

# Fiction for Summer Reading

## BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

*Armando and la Baula*, by David Robert. (Illus. by Ellie Cox.) CreateSpace, 2009. Using an encounter between an eight-year-old Costa Rican boy and a leatherback turtle as a starting off point, *Armando and la Baula* sets out to highlight how human actions can impact the environment and the animals that live in it. Armando is the boy and Bella is the leatherback turtle—or baula. Children will enjoy following along as Armando uses his imagination to help Bella and keep a promise to his father.



*After Earth: Kitai's Journal*, by Christine Peymani. (Illus. Jason A. Katzenstein.) Harper Collins, 2013.

For those who enjoyed the original *After Earth* and its movie, this book follows the

adventures of Kitai and his father after they crash land on Earth—from Kitai's point of view. The action is set one thousand years after humans abandoned Earth. After his father is injured during the crash, young Kitai must use his wits and determination to retrieve a distress beacon to save his father and himself.

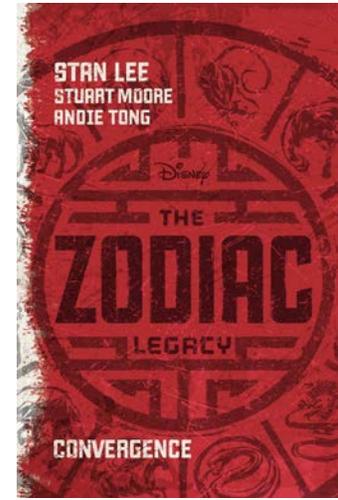
*Chavela and the Magic Bubble*, by Monica Brown. (Illus. by Magaly Morales.) Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010.

For all those who love chewing gum comes a whimsical tale of a little girl and her magic bubble. While out with her abuelita one day, Chavela buys a pack of magic chewing gum and when she blows a bubble she is carried off to the Yucatan where she learns how the chicleros use sustainable methods to harvest the sap, or chicle, from sapodilla trees to make her beloved bubble gum. The brightly-colored illustrations help tell this tale of rain-forest conservation.

*Convergence*, by Stan Lee. (Illus. by Andie Tong.) Disney Press, 2015.

The first novel by Stan Lee, author of Marvel comics like Spider-Man and X-Men, revolves around a teenage protagonist, Steven Lee, and a team of uniquely talented allies who fight to keep control of the world from falling into the

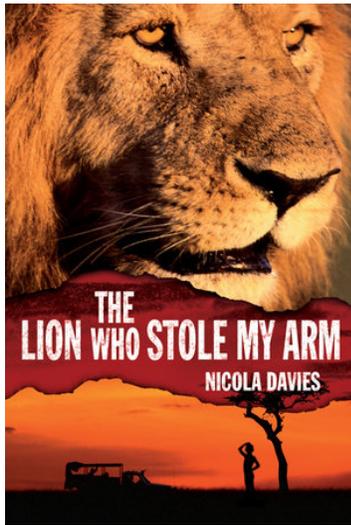
wrong hands. Steven and his allies all use the superpowers of the Chinese Zodiac to help them save the world.



*Flame and Hope: An African Adventure*, by Maretha Botha. (Illus. by MM Menichini and Holly Sellors; from Tales from Fauna Park Series.) LionheART Publishing House, 2014.

In this coming-of-age tale set in the African desert, Flame, a puppy born in the desert and adopted by a free-range cattle farmer, faces the challenge of proving himself to more than one of his new family. This book uses animal characters and animalized words to immerse the reader in the animal world of the farm as it follows Flame's adventures from puppy to a strong and brave dog that helps keep The Promise of protecting helpless ones in Fauna Park.

*Highway Cats*, by Janet Taylor Lisle. (Illus. by David Frankland.) Puffin Books, 2008. *Highway Cats* is the tale of a group of feral cats that live in the woods and their encounter with three tiny kittens. These mystical kittens are resilient and help the group band together to try to save the woods, their home, from being destroyed for more development. While the story takes on the feeling of a fantasy tale, it is grounded in some present-day problems like pollution and overdevelopment.



*The Lion Who Stole My Arm*, by Nicola Davies. (Illus. by Annabel Wright.) Candlewick, 2014. Zoologist Nicola Davies uses plain, simple language in this illustrated novel for young readers that proves you don't need two arms to be strong. Enhanced with black and white mixed media, the story centers around Pedru, who is attacked by a lion and loses his arm. Pedru is bent on revenge until he and his father kill the wrong lion and come to learn more about

these important predators. From his experiences, Pedru learns to look at lions in a different way and to consider peaceful, workable solutions to dangerous problems

*The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss. Harper Collins Publishers, 2010. First published in 1971, this classic tale of environmental destruction is still a great read after all of these years. The environment still needs protecting and today's children should find it relevant and engaging.

*Lucky Beans*, by Becky Bertha. (Illus. by Nicole Tadgell.) Albert Whitman & Co., 2014. Set during the Great Depression in the 1930s, *Lucky Beans* tells the story of Marshall Loman who uses his knowledge of mathematics to help him guess how many beans are in a jar. Will Marshall win the Lucky Bean contest and get his ma a new sewing machine?

*Meet Franklin Bean*, by Emmy Swain. (Illus. by Levi Whitworth.) Emmy Swain, 2011.

*Meet Franklin Bean* is the first book in a series that features a dog who helps a boy deal with some of life's challenges, like moving, going to a new school, and bullying.

*A Mighty Tree*, by Diane René Christian. (Illus. Raina YuSi Christian.) Asian Kid Lit, 2015. Written and illustrated by a mother-daughter team, *A Mighty Tree* explores the meaning of environmental preservation

through the eyes of two boys. One boy has a dream of cutting down trees to build a big mansion. His friend, though, helps him understand the devastation that would be caused by taking that course. The book features whimsical, pop-up woodland creatures and beautiful illustrations to help tell the story.

*Moon Bear*, by Gil Lewis. (Illus. by Alessandro Gottardo.) Oxford University Press, 2014. While working on a bear bile farm in a city in Laos, Tam is moved to help at least one bear escape the horrible conditions on the farm. The bile from bear gallbladders is used in traditional medicine. In this poignant tale, Tam forms an unbreakable bond with the bear and their story helps to reveal the real-life, heart-wrenching plight of Asia's endangered moon bears.

*Night of the Black Bear*, by Gloria Skurzinsky and Alane Ferguson. (Illus.; from Mysteries in our National Park Series.) National Geographic, 2007.

Children can join Jack and Ashley Landon as they struggle to figure out what could be causing the growing number of bear attacks in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. With the help of some new friends, will the Landons be able to help park officials figure out what's causing the bizarre bear behavior?

*One Love*, by Cedella Marley and Bob Marley. (Illus. by

Vanessa Newton.) Chronicle Books, 2011.

Adapted from one of Bob Marley's most beloved songs, *One Love* brings the joyful spirit and unforgettable lyrics of his music to life for a new generation. Readers will delight in dancing to the beat and feeling the positive groove of change when one girl enlists her community to help transform her neighborhood for the better. Adapted by Cedella Marley, Bob Marley's first child, and gorgeously illustrated by Vanessa Newton, this heartwarming picture book offers an upbeat testament to the amazing things that can happen when we all get together with one love in our hearts.

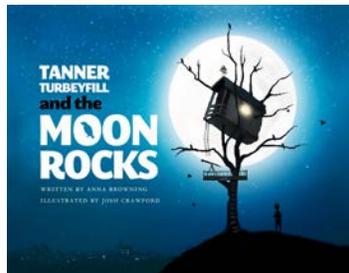
*Poacher Panic*, by Jan Burchett. (Illus. by Diane Le Feyer; from the Wild Rescue Series.) Stone Arch Books, 2012.

*Poacher Panic* is one book in a series called Wild Rescue, which features twins Ben and Zoe who travel the world on secret missions for their uncle's elite environmental organization, WILD. In this book, Ben and Zoe must help rescue a tiger and her two cubs from a gang of vicious poachers.

*Sea Watch*, by Jane Yolen. (Illus. by Ted Lewin.) Philomel, 1996.

Jane Yolen and Ted Lewin team up again to bring us this collection of fourteen poems that celebrate the mystery and diversity of the sea. Yolen's lyrical poetry is accompanied by Lewin's beautiful watercolors to reveal intriguing facts about the

habits and characteristics of various sea creatures, including an anemone, a beluga, a Portuguese man-of-war, and a seahorse.



*Tanner Turbeyfill and the Moon Rocks*, by Anna Browning. (Illus. by Josh Crawford.) Diamond DMT Publishing, 2013.

Filled with beautiful illustrations of the Earth, moon, and stars, *Tanner Turbeyfill and the Moon Rocks* takes kids on an adventure into space. Tanner dreams of going to the moon to get some lunar rocks to add to his rock collection. He's surprised to learn that he might just get what he wished for! Anna Browning strikes a good balance between science and whimsy in this tale about chasing your dreams.

*There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Frog!*, by Lisa Collandro. (Illus. by Jared D. Lee.) Cartwheel Books, 2014.

In this spin on the classic nursery song, everyone's favorite old lady swallows a frog instead, among other things. With its rhyming text and fun illustrations, children will get a good laugh at how this old lady makes a garden.

*Threatened*, by Eliot Schrefer. Scholastic Press, 2014.

*Threatened* recounts the story of Luc, an orphan adolescent in Gabon who agrees to help a researcher find chimps in the jungle. Luc is an AIDS orphan and, therefore, the book also touches on the societal impacts of HIV/AIDS in Gabon. As a child, he was afraid of chimps, or "mock men," but, through the course of the book, he learns not only to appreciate them but to feel as though he is part of their family

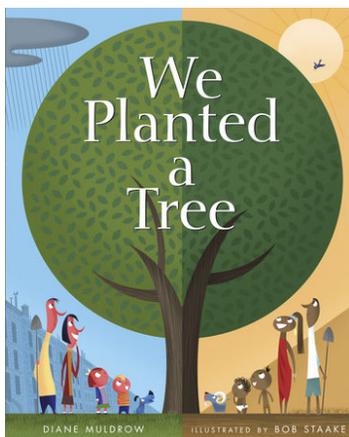
*To Be a Drum*, by Evelyn Coleman. (Illus. by Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson.) Albert Whitman & Company, 1998. Combining mixed-media illustrations with simple text that conveys the drumbeat of a people, *To Be a Drum* relates the history of African Americans from their origins in Africa, through slavery to the present day. Accomplishments in science, the arts, the military, and the Civil Rights Movement are recounted. Ultimately, though, this book exhorts everyone to follow their own heartbeats and become their own drums.

*Trouble on the St. John's River*, by Jane R. Wood. (Illus. by Elizabeth A. Blacker.) Florida Kids Press, Inc., 2008. This book follows the adventures of three siblings as they lead a crusade to clean up their favorite fishing pond. As they work to enlist others in their cause, they have an encounter with a manatee, visit a center that rehabilitates injured

sea turtles, and take a boat tour on the St. Johns River. What they learn through these experiences inspires them to create The Greenies and chart a course of action that captures the attention of many. Along the way, they also learn that kids can make a difference when they are inspired to do so.

*Waiting for the Owl's Call*, by Gloria Whelan. Sleeping Bear Press, 2009.

This beautifully illustrated book deals with a not-so-beautiful topic: child labor in the rug making industry. The book tells the story of eight-year-old Zulviya, who lives in Afghanistan, who joins the other girls and women of her village in weaving rugs all day. It expresses the longing of Zulviya and her friends to venture outside or possibly go to school. This book would be a good one to read along with a child and discuss the problem of child labor.



*We Planted a Tree*, by Diane Muldrow. (Illus. by Bob Staake.) Golden Books, 2010. In addition to helping to clean the air, enrich the soil, and

provide fruit and shade, trees all over the world also bring beauty and joy to our lives. This beautiful book, in poetry and illustration, is a story of two families who plant trees in two different parts of the world. As the trees flourish, so do the families. This book, with its clear ecological message, would be good to share on Earth Day, Arbor Day, or any day.

*Where in the World is Away*, by Michael Franti. (Illus. by Ben Hodson.) Stay Human Books, 2012.

This engaging book helps show children what happens when they throw something “away.” In the process, they learn that away really just means somewhere else. The story is about the importance of recycling, reducing waste, and reusing what we can. It also can be enjoyed with its read-along CD.

*Winter Bees and Other Poems of the Cold*, by Joyce Sidman. (Illus. by Rick Allen.) Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers, 2014.

*Winter Bees* takes kids on a journey out into the wintertime to learn about how animals stay alive and their secret lives under the snow. Joyce Sidman combines science and poetry with Rick Allen’s illustrations to show kids that the seemingly barren winter is actually alive with the hidden activity of plant and animal life.

*Wolf Stalker*, by Gloria Skurzinsky and Alane Ferguson. (Illus.; from *Mysteries in our*

*National Park Series*.) National Geographic, 2008.

In this book, Jack and Ashley Landon accompany their mother, a veterinarian, to Yellowstone Park to investigate an incident in which a hunting dog was purportedly chased onto park land and killed by a pack of wolves.

## BOOKS FOR PRETEENS & TEENS

*After the Snow*, by S.D.

Crockett. Square Fish, 2013.

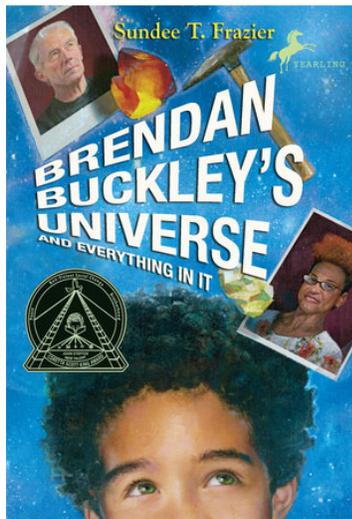
In *After the Snow*, there is no liquid water—only ice and snow. It’s a struggle for survival for Willo and his family, who have chosen to live out in the wilderness away from the government’s control. It becomes even harder for Willo when his family disappears and he has to rely on himself to find refuge and his family.

*Before We Were Free*, by Julia Alvarez. Laurel Leaf, 2007.

In this book, Julia Alvarez introduces young readers to Anita de la Torre and her family, who live in the Dominican Republic and grapple with their political ideals that are at odds with those of the Dominican dictator, Rafael Trujillo—or El Jefe. While the book tackles the harsh realities of life under a dictatorship, it does so slowly and gently. The story is told from Anita’s point of view and her voice rings clearly throughout the book.

*Breakfast Served Anytime*, by Sarah Combs. Candlewick, 2014.

In this coming-of-age story, Gloria sets out to spend the summer before her senior year at a camp for gifted and talented students. Though she doesn't know quite what to expect, Gloria resolves to make the best of her new circumstances and to try to overcome the heartache of losing her grandmother and best friend. This honest and touching story of growing up is imbued with the serene atmosphere of Kentucky's natural landscape.



*Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything In It*, by Sundee T. Frazier. Yearling, 2008. Brendan Buckley is a biracial boy with a passion for science who discovers that he is much like his grandfather, whom he has never met. When he does meet him at a rock club meeting, he discovers that his grandfather's skin is pink and not brown like his. He also learns that his grandfather has been estranged from his mother since she decided to marry an

African American. Will Brendan's mother and grandfather be able to put the past behind them and reunite as a family?

*The Day of the Wave*, by Gina Hamilton. Turning Tide Cottage Press, 2011.

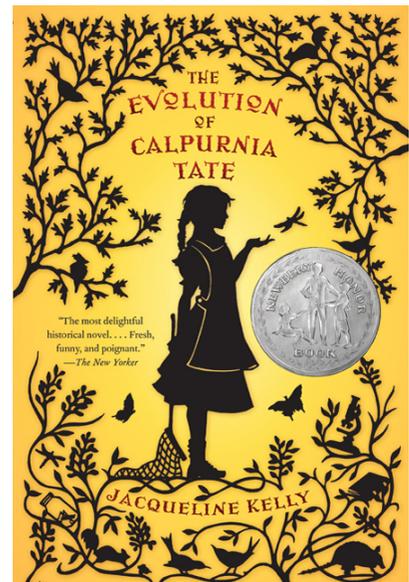
*The Day of the Wave* takes place during and after the earthquake and tsunami that devastated the island of Sumatra, Indonesia the day after Christmas in 2014. This book follows the story of Merpati, a twelve-year-old girl who gets separated from her parents during the tsunami. She becomes responsible for an orphan and an ancient blind villager and struggles to keep them alive as she searches for her family. This coming-of-age story provides a glimpse at the daily life of villagers in Sumatra as well as a look at the resilience and spirit of those who survive a natural disaster.

*Doomed*, by Tracy Deeks. Walker Childrens, 2013.

In this fast-paced novel that is sure to appeal to gaming fans, Pandora sets off a global computer virus by playing a virtual-reality game called Zero Day. The virus takes out the Internet, cell phones., utilities, traffic lights, hospitals, law enforcement, etc. In order to try to restore order, Pandora teams up with step-brothers Eli and Theo to enter the virtual world of Zero Day and to try to track down her long-lost father, who may be the only hope to saving the world.

*Dragons at Crumbling Castle: And Other Tales*, by Terry Pratchett. (Illus. by Mark Breech.) Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015.

This collection of never-before-published funny and inventive tales by Terry Pratchett offers a glimpse into the master storyteller's humor and wit. These tales are early works by Pratchett and as such are good examples of his fictional imaginings, from dragons who invade a castle because their caves were flooded to tiny people who live in a carpet.



*The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*, by Jacqueline Kelly. Henry Holt and Co., 2009.

This 2010 Newbery Honor Book offers a charming tale of a girl at the turn of the twentieth century who doesn't abide by the usual social norms for girls during that time period. Instead of getting caught in the trappings of tight corsets, cookery, and handiwork, Calpurnia prefers to observe and collect scientific

specimens with her grandfather. Told in vivid first-person narrative, this book provides a tale of self-discovery that would be hard to put down.

*Gilded Girls*, by R.K. Johnson. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014. *Gilded Girls* is a tale of four friends, Missy, Hazel, Poppy, and Countess, all living in Washington, D.C. during the Gilded Age. It explores their friendship, love, and coming-of-age among Washington's African American bourgeois after the Civil War.

*Green Boy*, by Susan Cooper. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2002.

In this fantasy novel by Newberry Award-winning author Susan Cooper, twelve-year-old Trey and his silent brother, seven-year-old Lou, are transported to another world that is strident, polluted, and overcrowded. In this world, Lou is hailed as a mythic hero who will bring both destruction and renewal. The tension continues to mount in this adventure as the children strive to save the alien world as well as their own beloved Long Pond Cay.

*Hieroglyph: Stories and Visions for a Better Future*, by Ed Finn and Kathryn Cramer. William Morrow Paperbacks, 2015. Inspired by *New York Times* bestselling author Neal Stephenson, this is an anthology of stories, set in the near future, from some of today's leading writers, thinkers, and visionaries that reignites the iconic and

optimistic visions of the golden age of science fiction. Included are works by Stephenson, Cory Doctorow, Elizabeth Bear, and more.

*Hoot, Flush, Scat, Chomp Collection*, by Carl Hiasen. Ember, 2013.

This collection of four ebooks by Carl Hiasen is set in Florida and features kids facing environmental problems and how they try to help. The books are full of Hiasen's signature quirky characters and humor in an age-appropriate package.

*Mousemobile*, by Prudence Breitrose. Disney-Hyperion, 2014.

This sequel to *Mousenet* follows the continuing adventures of Megan, Joey, and a bunch of mice that have evolved into possibly the smartest creatures on earth. When the Big Cheese, leader of Mouse Nation, asks for their help to figure out who betrayed him, Megan and Joey head out to California, with way too many mice, to try to save Mouse Nation.

*Nelson Telson: The Story of a True Blue Blood*, by Heidi Mayo. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.

Who hasn't dreamed of being able to talk to the animals like Dr. Doolittle? In this book, Mariah Miller gets to do just that when she discovers a magic spearhead on the beach that allows her to talk to a wise old horseshoe crab, Nelson Telson, and a host of other animals. Blending scientific content and ageless themes, Heidi Mayo tells

the story of a girl discovering what it means to be human.



*The Neptune Project*, by Polly Holyoke. Disney Hyperion, 2013.

This SciFi dystopian story about kids who were genetically engineered to survive in the ocean offers a twist to other stories in this vein. Although the kids involved were initially unaware of the fact that they were genetically engineered, they have no choice but to adapt to their special powers in order to avoid becoming pawns of the totalitarian government. Their journey through the ocean to asylum won't be easy, but it will be necessary in order for them to build a better world underneath the water.

*The One Safe Place*, by Tania Unsworth. Algonquin Young Readers, 2015.

After his grandfather dies, Devin must face an uncertain future on his own. He is unprepared to take care of the family farm—one of the few left on earth. So,

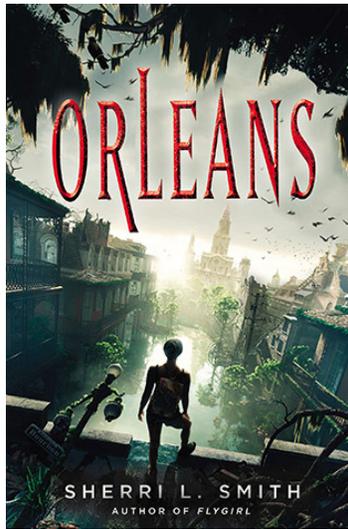
he sets out for the city and finds that children there are left to their own devices. He befriends a girl named Kit and they both eventually end up at the Gabriel H. Penn Home for Childhood, where things seem too good to be true. What will be the fate of Devin and the other children at the home? The mystery and suspense in this dystopian story gradually unfold but stop short of becoming truly horrific.

*One White Dolphin*, by Gill Lewis. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2012.

Written by veterinarian Gill Lewis, *One White Dolphin* captures the beauty and wonder of the undersea world and carries a strong environmental message. In this story, when a baby albino dolphin caught in old fishing netting washes ashore, Felix and Kara work with vets and specialists to save her and reunite her with her mother. These actions set off a chain of events that might just save a nearby reef from dredging.

*Operation Redwood*, by S. Terrell French. Amulet Paperbacks, 2011.

In this environmental adventure novel, 12-year-old Julian and his friends band together to save an area of redwood forest known as Big Tree Grove from his greedy uncle and his uncle's company. In order to take on the big corporation, the kids take up residence in a tree house where they face down the uncle to save the forest. The story shows how determined individuals can stand up to wrongdoing.



*Orleans*, by Sherri Smith. Speak, 2014.

In Smith's compelling and disturbing novel, the Gulf Coast has been formally separated from the U.S. since 2025, after a deadly plague called Delta Fever emerged from the horrific conditions following years of increasingly destructive hurricanes. Survivors have divided themselves into tribes based on blood type, which now matters more than race, religion, or wealth. After her best friend dies in childbirth, Fen sets out to get the baby outside the Wall to the safety of the Outer Lands.

*The Pond*, by Robert Murphy. The Overlook Press, 2013. Set in the early 1900s, *The Pond* tells the story of Joey and his visits to a beautiful pond as he grows from a boy to a man. His adventures in and around the pond help him come to understand his place in the world and to appreciate the animal and plant life surrounding it. This tale about respecting and preserving

animal life is perhaps even more relevant today than when it was written over 50 years ago.

*Seed Savers*, by Sandra L. Smith. Sandra L. Smith, 2012. There are three volumes in this series about a not-too-distant future where gardening is illegal, corporations own the seeds, and real food is no longer available. Set in 2077, this series follows the journey of three children as they go on a quest to find a place called "The Garden State." They also learn more about gardening and how to make a change back to the old ways.

*Seekers*, by Erin Hunter. HarperCollins, 2009. In this ecological adventure series by Erin Hunter, popular author of the *Warriors* series of books, readers meet three bear cubs—Kallik, a polar bear; Lusa, a black bear; and Toklo, a brown bear—who have been separated from their families. The story follows their adventures as they go on a perilous journey to find their way in the world.

*Strange Fruit: Uncelebrated Narratives from Black History*, by Joel Gill. Fulcrum Publishing, 2014.

*Strange Fruit* is an illustrated anthology of stories from African American history that recounts nine uncelebrated heroes, including: Henry "Box" Brown, who escaped from slavery by mailing himself to Philadelphia; Alexander Crummel and the Noyes Academy, the first integrated

school in America; Marshall "Major" Taylor, a.k.a. the Black Cyclone, the first black champion in any sport; and Bass Reeves, the most successful lawman in the Old West. These stories help to illuminate the struggles and triumphs of some important figures in American history.

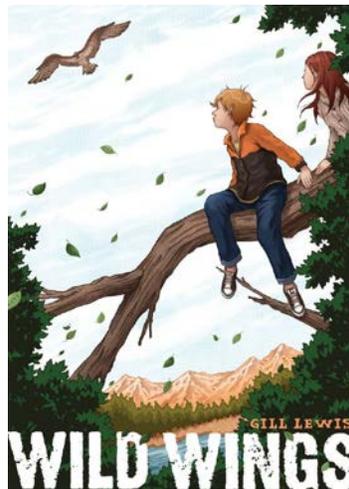
*Toby Alone*, by Timothée de Fombelle. (Illus. Francois Place.) Walker Books Ltd., 2009.

Toby Lolness and his community are just two millimeters tall or less (just smaller than the tip of a pencil). They live in an enormous oak they call the Tree. Their society, however, has been turned into a totalitarian nightmare by the power machinations of a builder. When Toby's father discovers that the tree is endangered by its continued development, Toby is forced to become a fugitive and try to rescue his parents and stop the builder.

*The Tyrant's Daughter*, by J.C. Carleson. Ember, 2015.

Laila, her mother, and brother have to flee their Middle Eastern country after her father is killed in a coup. They end up in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., where Laila has to adjust to a new school, new friends, and the intrigue surrounding her mother's attempts to avenge her father's death and get back the position and power they had. Will Laila help her mother or will she choose to do what is best for her country?

*Waiting for Unicorns*, by Beth Hautala. Philomel Books, 2015. Still dealing with grief after the death of her mother from cancer, Talia has to leave her home to go with her father to Churchill, Manitoba, where he can study beluga whales out on the ice. Talia takes along her "jar of secret wishes" to try to hold onto the past. As she begins to explore her new surroundings, however, she starts to open up to new friends and new possibilities.



*Wild Wings*, by Gil Lewis. (Illus. by Yuta Onoda.)

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2012.

Set mostly in Scotland, but eventually spanning to West Africa, *Wild Wings* tells the story of Callum McGregor and Iona McNair as they observe a rare endangered bird—an Osprey. Intent on keeping the bird safe from poachers and egg thieves, the two keep the bird a secret until they run into some trouble. It's then that they learn that they can count on the people in their village as well as people, like a little girl named

Jeneba, living thousands of miles away.