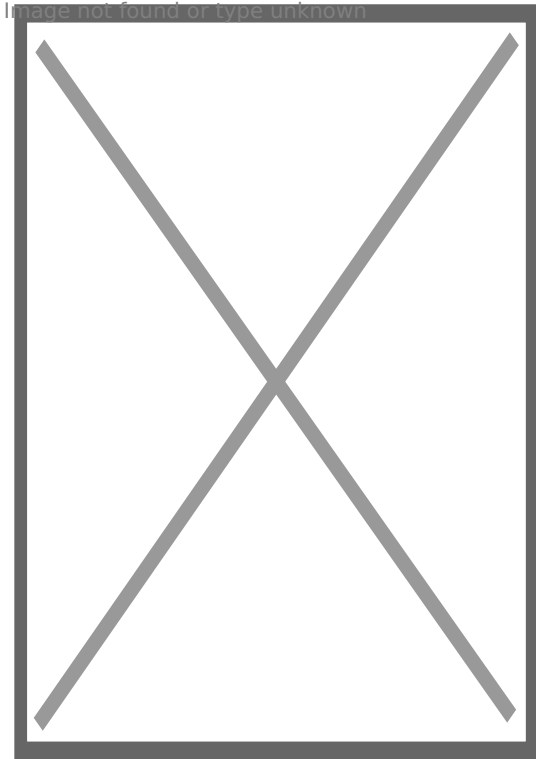


Titus Lucretius Carus - Main Biography

Post by "Cassius" of November 20, 2023 at 3:33 PM



[Lucretius - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org)
en.wikipedia.org



Virtually nothing is known about the life of Lucretius, and there is insufficient basis for a confident assertion of the dates of Lucretius's birth or death in other sources. Another, yet briefer, note is found in the [Chronicon](#) of Donatus's pupil, [Jerome](#). Writing four centuries after Lucretius's death, he enters under the 171st [Olympiad](#): "Titus Lucretius the poet is born."[\[6\]](#) If Jerome is accurate about Lucretius's age (43) when Lucretius died (discussed below), then it may be concluded he was born in 99 or 98 BC.[\[7\]\[8\]](#) Less specific estimates place the birth of Lucretius in the 90s BC and his death in the 50s BC,[\[9\]\[10\]](#) in agreement with the poem's many allusions to the tumultuous state of political affairs in [Rome](#) and its [civil strife](#).

[220px-Titi_Lucretii_Cari_De_rerum_natura.jpg](#)

Start of late 15th-century illuminated manuscript of [De rerum natura](#)Lucretius probably was a member of the aristocratic [gens Lucretia](#), and his work shows an intimate knowledge of the luxurious lifestyle in Rome.[\[11\]](#) Lucretius's love of the countryside invites speculation that he inhabited family-owned rural estates, as did many wealthy Roman families, and he certainly was expensively educated with a mastery of Latin, Greek, literature, and philosophy.[\[11\]](#)

A brief biographical note is found in [Aelius Donatus](#)'s Life of Virgil, which seems to be derived from an earlier work by [Suetonius](#).[\[12\]](#) The note reads: "The first years of his life Virgil spent in Cremona until the assumption of his [toga virilis](#) on his 17th birthday (when the same two men held the [consulate](#) as when he was born), and it so happened that on the very same day Lucretius the poet passed away." However, although Lucretius certainly lived and died around the time that Virgil and Cicero [flourished](#), the information in this particular testimony is internally inconsistent: if Virgil was born in 70 BC, his 17th birthday would be in 53. The two consuls of 70 BC, [Pompey](#) and [Crassus](#), stood together as consuls again in 55, not 53.

Another note regarding Lucretius's biography is found in Jerome's Chronicon, where he contends that Lucretius "was driven mad by a love [potion](#), and when, during the intervals of his insanity, he had written a number of books, which were later emended by Cicero, he killed himself by his own hand in the 44th year of his life."[\[6\]](#) The claim that he was driven mad by a love potion, although defended by such scholars as Reale and Catan,[\[13\]](#) is often dismissed as the result of historical confusion,[\[2\]](#) or anti-Epicurean bias.[\[14\]](#) In some accounts the administration of the toxic aphrodisiac is attributed to his wife [Lucilia](#). Regardless, Jerome's image of Lucretius as a lovesick, mad poet continued to have significant influence on modern scholarship until quite recently, although it now is accepted that such a report is inaccurate.