

Children's Books Celebrating Women in Science

It's always the right time to honor the many contributions of women, past and present, globally and in our communities. These children's books celebrate the achievements of women in science, from the first "giraffologist" to the mathematicians who helped put astronauts in space.

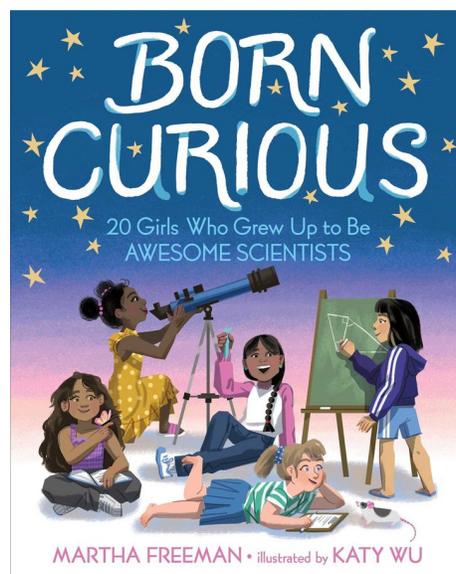
COLLECTIONS

Title: [Born Curious: 20 Girls Who Grew Up to Be Awesome Scientists](#)

Author, Illustrator: Martha Freeman, Katy Wu

Age: Grades 2-7

Summary: The scientists and mathematicians in Born Curious sought answers to many fascinating questions. The twenty groundbreaking women--including Rosalind Franklin, Marie Tharp, Shirley Anne Jackson, and more--came from all kinds of backgrounds and had all kinds of life experiences. Some grew up rich. Some grew up poor. Some were always the smartest kid in class. Some struggled to do well in school. But all had one thing in common: They were born curious. Are you curious, too? (Adapted from Simon & Schuster)

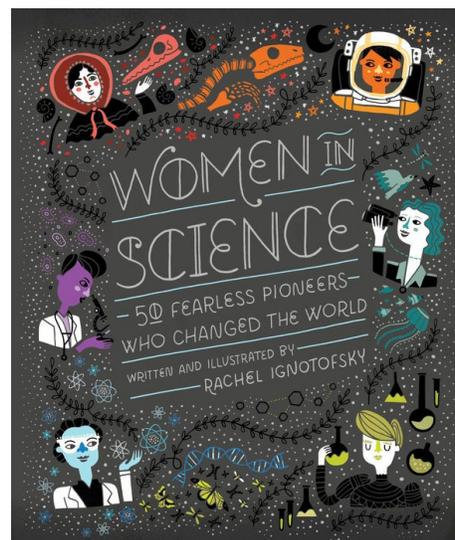


Title: [Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World](#)

Author & Illustrator: Rachel Ignotofsky

Age: 10 years and up

Summary: It's a scientific fact: Women rock! This fascinating, educational collection features 50 illustrated portraits of trailblazing women in STEM throughout history. *Women in Science* celebrates the achievements of the intrepid women who have paved the way for the next generation of female engineers, biologists, mathematicians, doctors, astronauts, physicists, and more! (Adapted from Penguin Random House)



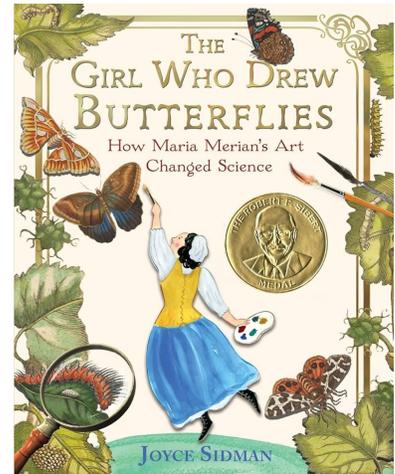
WILDLIFE

Title: [The Girl Who Drew Butterflies: How Maria Merian's Art Changed Science](#)

Author: Joyce Sidman

Age: 10 years and up

Summary: One of the first naturalists to observe live insects directly, Maria Sibylla Merian was also one of the first to document the metamorphosis of the butterfly. Bugs, of all kinds, were considered to be “born of mud” and to be “beasts of the devil.” Why would anyone, let alone a girl, want to study and observe them? *The Girl Who Drew Butterflies* answers this question. (Adapted from Harper Collins)

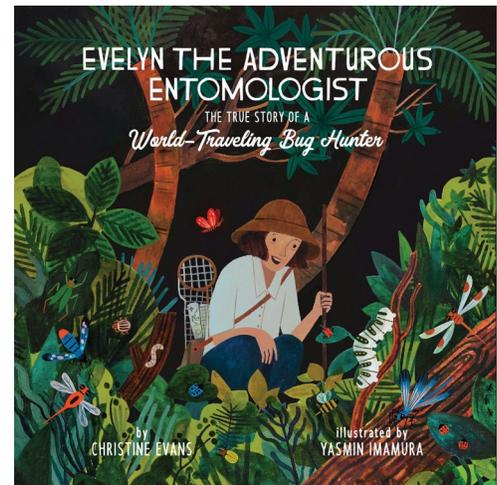


Title: [Evelyn the Adventurous Entomologist: The True Story of a World-Traveling Bug Hunter](#)

Author, Illustrator: Christine Evans, Yasmin Imamura

Age: 5-10 years

Summary: Back in 1881, when Evelyn Cheesman was born, English girls were expected to be clean and dressed in frilly dresses. But Evelyn crawled in dirt and collected glow worms in jars. Evelyn took charge of the London Zoo insect house, filling it with crawling and fluttering specimens and breathing life back into the dusty exhibits. In the early 1920s, women were expected to stay home, but Evelyn embarked on eight solo expeditions to distant islands. She collected over 70,000 insect specimens, discovered new species, had tangles with sticky spider webs, and tumbled from a cliff. Inspire children to believe in their dreams and blaze their own trail with the story of Evelyn's amazing life! (The Innovation Press)

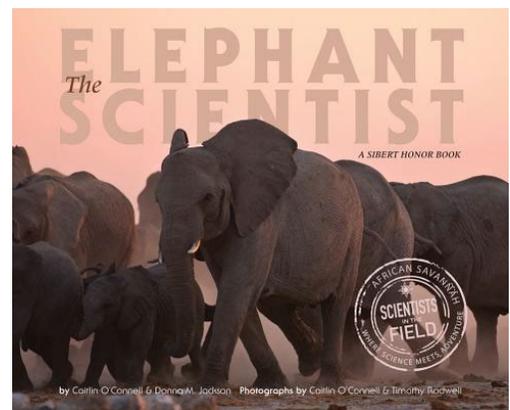


Title: [The Elephant Scientist](#)

Author, Illustrator: Caitlin O'Connell (Author), Donna M. Jackson (Author), Timothy Rodwell (Illustrator)

Age: 10 years and up

Summary: In the sprawling African scrub desert of Etosha National Park in Namibia, they call her "the mother of all elephants." Holding binoculars closely to her eyes, American scientist Caitlin O'Connell could not believe what she was seeing from these African elephants: as the mighty matriarch scanned the horizon, the other elephants followed suit, stopped midstride, and stood as still as statues. This observation would guide the scientist to a groundbreaking discovery about elephant communication: elephants actually listen with their limbs.

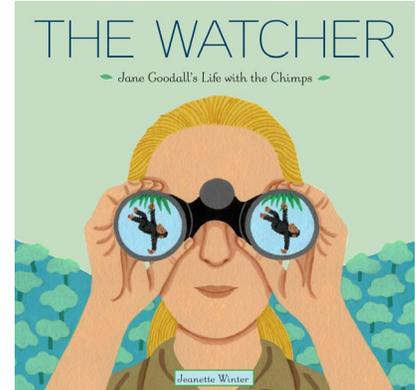


Title: [The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps](#)

Author & Illustrator: Jeanette Winter

Age: 3-8 years

Summary: Follow Jane from her childhood in London watching a robin on her windowsill, to her years in the African forests of Gombe, Tanzania, invited by brilliant scientist Louis Leakey to observe chimps, to her worldwide crusade to save these primates who are now in danger of extinction, and their habitat. (Adapted from Penguin Random House)

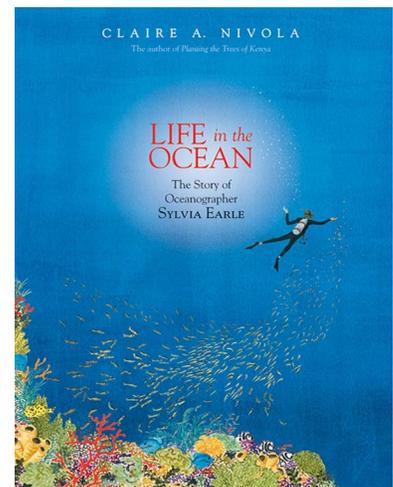


Title: [Life in the Ocean: The Story of Oceanographer Sylvia Earle](#)

Author & Illustrator: Claire A. Nivola

Age: 4-8 years

Summary: Sylvia Earle first lost her heart to the ocean as a young girl when she discovered the wonders of the Gulf of Mexico in her backyard. As an adult, she dives even deeper. Whether she's designing submersibles, swimming with the whales, or taking deep-water walks, Sylvia Earle has dedicated her life to learning more about what she calls "the blue heart of the planet." With stunningly detailed pictures of the wonders of the sea, Life in the Ocean tells the story of Sylvia's growing passion and how her ocean exploration and advocacy have made her known around the world. This picture book biography also includes an informative author's note that will motivate young environmentalists. (Macmillian Publishers)

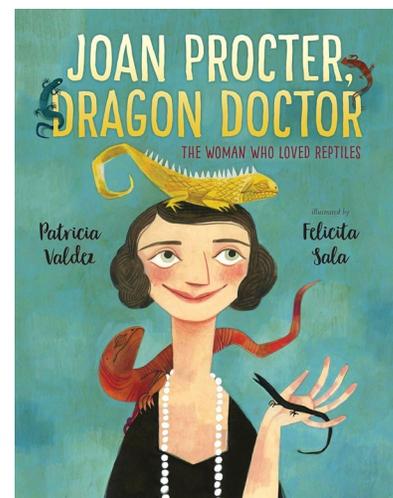


Title: [Joan Procter, Dragon Doctor: The Woman Who Loved Reptiles](#)

Author, Illustrator: Patricia Valdez, Felicita Sala

Age: 4-8 years

Summary: While other girls played with dolls, Joan preferred the company of reptiles. She carried her favorite lizard with her everywhere—she even brought a crocodile to school! When Joan grew older, she became the Curator of Reptiles at the British Museum. She went on to design the Reptile House at the London Zoo, including a home for the rumored-to-be-vicious komodo dragons. There, just like when she was a little girl, Joan hosted children's tea parties—with her komodo dragon as the guest of honor. With a lively text and vibrant illustrations, scientist and writer Patricia Valdez and illustrator Felicita Sala bring to life Joan Procter's inspiring story of passion and determination. (Penguin Random House)

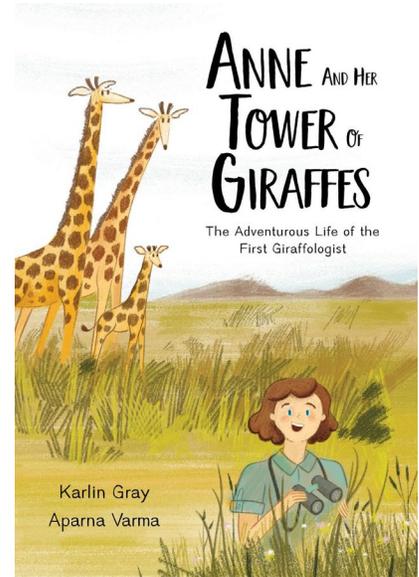


Title: [Anne and Her Tower of Giraffes: The Adventurous Life of the First Giraffologist](#)

Author, Illustrator: Karlin Gray, Aparna Varma

Age: 4-8

Summary: This inspiring picture book biography by Karlin Gray is based on the true story of Dr. Anne Innis Dagg, the pioneering female scientist who was the world's first giraffologist and the first scientist to study wild animal behavior in Africa. Anne was three years old when she first laid eyes on a giraffe. As her blue eyes gazed into the giraffe's big brown eyes at the zoo, she was mesmerized. And she never forgot it. Her desire to study the beautiful, graceful creatures followed her from preschool to graduate school. Often, she was laughed at for her interest. The scientific study of giraffes didn't exist at the time. And it certainly wasn't an appropriate pursuit for a woman — or so she was told. So, Anne decided she would teach herself about her favorite animal. She traveled to South Africa alone — and shocked everyone by studying giraffes in the wild! (Adapted from Kids Can Press)

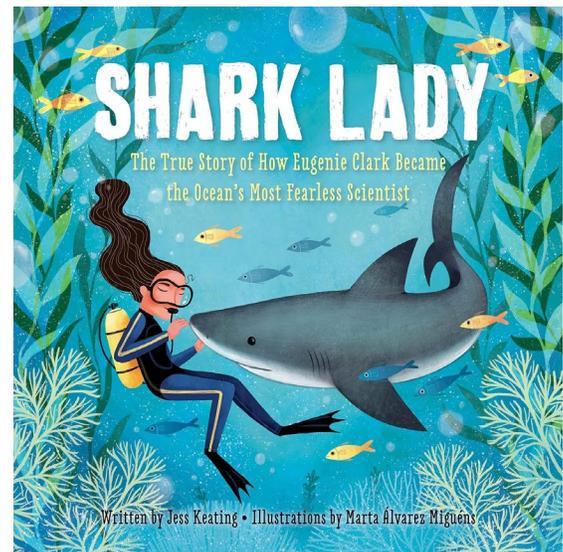


Title: [Shark Lady: The True Story of How Eugenie Clark Became the Ocean's Most Fearless Scientist](#)

Author, Illustrator: Jess Keating, Marta Álvarez Miguéns

Age: Grades K-4

Summary: Eugenie Clark fell in love with sharks from the first moment she saw them at the aquarium. She couldn't imagine anything more exciting than studying these graceful creatures. But Eugenie quickly discovered that many people believed sharks to be ugly and scary—and they didn't think women should be scientists. Determined to prove them wrong, Eugenie devoted her life to learning about sharks. After earning several college degrees and making countless discoveries, Eugenie wrote herself into the history of science, earning the nickname "Shark Lady." Through her accomplishments, she taught the world that sharks were to be admired rather than feared and that women can do anything they set their minds to. (Adapted from Sourcebooks)



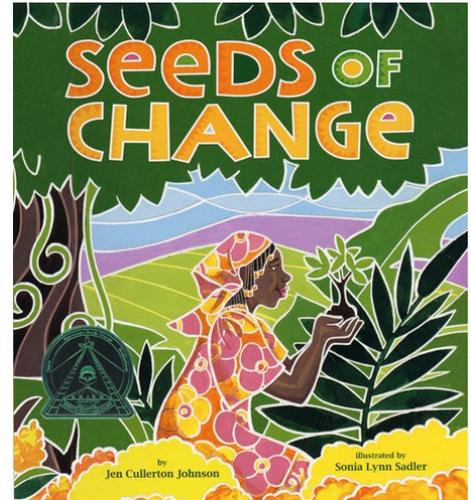
FORESTS

Title: [Seeds of Change: Wangari's Gift to the World](#)

Author, Illustrator: Jen Cullerton Johnson, Sonia Lynn Sadler

Age: 7-10 years

Summary: As a young girl in Kenya, Wangari was taught to respect nature. She grew up loving the land, plants, and animals that surrounded her—from the giant mugumo trees her people, the Kikuyu, revered to the tiny tadpoles that swam in the river. *Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace* brings to life the empowering story of Wangari Maathai, the first African woman, and environmentalist, to win a Nobel Peace Prize. Engaging narrative and vibrant images paint a robust portrait of this inspiring champion of the land and of women's rights. (Lee & Low Books)

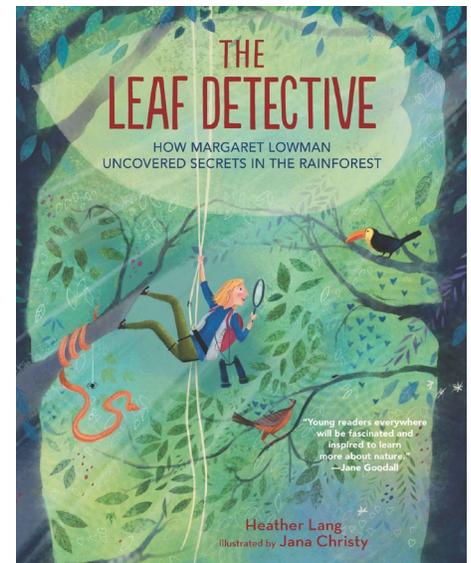


Title: [The Leaf Detective: How Margaret Lowman Uncovered Secrets in the Rainforest](#)

Author, Illustrator: Heather Lang, Jana Christy

Age: 7-10 years

Summary: Meg Lowman was always fascinated by the natural world above her head. The colors, the branches, and, most of all, the leaves and mysterious organisms living there. As a scientist, Meg set out to climb up and investigate the rainforest tree canopies. To be the first scientist to do so. But she encountered challenge after challenge. Male teachers would not let her into their classrooms. The high canopy was difficult to get to. And worst of all, people were logging and clearing the forests. Meg Lowman never gave up or gave in. She studied, invented, and persevered, not only creating a future for herself as a scientist, but making sure that the rainforests had a future as well. (Heather Lang Books)



Activities to go with the book: Download a discussion guide and learn fun facts from the author [here!](#)

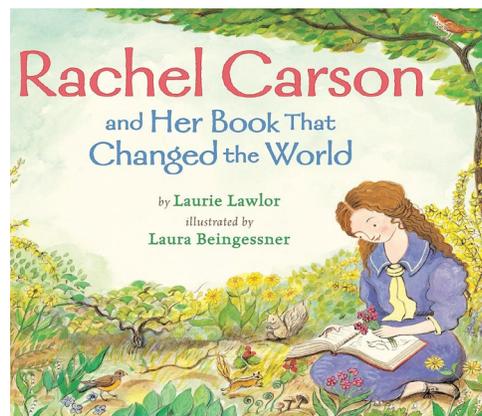
NATURE STUDY

Title: [Rachel Carson and Her Book That Changed the World](#)

Author, Illustrator: Laurie Lawlor, Laura Beingessner

Age: 6-9 years

Summary: Determined and curious even as a child, Rachel Carson's fascination with the natural world led her to study biology, and pursue a career in science at a time when very few women worked in the field. This lyrical, illustrated biography follows Carson's journey—from a girl exploring the woods, to a woman working to help support her family during the Great Depression, to a journalist and pioneering researcher, investigating and exposing the harmful effects of pesticide overuse. (Penguin Random House)



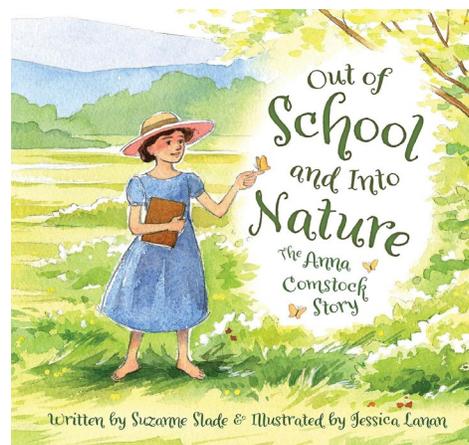
Activities to go with the book: Check out [Rachel Carson and Ecology for Kids: Her Life and Ideas, with 21 Activities and Experiments](#)

Title: [Out of School and Into Nature: The Anna Comstock Story](#)

Author, Illustrator: Suzanne Slade, Jessica Lanan

Age: Grades 1-4

Summary: This picture book biography examines the life and career of naturalist and artist Anna Comstock (1854-1930), who defied social conventions and pursued the study of science. From the time she was a young girl, Anna Comstock was fascinated by the natural world. She loved exploring outdoors, examining wildlife and learning nature's secrets. From watching the teamwork of marching ants to following the constellations in the sky, Anna observed it all. Eventually Anna became known as a nature expert, pioneering a movement to encourage schools to conduct science and nature classes for children outdoors, thereby increasing students' interest in nature. In following her passion, this remarkable woman blazed a trail for female scientists today. (Sleeping Bear Press)

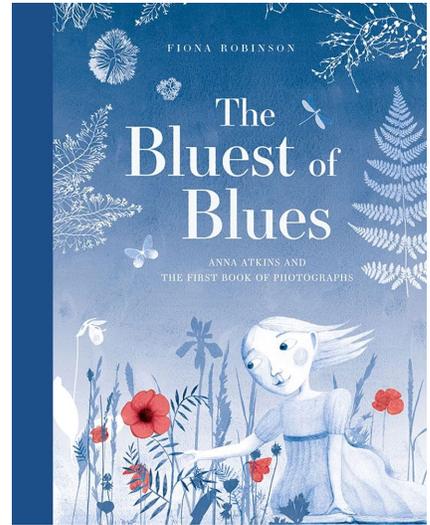


Title: [The Bluest of Blues: Anna Atkins and the First Book of Photographs](#)

Author: Fiona Robinson

Age: 6-9 years

Summary: A gorgeous picture book biography of botanist and photographer Anna Atkins—the first person to ever publish a book of photography. After losing her mother very early in life, Anna Atkins (1799–1871) was raised by her loving father. He gave her a scientific education, which was highly unusual for women and girls in the early 19th century. Fascinated with the plant life around her, Anna became a botanist. She recorded all her findings in detailed illustrations and engravings until the invention of cyanotype photography in 1842. Anna used this new technology in order to catalog plant specimens—a true marriage of science and art. In 1843, Anna published the book *Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype*. (New York Public Library)



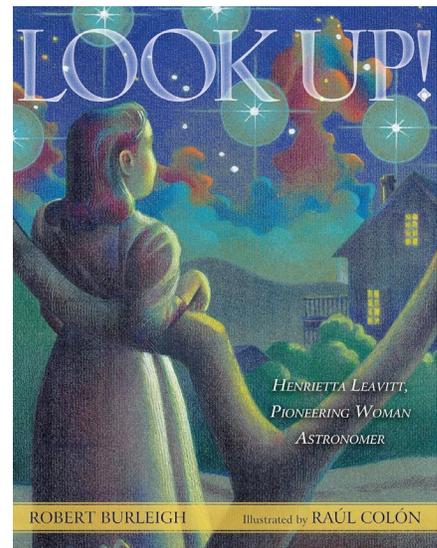
SPACE

Title: [Look Up!: Henrietta Leavitt, Pioneering Woman Astronomer](#)

Author, Illustrator: Robert Burleigh, Raúl Colón

Age: 4-8 years

Summary: Henrietta Swan Leavitt was born on July 4, 1868, and she changed the course of astronomy when she was just twenty-five years old. Henrietta spent years measuring star positions and sizes from photographs taken by the telescope at the Harvard College Observatory, where she worked. After Henrietta observed that certain stars had a fixed pattern to their changes, her discovery made it possible for astronomers to measure greater and greater distances—leading to our present understanding of the vast size of the universe.



Title: [Mae Among the Stars](#)

Author, Illustrator: Roda Ahmed, Stasia Burrington

Age: 4-8 years

Summary: When Little Mae was a child, she dreamed of dancing in space. She imagined herself surrounded by billions of stars, floating, gliding, and discovering. She wanted to be an astronaut. Her mom told her, "If you believe it, and work hard for it, anything is possible." Little Mae's curiosity, intelligence, and determination, matched with her parents' encouraging words, paved the way for her incredible success at NASA as the first African American woman to travel in space. This book will inspire other young girls to reach for the stars, to aspire for the impossible, and to persist with childlike imagination. (Harper Collins)



Title: [Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race](#)

Author, Illustrator: Margot Lee Shetterly, Laura Freeman

Age: Grades 1-3

Summary: In this beautifully illustrated picture book edition, we explore the story of four female African American mathematicians at NASA, known as "colored computers," and how they overcame gender and racial barriers to succeed in a highly challenging STEM-based career. They participated in some of NASA's greatest successes, like providing the calculations for America's first journeys into space. And they did so during a time when being black and a woman limited what they could do. But they worked hard. They persisted. And they used their genius minds to change the world.

