

The DVD two-pack in stores Tuesday includes both the original Japanese and American movie versions.

A lizard specialist examines the DVD return of Japan's big guy.

THE PLOT: In this classic monster movie from 1954, an American nuclear bomb test in the Pacific awakens a slumbering prehistoric creature. His beauty sleep interrupted, the gigantic monster — whose Japanese name, Gojira, is a combination of the Japanese words gorira (gorilla) and kujira (whale) — attacks Tokyo, wreaking havoc. The DVD two-pack includes *Gojira*, the uncut Japanese original featured here, as well as *Godzilla*, the re-edited American version starring Raymond Burr.

INSIDER'S CREDENTIALS: Bill Holmstrom is the collection manager of the Department of Herpetology at the Wildlife Conservation Society's Bronx Zoo and a lifetime monster movie fan.

OVERVIEW: "It's OK entertainment, but I wouldn't say it's one of my favorites. It's a little too silly, too over-the-top."

■ **Scene 8: Atom Breeds Monsters** — *Godzilla* appears and marches toward Tokyo.

"Godzilla was based on the old view we had of dinosaurs, that they were slow, lumbering creatures. But now we know some were more like birds: fast-moving, warm-blooded and quick-thinking. Godzilla, of course, is a large lizard, maybe 160 feet tall — larger than any creature we've ever encountered by far. One of the tallest dinosaurs, the T. rex, was about 15 to 20 feet tall. The longest lizard was a monitor lizard from Australia that is now extinct. That was about 20 feet long."


■ **Scene 15: Godzilla Attacks** — *Godzilla* unleashes his powerfully destructive "atomic breath."

"The popular misconception is that Godzilla breathes fire. Actually, he breathes a stream of compressed radioactive air that bursts into flame on impact. There are no animals that actually do that. But the spitting cobra will forcefully eject its venom into its tormentor's eyes, and the bombardier beetle shoots out a compound that burns on impact. That's from his butt, though, not his mouth."

■ **Scene 24: Danger of the Deep** — *Godzilla* finally is defeated when the valiant Dr. Serizawa (Akihiko Hirata) sacrifices himself and kills Godzilla with an experimental weapon, the Oxygen Destroyer.

"I was very curious about the Oxygen Destroyer. They never fully explained how it worked. I hope Dr. Serizawa left good notes in his lab. As far as I can tell, it's not based on any weapon we know of. It's not even based on any concept we know of."

■ **Special features: Making of the Godzilla Suit featurette**

"I was very interested in the segment on the Godzilla suit. Once the filmmakers decided that the kind of stop-action cinematography that was used in *King Kong* would be too expensive, they decided to put an actor in a latex suit. I was really into dinosaurs as a kid, and it was a big disappointment to see those baggy knees."  — Jamie Malanowski