

Bibliography of Environmental Children's Books

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FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS (Ages 5-9)

Cherry, Lynne. *The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of Amazon Rain Forest*. Gulliver /Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990. (Ages 5-7)

A logging company representative tells a logger to cut a kapok tree, and leaves. As the man works he becomes tired and takes a nap, during which the animals on the tree begin to tell him what would happen to them if he cut the tree. When he wakes up all the animals, as well as a boy from the rain forest surround him and he decides not to cut the tree.

Cherry, Lynne *The Sea, the Storm and the Mangrove Tangle*. Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2004.

A mangrove seed (propagule) falls into the sea and washes to a far away lagoon where it grows to eventually form an island and the habitat for a great variety of animals. When a hurricane comes the mangrove roots shelter the fish, and when people want to clear it for a shrimp farm one of them says this is where the fish have their nursery.

George, Jean Craighead *Nutik, the Wolf Pup*. HarperCollins, 2000. (Ages 4-8)

Little Amaroq falls in love with a sickly and hungry wolf pup he helps raise, but when it comes time to let the pup join its family of wolves he is strong and does so. The happy ending for Amaroq is that Nutik has bonded with him and returns to be part of the human family.

Lasky, Kathryn. *She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head!* Hyperion, 1995, (Ages 6-9).

Harriette Hemenway and her cousin Minna Hall, living in the late 19th century in Massachusetts, are determined to end the foolish and unethical use of animals and birds for fashion.

McCully, Emily Arnold. *Squirrel and John Muir*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2004. (Ages 7-9)

This fictional account of John Muir's stay in Yosemite Valley as a young man, working for a tour-guide and owner of a guest house in the park, and his explorations and beginnings as a nature writer is enlivened by the inclusion of Foy, his employer's lively daughter, whom Muir introduces to the wonders of nature and of Yosemite Valley.

Schuch, Steve. *A Symphony of Whales*. Illustrated by Peter Sylvada. Harcourt Brace, 1999. (Ages 7-10)

When Glashka, a girl living in a Chukchi village in Siberia discovers with the help of her sled dogs that hundreds, maybe thousands of beluga whales had been trapped in the bay ice, she and the villagers are determined to help the whales by calling on a Russian ship to come and open up a channel. Once the channel is open the whales would not follow the ship to safety until the ship played classical music.

Shetterly, Susan Hand. *Shelterwood*. Illustrated by Rebecca Haley McCall. Tilbury, 1999. (Ages 7-10)

The narrator, a young girl is invited by her grandfather, who owns some woods which he harvests, to learn about the care and management of the forest and to learn to observe and appreciate the plants and animals of the forest.

Wyeth, Sharon Dennis. *Something Beautiful*. Illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet.

Doubleday, 1998. (Ages 6-10).

A little girl is discouraged about her urban neighborhood, where she sees a homeless person, graffiti that says 'die,' and trash thrown in front of her apartment. When a teacher encourages them to find something beautiful, she discovers beauty in a baby laugh, her friends' 'moves,' an old man's smooth stone, the green grocer's vegetables. Upon her return home she cleans up the trash and removes the graffiti. To her mother she is something beautiful.

Young, Ed. *Night Visitors*. Philomel, 1995. (Ages 8-10)

A merchant, tired of having the ants invade storage chambers, wants to drown them, but his son pleads for a chance to seal them out of the granary rather than killing them.

NON-FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS Ages 5-9

Bash, Barbara. *Urban Roosts*. Sierra Club, 1990. (Ages 6-10)

Explains the unusual habitats birds have developed in urban places, from I beams and roof tops to garden gloves and stop lights

Bishop, Nic. *Forest Explorer: A Life-Size Field Guide*. New York: Scholastic, 2004. 44p. (Ages 6-11)

This field guide of truly life-size animals combines a narrative text inviting readers to identify specific animals from tiny velvet mites to a small rabbit and her kits, with stunning photography showing a temperate forest setting, from forest floor to canopy.

Brenner, Barbara. *One Small Place in a Tree*. Illustrated by Tom Leonard. HarperCollins, 2004. (Ages 5-8)

“You” can observe the formation of a tree hole and its use by various animals from beetles to fungi, woodpeckers, squirrels, bluebirds, mice, and snake, etc.

Cole, Henry. *I Took a Walk*. Greenwillow, 1998. (Ages 6-9)

The unnamed narrator, depicted vaguely as a boy on the cover, but nowhere else, says he took a walk and lists all the things he saw in four environments: the woods, and the meadow, the stream, the pond. Numerous animals and plants are named and depicted for the reader to find, with a key to provided at the end for each.

Cone, Molly. *Come Back, Salmon: How a Group of Dedicated Kids Adopted Pigeon Creek and Brought it Back to Life*. Photographs by Sidnee Wheelwright. Sierra Club Book, 1992. (Ages 9-12)

In 1984 elementary school children in the city of Everett, Washington began the arduous process of cleaning up Pigeon Creek, making it habitable by salmon, and raising the salmon from eggs to fry over the school year, until they could release them into the creek. They not only cleaned up the stream but motivated the entire city to cooperate in the project. Two years later the salmon returned.

Cone, Molly. *Squishy, Misty, Damp & Muddy: The In-Between World of Wetlands*. Sierra Club Books for Children, 1996. (Ages 7-10)

Describes the kinds of plants and animals that live in a variety of different wetlands, from puddles to marshes and explains the detrimental effect of draining and building over them on human welfare (flooding and droughts) as well as wildlife. Emphasizes water purifying effect of wetlands.

Dunphy, Madeline. *Here is the African Savanna*. Hyperion, 1999. (Ages 4-8)

Describes the wildlife of the savannah through rhythmic cumulative lines and beautiful illustrations.

Ehrlich, Amy. *Rachel: The Story of Rachel Carson*. Illustrated by Wendell Minor. Harcourt, 2003.

Through small chronologic vignettes the author depicts Carson’s life from birth to death, highlighting her love of nature, her of writing and explorations of the seashore and woods, and her work exposing the harm pesticides were doing to the ecosystem.

George, Jean Craighead. *One Day in the Tropical Rainforest*. Thomas Y. Crowell, 1990. (Ages 8-11)

Tepui, a boy of the Tropical Rain Forest of the Macaw, near the Orinoco in Venezuela helps a biologist discover an unnamed butterfly which he can name for the daughter of a millionaire who would then buy the rainforest and donate it as an international preserve.

Gibbons, Gail. *Giant Pandas*. Holiday House, 2002. (Ages 4-8)

Gives panda facts for younger children and tells of their endangered status and what’s being done to protect them.

Grupper, Jonathan. *Destination: Rainforest*. National Geographic, 1997. (Ages 5-10)

South and Central American rainforest life is introduced by putting the child in the scene, imagining seeing the animals in each of the four vertical worlds. Endnote explains importance of rainforests – 70% of animals on earth; Conservation; land; use; population demands; alternative economic solutions;

Jenkins, Steve. *I See a Kookaburra! Discovering Animal Habitats Around the World*. Houghton Mifflin, 2005. (Ages 5-8)

Presents six environment representing different ecological niches from around the world, with children having to spot eight animals in each environment.

Siebert, Patricia. *Discovering El Nino: How Fable and Fact Together Help Explain the Weather*. Illustrated by Jan Davey Ellis. Millbrook Press, 1999. (Ages 7-10)

Describes the weather changes created by the shifting temperature in the Pacific off Peru around Christmas time (El Nino is Baby Jesus), which results in droughts or great storms in distant parts of the world.

Wright-Frierson, Virginia. *An Island Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk on a Barrier Island*. Simon & Schuster, 1998. (Ages 9-12)

Wright-Frierson records her day with her daughter on a barrier island off North Carolina through description, inserts of informational notes, and paintings.

FICTION FOR OLDER READERS Ages 10-14

Fleischman, Paul. *Seedfolk*. HarperCollins, 1997. (Ages 10-14)

In memory of her father a young Korean American girl plants a few sunflower seeds in the empty lot which has been used as a dump by everyone. Little by little others with needs of their own plant vegetables, and even cash crops for the market. Soon the people and the dump flourish.

George, Jean C. *The Missing Gator of Gumbo Limbo*. HarperCollins, 1992. (Ages 9-12)

Gumbo Limbo has one of the last "undefiled hammocks" in Southern Florida, but it too is threatened by the new condominium. The owners are beginning to draw too much fresh water from the aquifer, are using a lot of pesticides killing off the fish and dragonflies that eat the mosquitoes, and want the local pond's alligator killed. Fortunately Liza K., age 10, and her friends, all of whom are in some way endangered beings too, work together and use the law to help save the alligator and the hammock.

George, Jean Craighead. *There's an Owl in the Shower*. HarperCollins, 1995. (Ages 10-13)

After Borden's father, a logger, loses his job, Borden vows open warfare on spotted owls, but not recognizing a helpless baby owl as one of his enemies, he brings it home to nurture. His father ends up raising it and gradually learns not only to care about the owl, even after recognizing that it is a spotted owl, but comes to understand that his own well-being is also threatened by clear-cutting the ancient forests.

Hiassen, Carl. *Hoot*. Knopf, 2002. (Ages 12+)

Roy, new to South Florida, becomes involved with trying to save the burrowing owl, a protected species from having its nesting site destroyed by a new pancake restaurant after he learns from 'Mullet Fingers,' who is harassing the builders, about the problem. Instead of harassment, Roy researches and uses the law, and organizes a protest which helps publicize the issue.

Hobbs, Will. *Jackie's Wild Seattle*. HarperCollins, 2003. (Ages 10-14)

Shannon, 13, and her 7 year old brother Cody spend one summer helping their uncle Neal rescue trapped and hurt wildlife near Seattle. Helping the animals helps Cody overcome his fears of disasters, an abused boy at the rescue center gain the confidence he needs to get out of his situation and to stop his own psychological decline into abusiveness, and uncle Neal to keep his spirit up so he can fight his cancer.

Quattlebaum, Mary. *Jackson Jones and Mission Greentop*. Delacorte Press, 2004. (Ages 8-10).

An anonymous corporation, Drane and Company, has bought the little plot of land that has been a neighborhood garden since the days of WWII, and Jackson Jones, reluctant hero and gardener, is going to fight them.

Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw. *Return of the Wolf*. Jared Taylor Williams, illustrator. Clarion, 1995. (Ages 10-12)

Two outcast wolves find each other and form a pair bond and a new family. Told from the wolves point of view, readers see the challenges they face for survival from territory with sufficient wildlife to hunting larger animals that can support them, to avoiding human traps and hunters.

NON-FICTION FOR OLDER READERS Ages 10-14

Burnie, David. *Endangered Planet*. Kingfisher, 2005. (Ages 10-14)

Emphasizing that our earth is fragile and rare, Burnie describes its history and evolution and the pressures human activity is placing on it, from increasing demand for energy to population growth.

Coombs, Karen M. *Flush! Treating Waste Water*. CarolRhoda, 1995. (Ages 10-14)

Describes the importance of water, the history of water use and sewage, stages of water treatment today, natural methods of treatment, and "Fun Facts."

Goodall, Jane. *The Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World and Ours*. Scholastic, 2001. (Ages 10+)

Goodall describes her life studying chimpanzees, gives readers close-ups of chimps and their personalities, and explains the problems that beset them and what she and her foundations are trying to do to save the chimps and improve the environment and lives of the people in the area near the Gombe National Park.

Hoose, Phillip. *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2004. (Ages 12+)

Chronicles the race by scientists and environmentalists against the destruction of the Ivory Billed Woodpecker which was once abundant in the southern United States but had not been recorded as sighted for many years at the time of the publishing of the book (since then it has been sighted in Arkansas). The account highlights the wonder of those who have seen the bird, the passion of those trying to save it from extinction, and the economic interests that show lack of appreciation or understanding for the need to preserve the wilderness for posterity.

Lauber, Patricia. *Flood: Wrestling with the Mississippi*. National Geographic Society, 1996. (Ages 10-14)

Chronicles the flood of 1992, when after a spring drought an endless rain resulted in the flooding of the entire Mississippi River valley, including its tributaries. Explains the connection between destroying the natural flooding patterns of the river through levies, the elimination of the delta wetlands, and the barrier islands in the Gulf of Mexico, and major floods. Predicts this year's Katrina disaster.

McLimans, David. *Gone Wild: An Endangered Animal Alphabet*. Walker, 2006. 32 p. (Ages 8-11)

Elegant and fanciful, this black and white silhouette illustrated picture book gives facts about endangered animals from around the world, identifying each animal's taxonomic classification, range, and endangered status. Caldecott Honor, 2007.

Montgomery, Sy. *Quest for the Tree Kangaroo: An Expedition to the Cloud Forest of New Guinea*. Photographs by Nic Bishop. Houghton Mifflin. (Ages 9+)

A team of scientists work with trackers in New Guinea to site, band, and follow by radio this rare animal in one of earth's biologically most diverse regions. Beautiful photographs and information about cloud forest, the other fascinating animals that live there, and the people of Papua New Guinea are included. The book concludes with information on the importance of conserving this nature treasure. (Sibert Honor book, 2007).

Montgomery, Sy. *Tarantula Scientist*. Photographs by Nic Bishop. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. (Ages 9+)

This Sibert Honor book presents the adventurous life a scientist, Sam Marshall, whose work takes him from his Hiram College, Ohio lab to the rainforests of French Guiana as well as to the Arizona desert in search of tarantulas. The close-ups of tarantulas and the lively description of Dr. Marshall's pursuit make the subject of spiders and the career of a scientist inviting.

Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw. *Back to the Wild*. Photos by William Munoz. Gulliver Green Book, 1997. (Ages 10+)

Describes the reintroduction of four endangered animals in the wild: red wolf; black footed ferret; leaping lemur; and golden lion tamarin, and explains the challenges and dilemmas.

Salmansohn, Pete and Stephanie Kress and Stephen W. Kress. *Saving Birds: Heroes Around the World*. Audubon/Tilbury House Pub, 2003. (Ages 10+).

Six stories of reclaiming near extinct or endangered birds or environments in collaboration with people who live near them. Only in two birds' environments, those of the murre of the United States and the black robin of New Zealand, were people affecting their environment too far to reach directly-i.e. fishing practices and a logging company. This is a very inspiring book that shows how economic activity and conservation can work hand in hand.

Smith, David J. *If the World Were a Village: A Book about the World's People*.

Illustrated by Shelagh Armstrong. Kids Can Press, 2002. (Ages 10+)

Reducing the world population to a village of 100, each page displays an interesting and understandable statistic relating to resources and social conditions,

Sussman, Art. *Dr. Art's Guide to Planet Earth: For Earthlings Ages 12 to 120*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2000. (Ages 12+) Explains how matter, energy and life systems are interrelated and part of the entire earth system. Discusses ways in which humans are interfering with these systems: chemicals in the atmosphere etc.