

Outstanding Science Read Alouds 2003

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"The term read-aloud refers to an experience that involves the actual oral reading of a book or some form of print for the purpose of communicating the text's meaning to others. Reading aloud involves verbalizing the words while adhering to the intonation, pitch, inflection, stress, and pauses that present the language and style that are appropriate for conveying the author's message. Silent reading does not present the language, style, or mood of a text as effectively as reading aloud."¹

When you read aloud a science book to students it is important to: introduce the book, read with expression, allow time for the students to study the illustrations, encourage predictions, and allow time for discussion at the end of the story. You may also want to point out the parts of the story you liked and ask the students what parts they liked and why they liked that particular part.

Selecting Science Read-Alouds

In selecting science read-aloud books it is important to remember that not all children are able to separate fact from fiction. Therefore, the primary emphasis should be to choose books that present the most accurate information. What characteristics make a good science read-aloud book? Look for the following: the language flows well when read aloud; one or more facts are remembered long after the book is finished; the book gives pleasure even after repeated readings; hearing the book read aloud motivates children to continue reading on their own; the illustrations or photographs are eye-catching and dynamic, strengthening and extending the story; and finally, the content sparks curiosity and enhances the curriculum.

Science read-aloud books often encourage students to ask questions while you are reading the story. Often their questions will enhance the storytelling experience rather than disrupting the story. You will have to inform the students what the procedure will be for asking questions. We suggest that questions be entertained after the reading so the flow of the narrative will not be interrupted. At that time we will return to the book and turn the pages to remind them of any questions they might have.

Science Series Read Alouds

These series are intended for the beginning readers to read on their own. However, certain individual titles qualify as read-alouds for younger children who are nonreaders. Many of these titles would be of interest to older students who are struggling readers since these books are high-interest, low-vocabulary-level.

Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science

HarperCollins. Individual books, 32-40 p., \$15.95; paper, \$4.95.

The Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science series is the longest-lived science series in the industry, founded in 1960 with the publication of *The Moon Seems to Change* by Franklyn M. Branley. The books provide focused exploration of science topics such as anatomy, space science, biology, physics, and paleontology. Information is presented in a child-centered way, starting with what a child already knows or can readily observe about his or her world, and then building on those basic facts to expand the area of knowledge. There are currently 80 titles in print.

Rookie Read-About Science

Children's Press. Individual titles, 32p., \$19.00.

This series was launched in 1990 and quickly became a favorite early science series. Each of the 120 titles impacts a fundamental science concept in a clear and concise way and is generously illustrated with engaging color photos that bring its subject into vivid focus. Topics are drawn mainly from physical and natural science areas.

An exceptional resource for children's science books for the K-8 community is **Search It! Science**, at <http://searchit.heinemann.com>. This database contains thousands of highly recommended children's science trade books. Want to find books on the environment appropriate for fourth graders? No problem. You can create that bibliography, and numerous others, in seconds. You can search for titles by subject, kinds of books (genre type, how hard, how long), keyword, title, series, or author. Each title's information includes a picture of the cover, awards (if any), bibliographic information, keywords, difficulty level, and summarized reviews with source. This subscription based service is rooted in a National Science Foundation grant. Sign-up for a preview today!

Aruego, Jose and Ariane Dewey. *Weird Friends: Unlikely Allies in the Animal Kingdom*

Harcourt, 2002. 40p. 0-15-202128-0. \$16.00

A wonderfully, colorful and entertaining science book by the late beloved author/artist, Aruego. The animals are more cartoony than graphically realistic but certainly recognizable. The facts about symbiosis, weird friendships in the wild, are fascinating. All ages can learn something unknown to them. Did you know about the alliance between the Tuatara and the Sooty Sheawater? Or the Red Ants and the Large Blue Butterfly? Geography is introduced at the end with a note about each species and its locale. This book is longer than most of our read-aloud choices. We suggest that if introduced in a library, read a few entries and make the book available for checkout to be pursued at leisure. In a classroom the teacher could read an entry spaced through the day, even the week.

Ashman, Linda. *Babies On the Go. (Illus. by Jane Dyer)*

Harcourt, 2003. unpag. 0-15-201894-8. \$16.00

In rhymed text and colorful illustrations animal locomotion is depicted in the natural habitats of twenty animals. The many different ways parents transport children is demonstrated with mother and child. The pictures are realistic and the language is vivid: "Towed along a bumpy trail" (elephants), "Surfing on a paddletail" (beavers), "Nudged along with gentle paws" (polar bears), "Perching on a mother's hip" (snow monkey).

Barner, Bob. *Stars! Stars! Stars!*

Chronicle Books, 2002. 28p. 0-8118-3159-0. \$13.95

Barner's latest addition to the world of science for the very young reader is as colorfully captivating with its bright vivid art and rhymed text as his other contributions - *Dem Bones, Dinosaur Bones*, etc. "Venus, the Evening Star, first planet to shine in the twilight sky ...Stormy Mars glowing red in the vastness of space. Giant planet Jupiter moving with grace." Several pages of interesting facts conclude the book. "Jupiter..is so big that all the other planets could fit inside it." "A sun is any star that is the center of a planetary system. Our sun is a medium-size star."

Batten, Mary. *Hey, Daddy! Animal Fathers and Their Babies. (Illus. by Higgins Bond)*

Peachtree, 2002. unpag. 1-56145-272-6. \$15.95

Big, realistic, vivid art instantly captivates the reader. And the text grips him with the strange parenting habits of mammals, birds, and reptiles. Some are familiar species (blue jay, mice) and others are exotic (the mallee fowl is of Australia; the Darwin frog of the South American rainforest). Each species is introduced on one page (the Emperor penguins rate 3 pages, but with short paragraphs!) so this could be read over a period of time.

The daddy phalaropes are Alaskan shorebirds that sit on the eggs until they hatch. The female may mate with other males and lay more eggs, then she swims off into the sea, leaving the daddies to take over. "The mother (seahorse) lays her eggs in a special pouch in the daddy's abdomen. The eggs hatch inside the pouch, and the baby seahorses stay there until they grow strong. When they are big enough to take care of themselves, they pop out of their daddy's pouch and swim away."

Bono, Mary. Ugh! A Bug

Walker, 2002. 32p. 08027-8800-9. \$15.95

The author/artist's first children's book is a visual and audio delight. A rhymed text asks a question.

"Supposing a SPIDER should slide into view. Would you scream? Would you holler? Just what would you do?"

Against a colorful background of comical caricatures are positioned amazingly realistic looking bugs. The 16 different creatures (centipede, flea, inchworm, etc.) are made of plastic clay with wire legs and acetate wings. This fun little book ends with a gentle reminder:

"And please don't forget that whoever they are-bugs are happier when they are not in a jar."

Carney, Margaret. *Where Does A Tiger Heron Spend the Night?* (Illus. by Melanie Watt)

Kids Can Press, 2002. 28p. 1-55337-022-8. \$15.95

This amazing little book spans interest levels from 2 to 82 and beyond. The text is the simplest: a question asked on the left page and answered, under a fold-out on the right page. But the appeal is not the text but rather the rare birds chosen: storm-petrel, lyrebird, nightjar, whinbrel, twelve in all. Each is in its natural habitat, and the questions involve different aspects of the nature of the bird. "Why does an osprey plunge from the sky? To grasp a fat catfish it spies swimming by." "What snacks does a roadrunner grind in its gizzard? Tarantulas, rattlesnakes, beetles and lizards." The two year old learns several facts about each bird by listening and looking. The appendix with its brief notes about each bird is probably as much information that the 82 year old wants to know. The book could stimulate further research about locale, habits, etc. by older students. Colorful art.

Carrick, Carol. *The Polar Bears Are Hungry.* (Illus. by Paul Carrick)

Clarion, 2002. 32p. 0-61815962-2. \$14.00

Soft pastel tones create the feeling of cold in the arctic setting of this story of a mother polar bear and her two young cubs. She has not eaten for months and her body needs food so she can make milk for her cubs. While the ice is intact, the mother can capture seals. But as the days grow warmer, the ice breaks up, and the seal can out swim the bear. So the bears move closer to town and man to search for food. The bears have to be drugged and moved away back into the wilderness. The author's note warns against global warming with the shrinking of the ice flows. A good story!

Collard, Sneed. *Leaving Home.* (Illus. By Joan Dunning)

Houghton Mifflin, 2002. 32p. 0-618-114548. \$15.00

Bright watercolors depict accurately the natural locations of where 25 different species of animals, birds, fish and reptiles are born. "Sooner or later, we all leave home." Some walk (the jaguar), some crawl (Jamaican bromeliad crab), some fly (albatross), some swim (Port Jackson shark) while nature lends a hand to some with currents (coral larvae) and winds (spiders). All different ways in different environments at different stages of growth are pictured in the realistic, detailed art. "Visual literacy" in action! And a detail or two is included in each description so children learn more in a succinct way.

Copeland, Cynthia and Alexandra P. Lewis. *Splashy Fins, Flashy Skins: Deep-Sea Rhymes To Make You Grin*

Millbrook Press, 2002. 32p. 0-76132906-4. \$21.90

Colorful photos of some weird creatures will captivate the reader. Each is labeled with some of the rhymes highlighting characteristics of the species. "Puffer fish is a deep-sea fake, he is usually flat, not fat. But when the big fish follow him (the ones who want to swallow him) he puffs up and stays that way, so they will not eat him today!" After the text is a note to parents with tips for both reading and discussion.

Davies, Nicola. *One Tiny Turtle.* (Illus. by Jane Chapman)

Candlewick, 2001. 29p. 0-7636-1549-8. \$15.99

This non-series is a favorite "series" of ours. The Candlewick science books all have pleasing realistic art with a lyrical narrative. "Far, far out to sea, land is only a memory, and empty sky touches the water." The text is printed in a big, generous type and spacing. In a smaller type are added facts for an adult reader to share. A tangle of weed is the nursery of a baby loggerhead, one of the seven species of sea turtles. Loggerheads lead solitary lives, swimming all over the world in search of food. But one summer night she miraculously reappears, 30 or 40 years later, at the beach where she was born. She lays her eggs, covers them carefully, and swims away. When the eggs hatch, the few turtles who survive disappear into the ocean, the cycle repeating.

Dewey, Jennifer. *Once I Knew A Spider.* (Illus. by Jean Cassels)

Walker, 2002. 30p. 0-8027-8701-0. \$16.95

"This story reveals the exceptional magic in the everyday world and how it can touch our lives." So reads the blurb of this lovely story, a true story, of an expectant mother who watches a common orb weaver making a home outside her window. First, a delicate web is woven, its sticky threads trapping insects. And as summer passes, both the mother and the spider grow bigger and bigger. The spider makes a strong, waterproof sack to hold her eggs and tucks it into the darkest corner of the window. Snows come and miraculously the orb spider does not die as most of its species does. All winter the spider warms her sack against her belly and protects it. And one morning in June the spiderlings hatch and the mother dies. The lovely art captures the gentle mood of this tender tale of birth and rebirth. The author's note at the end adds a deeper dimension.

Doyle, Malachy. *Cow.* (Illus. by Angelo Rinaldi)

Margaret McElderry Books, 2002. 34p. 0-689-84462X. \$17.00

The art alone makes this book worth every penny! Big, oversize illustrations make it perfect for group readings. The poetic prose and the soft muted colors depicting the countryside create a mood of tranquility and well-being, a lazy, summer day in the country. Imagine being a cow.

"Early morning. Dawn is breaking. The first birds sing, and the farmer strolls down the lane whistling."

Into the barn for milking, back to the field for grazing, down to the river for a long drink of water, under the oak for resting, waiting by the fence for evening milking, and finally back to the field for the night.

"You graze, you chew, and you rest. It's hard work being a cow."

Frazier, Mary Ann. *How Animal Babies Stay Safe*

HarperCollins, 2002. 33p. 0-06-028804-3. \$15.95. Series: Let's Read-and-Find-Out Science, Stage 1.

The Let's Read-and-Find-Out Science series gains another lovely new addition to a superior science series. The accurate and colorful illustrations depict all the animals in their natural habitat. A wide variety of animals are pictured as helpless newborns depending on parents, each other, or even instinct for survival. Some animal parents (cats, leopards, shrews, etc) feed, clean, carry and protect their young until they are old enough to manage alone. Human babies are taken care of by parents the longest of all animals. Some parents build homes -a nest, a den, a burrow to protect their babies. Even those who are left behind are often camouflaged to protect them. Many animal parents will risk their own lives to protect their children, like zebras, tigers, wolves and bears. An addendum lists what to do if you find a baby animal.

Fredericks, Anthony. *In One Tidepool: Crabs, Snails and Salty Tails.* (Illus. by Jennifer Dirubbio)

Dawn Publications, 2002. unpag. 1-58469-038-0. \$7.95

Big, bright illustrations highlight the wonderful creatures living in and around a tidepool. The rhymed text told in a cumulative style introduces barnacles, fish, anemones, a sponge, snails, crabs, limpets, and a sea star. That method of narration makes it a good book for beginning readers. The interesting field notes at the end make it a good science book for young readers: Sponges are animals not plants. There are about 9000 different species.

"Fantastic Fact: Sponges are some of the oldest animals on Earth. They lived during the time of the dinosaurs." A bibliography of good books about ecology and addresses of organizations preserving animal habitats is at the end.

Glaser, Linda. *It's Spring.* (Illus. by Susan Swan)

Millbrook Press, 2002. 32p. 0-7613-1760-0. \$21.90

This second in a series of four books about seasons (*It's Fall*, 2001) expresses the feelings a child experiences with a change in the season. The things he sees, hears, feels, all bring joy to the child.

"I skip and leap and feel light and free. Fresh air rushes all over me."

Animals that have been hibernating awaken. Birds return. Flower buds grow and swell. "It's spring." All this exuberance is captured in the colorful cut-paper illustrations of the artist. She describes how she makes the pictures. The author includes 3 pages of very useful information about nature activities that can be accomplished by children in the spring.

Godwin, Laura. *What the Baby Hears.* (Illus. by Mary Morgan)

Hyperion, 2002. 26p. 0-7868-2484-0. \$15.99

In case you think this is just another "mommy/baby" book, (of which there are more than enough), this one is different. Rhymed text imitates the comforting sounds mother animals make, but these sounds are different from the ordinary: "nuzzle, nuzzle, nuzzle; guzzle, guzzle, guzzle; oink, oink, oink; boink, boink, etc."

"What the puppy hears - lick, lick, lick. What the beetle hears - click, click, click."

The simplicity of the text and the big print and clean spaces lend this book to beginning readers. The sound the human baby hears is "I love you!" Simple, colorful art makes this good for early childhood and beginning readers.

Hall, Peg. *Whose Tail Is This? A Look at Tails -Swishing, Wiggling, and Rattling.* (Illus. by Ken Landmark)

Picture Window Books, 2003. 24p. 14048-0011-6. \$15.95

A good book for the very young at story hour. Nice size, bright art, the tail only is shown on one page and the page is turned for the answer. Fun facts accompany each of the seven animals. A gecko lizard, whose tail breaks off in time of danger, can grow another in some months time but it might be crooked or a different color, or maybe even two! The end of the book has riddles about the information presented in the text. A list of fun facts, a glossary, a bibliography of books and Web sites, and an index! Other titles in series: *Whose Ears Are These? Whose Eyes Are These? Whose Feet Are These? Whose Legs Are These? Whose Mouth Is This? Whose Nose Is This? Whose Skin Is This?*

Harrison, David Lee. *Rivers: Nature's Wondrous Waterways.* (Illus. by Cheryl Nathan)

Boyd Mills Press, 2002. 32p. 1-56397-968-3. \$15.95

The clear, direct style of this narrative makes a good introduction to young students. The importance of water to humans and nature is presented first. But most of the book is about where the water comes from and how a river begins and grows. The colorful collage illustrations add interest. After the author's note is a list for further reading. This subject is not as enthralling as snakes and alligators, but this book is one of the best for young students on this topic.

Jordan, Sandra. *Frog Hunt.*

Roaring Brook Press, 2002. 32p. 0-7613-2652-9. \$15.95

A lovely little book for young children with soft, hand-tinted photographs of children "On a bright summer morning we set out to catch a frog." And though they see many creatures - tadpoles, skimmers, muskrat, minnows, but no frog. "The day is ending ...And then we see a golden eye gleaming in the reeds. Got him! We take turns holding our frog, feeling the heartbeat through his thin, cool skin. Then we let him go ...Thank you frog. Goodbye." An endnote explains how ponds are formed and a little information about the creatures that live there.

Kelly, Irene. *It's a Hummingbird's Life*

Holiday House, 2002. unpag. 0-8234-1658-5. \$16.95

What an amazing bird is this! There are 343 different types of hummingbirds, but only 15 kinds live in the western United States and the ruby-throated is the only one east of the Mississippi River. All the other species live in South and Central America. The nest is only the size of half a ping-pong ball. When first born the babies are fed every 3 minutes with the mother eating 2000 insects every day. In the fall the ruby-throats gather in Florida and when the weather and the winds are right, they fly across the Gulf of Mexico, skimming low for about 25 hours at a rate of 25 miles per hour. The book design is especially attractive -vivid water colors, hand printed text that swoops and rolls like the birds themselves.

Kurtz, Jane and Christopher. *Water Hole Waiting.* (Pictures by Lee Christiansen)

Greenwillow, 2002. 32p. 0-06-029851-0. \$15.95

The drama enacted at a water hole on the African savanna is beautifully captured in this book's art and poetic text. The main character is a young vervet monkey who impatiently waits his turn at the watering hole. His mother, protecting him from the danger of injury from herds or dangerous animals, thwarts his attempts to rush down to the water. Kurtz's metaphors are sheer poetry:

"Morning slinks onto the savanna and licks up the night shadows one by one."

"Sun cartwheels slowly up the sky."

"Zebra is one moment quicker than death" as lurking crocodile lunges. And finally, "In the still-warm air, the monkeys leap, jiggle, chitter-chatter, wiggle all the way down to the waiting water hole. Aaaaah." The author gives further information about the animals who live on the savannah and visit the waterhole.

London, Jonathan. *Crocodile: Disappearing Dragon.* (Illus. by Paul Morin)

Scholastic, 2002. 32p. 0-439-33630-9. \$15.99

Beautiful oil paintings and a dramatic narrative chronicle the tenacious efforts for survival of an endangered species, the mangrove swamp crocodiles of southern Florida. After mating in late spring the mother searches for a safe sandy bank to dig her nest and to lay her eggs. She ferociously protects 20-80 eggs from predators. Once hatched she gently carries them from nest to water where they will live on their own. Because of herons, crabs, osprey, and other crocodiles, possibly five hatchlings will survive. The mother herself is constantly in peril from the most dangerous predator of all - MAN.

London, Jonathan. *What the Animals Were Waiting For.* (Illus. by Paul Morin)

Scholastic, 2002. 32p. 0-439-33630-9. \$16.95

A lyrical narrative and the most handsome mixed media art combine to tell the story of the dramatic cycles of life on one of the last great wild spaces on earth - the African savanna. A boy, Tepi, and his grandmother are the narrators. All the animals, cows, goats, gazelles, crocodiles, even humans, are all watching and waiting.

"What are they waiting for, Grandmother? Why are they waiting?"

"You shall see, Tepi. You shall see."

This refrain is repeated throughout as the various animals are pictured in paintings and photos: the zebras, the hippos, the wildebeests, and others, all waiting.

And suddenly a wall of water, lightning, and thunder!

"Rain, Grandmother! The rain is coming!"

"Yes, Tepi...the months of hunger are over. You are Maasai. And now you know what the animals were waiting for."

Miller, Debbie S. *Are Trees Alive?* (Illus. by Stacey Schuett)

Walker, 2002. 32p. 0-8027-8802-5. \$16.95

Against the backdrop of rich, earthy colors, Miller's simple text compares the many ways that trees and humans are alike. Bark, like skin, can be dark or light; and like skin, bark protects trees from harsh weather and insects.

"Without sap the tree could not live, just like your body could not live without blood. Look at the veins in a leaf and compare them to the veins in your hand." The end pages show a map of the world with the locations of the 13 species illustrated in the text. An appendix contains interesting descriptions of each tree. An identity game may be played with the children: the many species of wildlife that are pictured in the background of the illustrations form the borders of the pages of the index. Who remembers the tree that the fruit bat likes? In what country does the kookaburra nest? Do you remember its tree of choice?

Richards, Jean. *A Fruit Is a Suitcase for Seeds.* (Illus. by Anca Hariton)

Millbrook Press, 2002. 32p. 07613-1622-1. \$21.90

The loveliest watercolors bring to life the simple but satisfying text of this introduction to seeds for the very young. A border of humans with all kinds of suitcases reinforces the idea of seeds on the bottom of each page traveling in all manner of ways. As simple as the text is (mostly one line per page) one of the 2 authors of this article was reminded of a fact long forgotten: peas are seeds. Two pages of questions and answers provide an added depth. The biggest seed in the world weighs about 45 pounds and grows on a palm tree called the Double Coconut.

Rockwell, Anne F. *Becoming Butterflies.* (Pictures by Megan Halsey)

Walker, 2002. 32p. 0-8027-8798-3. \$15.95

Armed with all the necessary equipment, a 1st grade teacher treated her students to a magical month of the metamorphosis of three caterpillars. The children helped set up the incubator and watched and recorded with their art all the changes they observed. The teacher showed them on the map where the butterflies would fly for the winter. Then the class wrote a letter to a school in Chincua, Mexico with a request: "Please take good care of our

butterflies." And one cold winter day a letter arrived from Mexico with a photo of a cluster of butterflies. The text is clear and simple, and the collage art is colorful. A note at the end about monarch butterflies compliments and extends the information. Special features are the end pages: different caterpillars in the front and the butterflies they change into on the back pages.

Rockwell, Anne. *My Pet Hamster.* (Illus. by Bernice Lum)

HarperCollins, 2002. 32p. 0-06-028564-8. \$15.99. Series: Let's Read-and-Find-Out Science, Stage 1.

A book about pet care told in a very simple, direct style and easy language and illustrated in clear, simple pictures. What is it about this book that makes words like appealing, happy, comforting, loving, secure, etc. come to mind when reading it? Is it because everyone, including the stuffed animals have smiles on their faces? The information for pet care is covered and the difference between tame and wild animals is introduced. An addendum adds additional information about hamsters and other animals. "My hamster was my birthday present. I picked it out at the pet store. Its mother had ten baby hamsters. I counted them. I couldn't decide which one I liked best. But when mine crawled over to me, I knew it was the **one I wanted.**"

Sayre, April. *Crocodile Listens.* (Pictures by JoEllen McAllister Stammen)

Greenwillow, 2001. 24p. 0-68816505-2. \$15.95

April Sayre's science books are the epitome of all that is good in children's literature. They are beautifully illustrated and narrated in a rhythmic, flowing voice. **Thump, thump, thump**A thunder of thumps pounds the grassy ground. A herd of giraffes gallop past. But Crocodile just looks and listens. **Tromp, tromp, tromp...Warthog** toes trot. Warthogs are delicious for dinner. Yet all the while, sun-warmed Crocodile simply lies and listens." What is she listening for? A clap of thunder heralding rain? The sound of her mortal enemy, man? No, she is listening for the sound of her eggs hatching. They need their mama's help! "**Beeeeeyo, beeeeyo, beeeeyo!**" And always the reader learns something interesting to recall. For example: she may go weeks without food while guarding her 40-60 eggs hidden deep in the sand. Because she is so vigilant guarding her eggs, other egg-laying animals take advantage and make their nests nearby.

Schafer, Lola M. *What's Up, What's Down?* (Pictures by Barbara Bash)

Greenwillow, 2002. 32p. 0-06029758-1. \$15.99

"Read this book from bottom to top and top to bottom. Look everywhere in between. What do you see?" A fun book for story hour that piques the imagination. Turn the book sideways and follow the arrows. "WHAT'S UP if you're a mole?" Turn the page, and the answer is "Loose, rich soil sewn together with thread-fine roots." "What's up if you're a root? Proud, new grass pushing emerald blades toward the sun." When you finally reach the "pearly moon.." turn the book over. "WHAT'S DOWN if you're the moon?"

Schlein, Miriam. *Hello, Hello!* (Illus. by Daniel Kirk)

Simon & Schuster, 2002. 32p. 0-689-83435-7. \$16.95

This read-aloud for the very young will be a fun addition to story hour. Big, colorful art with uncluttered background and a simple, repetitive text makes it also a good book for beginning readers.

"How do polar bears who meet in the snow say hello? They walk around one another then sit down and grab each other's jaws. That's how polar bears in the snow say HELLO."

The greetings of lions, chimps, wolves, beavers, zebras, penguins, elephants, and finally humans are pictured. Each animal is in its natural habitat.

Shield, Carol Diggory. *On the Go.* (Painting by Svjetlan Junakovic)

Handprint Books, 2001. 38p. 1929766-14-9. \$9.95

Fourth title in a fun series "Animagicals." Each title introduces concepts to children in a whimsical way. On the left a rhymed text hints at an animal:

"A tricycle's slow, compared to a bike, but going slow is what we like. We slither along, leaving our trails."

To the right is a drawing of an object (a trike) and the page unfolds to reveal "Slow but steady, three little snails." Twelve animals are included in this title.

Walsh, Ellen Stoll. *Dot & Jabber and the Mystery of the Missing Stream*

Harcourt, 2002. 32p. 0-15216512-6. \$15.00

After a bone crushing storm last night, how can the stream be dry? Where did it go? Where's all that water? Though our two intrepid mice detectives never have looked for lost water, they set out to solve the latest mystery. Following the streambed, they start walking upstream, passing all the distressed creatures that depend on the water - the minnows, the crayfish, and the turtle. And finally the mystery is solved-a "...magnificent dam made of many branches jammed together" is blocking the flow! An author's note at the end explains the formation of ponds, lakes, and reservoirs. This mystery is the second in a series of science inquiry with a third, *The Big Bug Mystery* forthcoming in fall 2003. A delightful book for reading aloud.

Yolen, Jane. *Wild Wings: Poems for Young People. (Photographs by Jason Stemple)*

Boyd's Mills Press, 2002. 32p. 1-56397-904-7. \$17.95

Yolen and her son Jason Stemple have combined their extraordinary talents to create yet another stunning nature book. Fourteen original poems, all about birds, range in mood from whimsy ("Swallow: a Haiku") through nostalgia ("Tree of Life") to high drama ("Moorhen with Gator"). The color photos, capturing the natural setting of each bird, are so fabulous that they and the poetry make this book appealing to all ages. Each bird is identified in a note with its scientific name and a detail or two about its lifestyle.

"The white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) is abundant along the Gulf Coast ...where it nests at night in large tree rookeries." Also *Horizons: Poems As Far As the Eye Can See.* (Photographs by Jason Stemple) Boyd's Mills Press, 2002. 32p. 1-56397-197-6. \$17.95

1 *Literacy in America: An Encyclopedia of History, Theory, and Practice.* Edited by Barbara J. Guzzetti. ABC-CLIO, 2002. Santa Barbara, CA. 1-57607-358-0

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This is our fourth annotated list of the best science read alouds published since 1999. The bibliography consists of titles published in 2002 and 2003 and a few that slipped through the cracks. Our companion articles can be found in:

1999: *Scintillating Read-Aloud Books Keeps Children's Natural Curiosity Alive!* *Science Books & Films*, March/ April 1999. also available on the Web at: www.sbsonline.com

2000: *Read-Aloud Science Books.* *Book Links*, March 2000. available on the Web at: www.ala.org/BookLinks/v09/science.html

2001: *Discovering Science through ReadAlouds.* *Book Links*, Oct./Nov. 2001.

Look for our fifth annotated bibliography to be published in *Book Links* in 2004.