

Over in the Wetlands

A Hurricane-on-the-Bayou Story



Over in the Wetlands A Hurricane-on-the-Bayou Story

Caroline Starr Rose
Illustrated by Rob Dunlavey

Grades: Preschool–3
Ages: 4–8

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About This Book

In the bayous of Louisiana, the breeze begins to blow, a gentle “whisper too soft to hear.” As the breezes become gales and the waves increase in size, the animals sense what is about to roar through their wetland home: a raging hurricane. In eloquent verse, with dramatic imagery, *Over in the Wetlands* tells how the animals of the Louisiana bayou experience a hurricane, from its subtle beginnings, through its violent winds and drenching rains, to the stillness of its aftermath, when the animals continue with the rhythm of life. Whether bird, reptile, fish, or mammal, each creature moves with the storm to survive another day in this remarkably diverse and resilient habitat.

About the Author

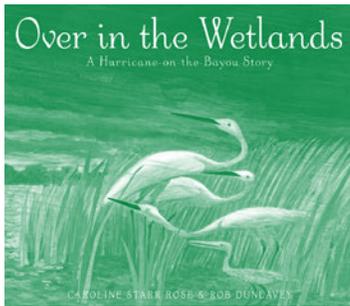
Caroline Starr Rose was named a *Publishers Weekly* Flying Start Author for her debut novel, *May B.*, which was an ALA-ALSC Notable Children’s Book and received two starred reviews. She spent her childhood in the deserts of Saudi Arabia and New Mexico, camping by the Red Sea in one and eating red chile in the other. She has taught social studies and English, and worked to instill in her students a passion for books, an enthusiasm for experimenting with words, and a curiosity about the past. She lives in New Mexico. Visit her at carolinestarrrose.com.

About the Illustrator

Rob Dunlavey is the illustrator of *The Dandelion’s Tale* by Kevin Sheehan, which was called “luminous” and “radiant” in a starred review by *Kirkus Reviews*, and *Counting Crows* by Kathi Appelt. His work has been featured in the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and *BusinessWeek*, among many other publications. Rob has made murals for children’s museums in Miami, Florida, and Bridgehampton, New York, and the East Hampton Public Library on Long Island. He lives in suburban Boston with his wife, two daughters, two insane cats, and a tropical fish named Bruce. Learn more at robd.com.



This guide was prepared by Colleen Carroll,
Children’s Book Author, Curriculum Writer-Developer,
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Pre-Reading

Present the book cover to students and highlight the words *wetlands*, *hurricane*, and *bayou*. Call on volunteers to offer a definition for each word. Generate a definition for each word; write each definition on the board. Next, spend some time looking at the cover. Ask students to describe what they see in the illustration and to make predictions about the story based on the information in the picture. Circle back to these student predictions after reading the text.

Vocabulary/Use of Language: Some of the vocabulary in *Over in the Wetlands* may be new to students. Consider previewing the following words before reading the book: *cypress*, *tufts*, *coastal*, *scuttle*, *spoonbills*, *egret*, *clamor*, *lumpers*, *nestles*, *undertow*, *squall*, *debris*, *writhes*, *pelting*, *gales*, *frothing*, *loam*, *tupelos*, *relentless*, *bulrushes*, *expanse*, *shambles*, *whuffles*, *ambling*, *skitter*, *chauffeur*.

Additional Resources

Over a third of our country's threatened or endangered species make their homes in wetlands, and nearly half live in wetlands for at least part of their lives. Be sure to read the Author's Note to learn more about endangered and threatened plants and animals.

Curriculum Connections Discussion Guide

1. In the beginning of the story, all is calm in the bayou as a single dragonfly "lights on a slender reed." How does the author foreshadow the approaching hurricane?
2. Study the illustration that opens the story. Describe how the bayou looks and feels.
3. What does the author mean by "cotton tufts dot the coastal skies" and "the wind stirs moss like silent bells"?
4. Discuss how the language and the illustrations capture the storm as it approaches, makes landfall in the bayou, and finally subsides.
5. Describe how the animals of the bayou prepare for the hurricane.
6. What is meant by the phrase "the cypress salted with an egret flock"? Why do you think the author chose the word *salted* to describe how the birds perch in the trees?
7. How do the colors of the bayou change over the course of the story? Why?
8. The wind is an important "character" in the story. Discuss ways in which the author describes or refers to the wind ("faint breeze," "wind stirs," "squall," "wind-whipped waves," "screaming gales," "winds ease to gentle breaths"). How does this use of descriptive language help you experience the feeling of the wind?
9. When the hurricane finally hits the bayou, it is very active. The author uses many powerful verbs to describe the hurricane's action. Identify those verbs and discuss how they make the story come to life. ("Stirs," "crawls," "grumbles," "writhes," "twists," "roars," "drenches," "drowns," "pounding," "wailing," "blasting," "breaking," "yawns," "rests").
10. The author refers to the mother alligator as a "swamp chauffeur." What does this phrase mean?
11. What happens to the bayou after the storm is over? How do the animals react?
12. Compare the opening illustrations with the final ones. How are the pictures alike? How are they different? How would you describe each illustration?
13. What discoveries did you make about the bayou as you listened to the story and examined the illustrations? What parts of the story surprised you?
14. Review and discuss students' predictions from the pre-reading activity.

Common Core Standards

Craft and Structure:

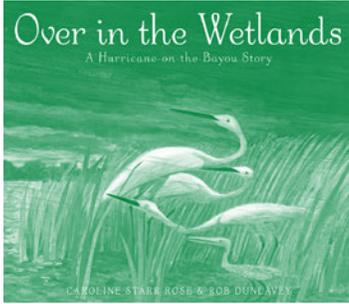
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4. Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 2 topic or subject area.

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.2. Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.





Name: _____

Animal Life in the Bayou

Over in the Wetlands introduces readers to the wonderful animal diversity of the Louisiana bayou.

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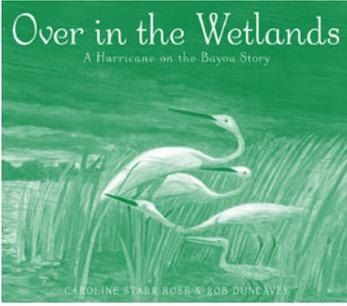


Illustration © 2015 by Rob Dunlavey

Instructions: Have students complete the chart below, filling in the spaces with animals featured in the book. To extend this activity, have students research additional animals that live in the bayou.

Mammal	Reptile	Bird	Fish/Sea Life	Insect





Name: _____

Nestle, Dive, Scuttle: Words in Action



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Instructions: In the space below, draw a picture of the bayou, making sure to include many different types of animals that live in this wetland habitat. Write labels to identify the animals you've drawn.

Large empty rectangular box for drawing and labeling.

Illustration © 2015 by Rob Dunlavy

