

## The Best of Eric Burdon & the Animals 1966-1968

Written by bluesever

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### The Best of Eric Burdon & the Animals 1966-1968



1. *Don't Bring Me Down* The Animals 3:15 2. *See See Rider* Eric Burdon & The Animals 4:01  
3. *Inside-Looking Out* The Animals 3:47 4. *Hey Gyp* The Animals 3:49 5. *Help Me Girl* Eric Burdon & The Animals 2:38 6. *When I Was Young* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:01 7. *A Girl Named Sandoz* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:06 8. *San Franciscan Nights* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:20 9. *Good Times* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:00 10. *Anything* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:23 11. *Winds Of Change* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:59 12. *Monterey* Eric Burdon & The Animals 4:16 13. *Sky Pilot* Eric Burdon & The Animals 7:30 14. *White Houses* Eric Burdon & The Animals 3:46 15. *River Deep Mountain High* Eric Burdon & The Animals 7:21

Despite its being credited to Eric Burdon & the Animals, this hour-long compilation may prove to be of equal interest to serious fans of the original Animals (i.e. the quintet that recorded "House of the Rising Sun," "It's My Life," etc.). The first four cuts, at least -- "Don't Bring Me Down," "See See Rider," "Inside Looking Out," and "Hey Gyp" -- were done by the classic second lineup, featuring Burdon and original members Hilton Valentine, Chas Chandler, and John Steel, along with Dave Rowberry on keyboards, and those tracks all sprang from the original Animals' R&B roots. They also happen to be first-rate recordings and, indeed, are superior to many of the tracks off of the original band's first two LPs. As for the rest, overlooking "Help Me Girl" -- an Eric Burdon solo release on which it isn't clear who played, other than drummer Barry Jenkins -- it's all the work of Eric Burdon & the Animals, the psychedelic outfit that Burdon and his management assembled in 1966 around Jenkins; and John Weider on guitar, bass, violin, and keyboards; Vic Briggs on guitar, vibes, keyboards, and saxophone; and Danny McCulloch on bass, with Andy Summers showing up late in the day on "River Deep, Mountain High." Their material is surprisingly engaging, even if it isn't what anyone really wants to remember Burdon for -- in contrast to the typical British psychedelic music of the period, which tended to sound very fey and elegant, the "new Animals" played a hard, ballsy kind of psychedelia that never lost sight of the rhythm (and, at its best, didn't stray too far from the blues) of their R&B roots. The sides represented here are played more than competently and show occasional inspiration in the writing, arrangements, and performance. Though their sound is more of an acquired taste than that of the original Animals, they were a talented band, and perhaps if they could have

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pulled together one album that was as inspired as the singles "When I Was Young," "Monterey," or "Sky Pilot," they might have sustained some success. Instead, their albums tended toward the self-consciously heavy, spaced-out noodling that we hear on "Winds of Change," where Burdon sounds as though he's doing a burlesque of Jim Morrison. This disc lives up to its name, however, distilling down the best elements of the group's various facets, so you get their most accessible single sides and the best of the album noodling (the sitar and violin on "Winds of Change" are beautifully played, even if they don't go anywhere). The disc could have been extended to include cuts like "Shake" by the early transitional lineup, and "Paint It Black," which would have come close to making it definitive, but those did turn up later on Polygram Special Products' budget-priced best-of on the group. The sound is very good for a 1991 CD release, and the notes are reasonably thorough. ---Bruce Eder, AllMusic Review

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