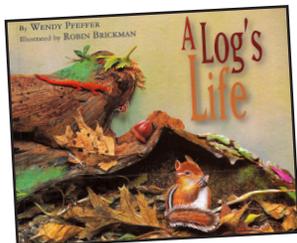


Keeping Lakes in the Family

Sharing the Magic Through Stories

Compiled by Lynn Markham, Center for Land Use Education, UW-Stevens Point

Wildlife are attracted to lakes and streams because the essentials of life for many species occur there, including food, water, shelter, and a place to raise their young. The variety of plants on land and in the water provides a mosaic of wildlife habitat. The land that drains to a lake or stream is known as the watershed. Healthy watersheds include woods, wetlands, and prairies that filter and absorb runoff from buildings, driveways, and roads. But that's not all; watersheds also provide critical habitat near the shoreline. In this year's book review, we're focusing on the benefits of trees, forests and wetlands near our lakes. *Healthy Watersheds = Healthy Lakes.*



A Log's Life Ages 4-8
Written by Wendy Pfeffer
Illustrated by Robin Brickman

An attractive introduction to the life, death, and decay of an oak tree. The simple, informative text presents the complex cast of characters residing in or on the living tree as well as the decomposing log from woodpeckers, squirrels, and porcupines to carpenter ants, millipedes, slugs, and fungi. This book is enhanced by striking illustrations of three-dimensional paper sculptures, often so realistic as to seem to be preserved natural specimens



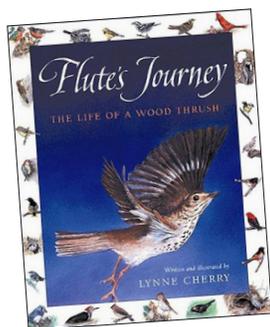
Salmon Forest Ages 5-8
Written by David Suzuki and Sarah Ellis
Illustrated by Sheena Lott

While this book features the sockeye salmon, found in the Pacific Northwest, the book offers a wider view of the fish's ecosystem. In clear, kid-friendly language, Katie and Dad discuss how the salmon and the forest ecosystem form an intricate web of dependency that includes flesh-eating fungi, maggots, and "all the poop" from the animals that feed on salmon. Many fish in Wisconsin also depend on the cool, clear water provided by trees and forests on the shorelines. Vibrant watercolors of sun-dappled forest light and shimmering fish bodies add to the sense of atmosphere.

This is my favorite book!
~ Tessa, age 5

Flute's Journey: The Life of a Wood Thrush Ages 5-8
Written and illustrated by Lynne Cherry

Through the tale of a young wood thrush, readers learn the dangers migratory birds face. Cherry's illustrations, always a feast for the eyes, provide colorful, richly detailed forest scenes as a handsome backdrop for the story of Flute's autumn migration from his birthplace in a Northern American forest to a Central American rain forest for the winter. There he rests and feeds before beginning his journey back north in the spring. Along the way, Flute faces natural predators, but the destruction of habitat is presented as the most serious threat.



Forest has a song: Poems Ages 6-9
Written by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater
Illustrated by Robbin Gourley

Creatures and plants and the sights and sounds of the forest are described in this collection of nature poems. A girl, other human companions, and her dog encounter chickadees, tree frogs, lady slippers, lichens, and fossils, and these forest experiences span the seasons. The poems are simple, well-shaped, and pleasant for read-aloud sharing.



On Meadowview Street *Ages 4-8*
Written and illustrated by Henry Cole

When Caroline and her family move to a suburban development, their street's pleasant name prompts an exploratory stroll to see if there really is a meadow on Meadowview Street. The girl doesn't get far before she spies a beautiful, solitary flower on her own lawn. She asks her dad to work around it while mowing the lawn, hurries inside to find string and sticks, and builds a "small wildflower preserve." As other flowers bloom, she enlarges the area. Dad puts the lawn mower up for sale, and, with the help of her parents, Caroline sets about transforming her backyard into a teeming ecosystem. Soon there are butterflies, birds, a pond, flowers, trees, and a real meadow on Meadowview Street. And soon, their neighbors' yards changed. Cole's economical text and tender, acrylic paintings tell the story with simplicity and energy as the barren strip of grass evolves into a lush habitat.

The Secret Pool *Ages 6-10*
Written by Kimberly Ridley
Illustrated by Rebeka Raye

"Even if you are lucky enough to find me shining on the forest floor on an early spring day, you might mistake me for a puddle—which I most certainly am not! I'm a watery jewel called a vernal pool." A lyrical narrative is supported by additional text on every page providing accessible facts about vernal pools. These temporary areas of water that form in spring and last (typically) until autumn serve as a breeding ground for several creatures in forest ecosystems, such as wood frogs, spotted salamanders, and fairy shrimp. Both narratives follow the activity across the several months of a vernal pool's existence. Once the pool is dry, things continue to happen in the spot where it once shined as the cycle of decay and renewal nourishes the environment that will enable the vernal pool to support new life the next time it forms. Illustrations with a rich, woodsy palette provide an up-close look at activities in and around the vernal pool.

Book reviews are drawn from Amazon and the Cooperative Children's Book Center at UW-Madison.

Loon *Ages 4-7*
Written by Susan Vande Griek
Illustrated by Karen Reczuch

One late June day, a gray chick pecks and pecks her way out of her large green-and-brown spotted egg. A short time later, she has a little brother. They stay in the nest for about a month, then are ready to test the waters, literally. In summer, there are dangers on the water, such as people; the offspring learn to dive deep for fish like their parents. As fall turns to winter, the parents fly away, leaving the young to fend for themselves. They grow strong and take flight just before the lake water freezes, finding a new home on the ocean with a loose flock of others. After a few years they are ready to become parents themselves and begin to listen for that distinct mating call. The book concludes with an informative essay about the loon, including what we can do to help loons. Beautiful paintings tell the story eloquently.

Ellie's Log: Exploring the Forest Where the Great Tree Fell *Ages 8-12*
Written by Judith L. Li
Illustrated by M. L. Herring

After a huge tree crashes to the ground during a winter storm, ten-year-old Ellie and her new friend, Ricky, explore the forest where Ellie lives. Together, they learn how trees provide habitat for plants and animals high in the forest canopy, down among mossy old logs, and deep in the pools of a stream. The plants, insects, birds, and mammals they discover come to life in colored pen-and-ink drawings.

One Day in the Woods *Ages 6-10*
Written by Jean Craighead George
Illustrated by Gary Allen

Rebecca is determined to find an ovenbird in her local woods. Rebecca's encounters with various animals are gentle and respectful. The day climaxes at sunset with the appearance of the ovenbird and a concert of amazingly varied sound. The repeated reference to animals as "wizards of the woods" adds a precious note to the quiet tale.

This is the best book I've ever read!

~ Tate, age 9, who stayed up two nights in a row reading this book under the covers with a headlamp when he was supposed to be sleeping!

