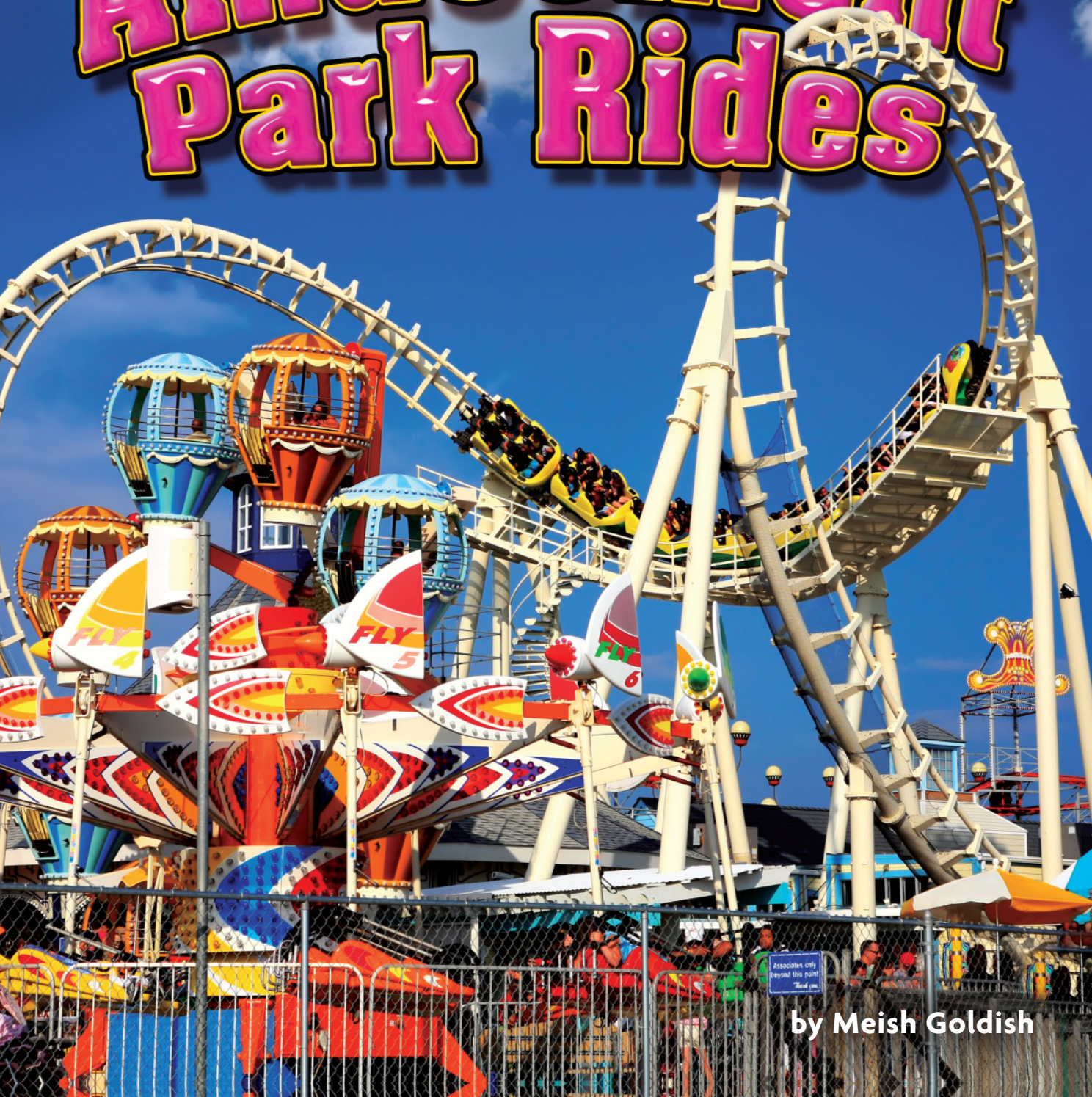




AMAZING Amusement Park Rides



by Meish Goldish

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by Meish Goldish

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Historian for American Coaster Enthusiasts

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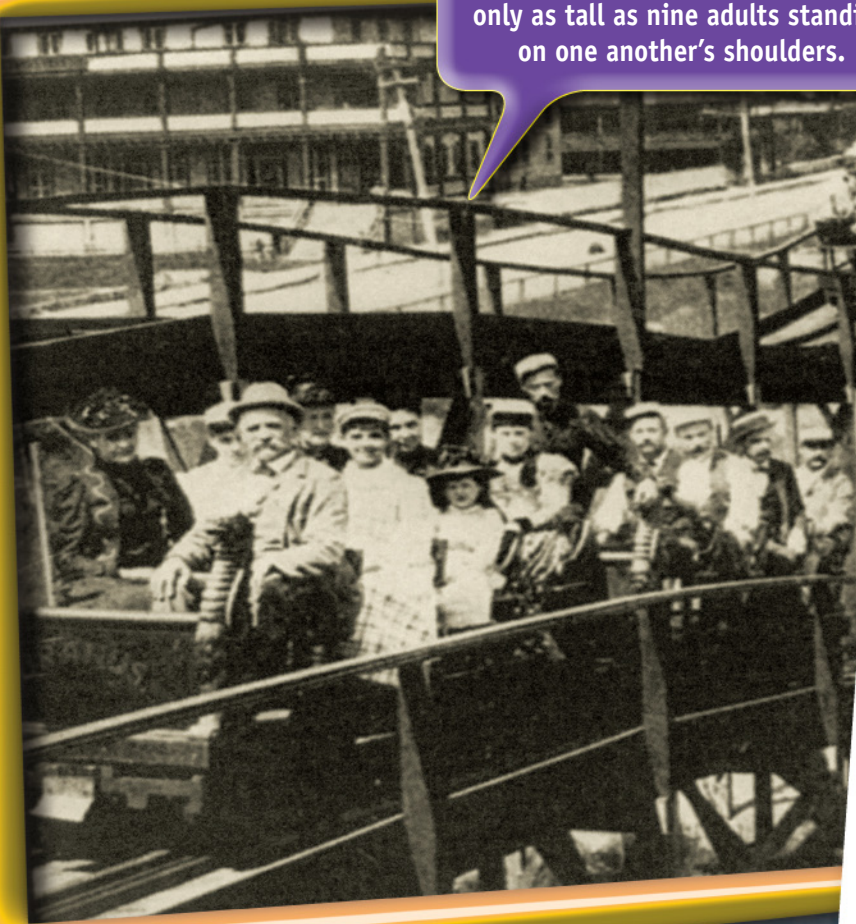
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BIG THRILLS

Every year, **amusement parks** offer bigger, faster, and taller rides. Back in the 1880s, one of America's first roller coasters, the Gravity Pleasure Switchback Railway, was only 50 feet (15 m) high and traveled just six miles per hour (9.7 kph). At that speed, many adults could outrun it. Today, some coasters are nearly ten times as tall and more than 20 times as fast!

At its highest point, the Gravity Pleasure Switchback Railway was only as tall as nine adults standing on one another's shoulders.



The Gravity Pleasure Switchback Railway opened at Coney Island in Brooklyn, New York, in 1884.

Other rides have also grown. In 1893, the first Ferris wheel was introduced at a world's fair in Chicago. The wheel rose 264 feet (80 m) into the air. It amazed people at the time. Yet the largest Ferris wheel today is more than double that size!

In this book you will discover some of the world's biggest, fastest—and scariest—amusement park **attractions**. You will also find out how their size and weight compare to other spectacular sights. So hold on tight—it's going to be an amazing ride!

The first Ferris wheel was as high as a 26-story building.



The Ferris wheel was invented by George W. Ferris. It is the only amusement park ride that is named for its inventor.

STEEL DRAGON 2000

Opened: 2000

Where: Nagashima Spa Land
in Mie, Japan

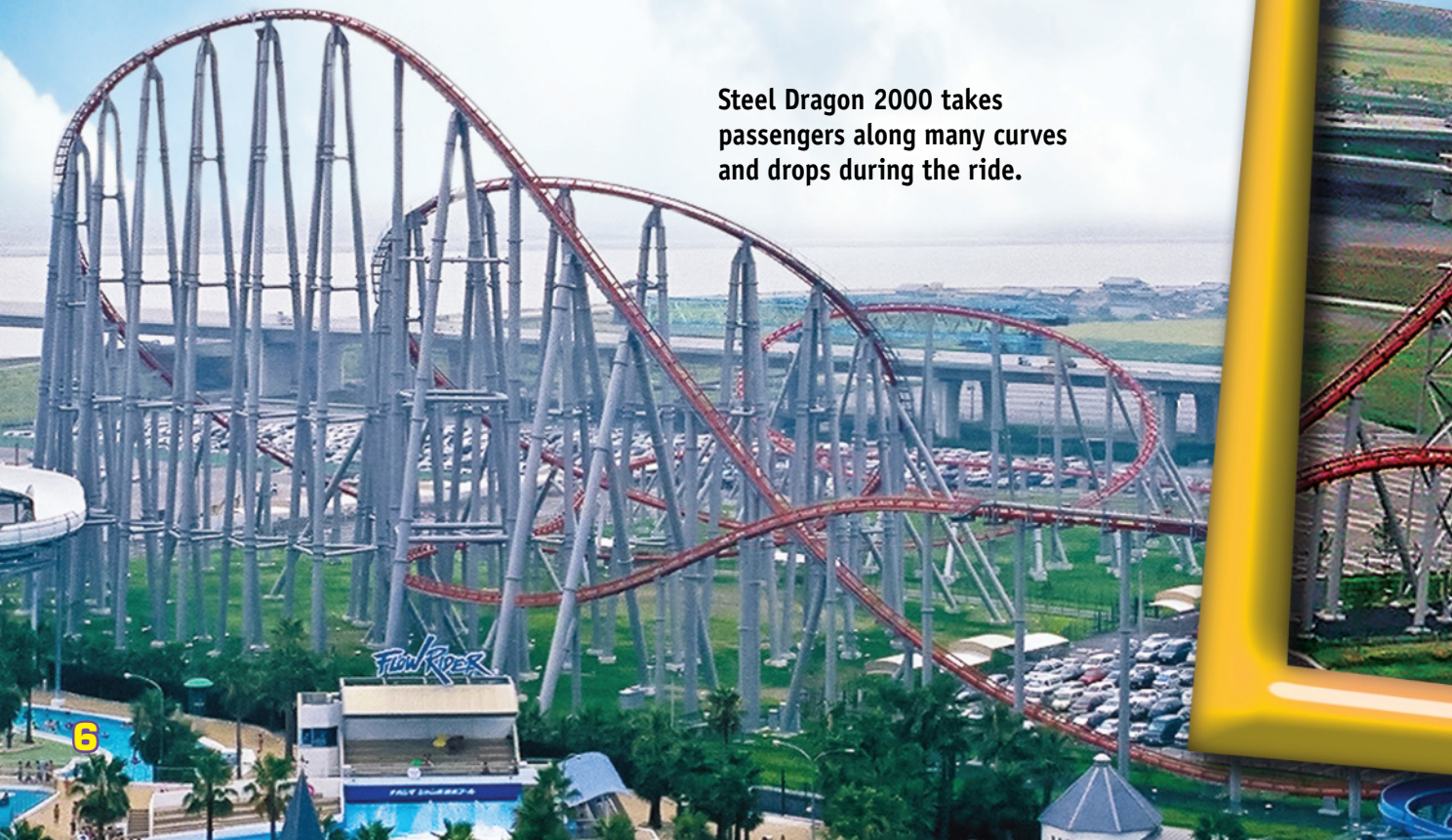
Length: 8,133 feet
(2,479 m)

Amazing Feature: World's longest roller-coaster track

Roller-coaster lovers like to zoom fast and far. They get to do both on Steel Dragon 2000. It's the longest roller coaster in the world. The winding track runs 8,133 feet (2,479 m). If it were laid out in one long straight line, the track would stretch across 27 football fields placed end to end!

Passengers on Steel Dragon 2000 zoom along the lengthy track at 95 miles per hour (153 kph). That's faster than the average speed of an Acela—Amtrak's high-speed train. At the Steel Dragon 2000's lightning **pace**, the entire ride takes only about four minutes to complete.

Steel Dragon 2000 takes passengers along many curves and drops during the ride.



The roller-coaster track rises 318 feet (97 m) high—almost twice the height of the giant ocean liner the *Titanic*.

Steel Dragon got its name because it is made of steel and opened in 2000, the Asian Year of the Dragon.



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LEARN MORE ONLINE

To learn more about amazing amusement park rides, visit
www.bearportpublishing.com/SoBigComparedtoWhat

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Meish Goldish has written more than 200 books for children. He lives in Brooklyn, New York, near the amazing amusement park rides at Coney Island.

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AMAZING Amusement Park Rides

Some amusement park rides are so extraordinary it's hard to grasp their incredible size and speed—unless you have something to compare them to. For example, the Steel Dragon 2000 roller coaster has a track that runs 8,133 feet (2,479 m). How long is that? If it were laid out in one straight line, the track would stretch across 27 football fields placed end to end! Look inside for more amazing comparisons in order to find out just how big and fast amusement park rides around the world truly are.

**Amazing Amusement
PARK RIDES**

**Spectacular
SKYSCRAPERS**

**Freaky-Strange
BUILDINGS**

**Stupendous
SPORTS STADIUMS**

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