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Wild Wings



Synopsis

This vividly imagined and well-written novel • (Booklist, starred review) tells a gripping story about a boy from Scotland and a girl from West Africa who join together to save a migrating Osprey and end up saving each other. When Callum spots crazy Iona McNair on his family's sprawling property, she's catching a fish with her bare hands. She won't share the fish, but does share something else: a secret. She's discovered a rare endangered bird, an Osprey, and it's clear to both her and Callum that if anyone finds out about the bird, it, and its species, is likely doomed. Poachers, egg thieves, and wild weather are just some of the threats, so Iona and Callum vow to keep track of the bird and check her migratory progress using the code a preservationist tagged on her ankle, no matter what. But when one of them can no longer keep the promise, it's up to the other to do it for them both. No matter what. Set against the dramatic landscapes of Scotland and West Africa, this is a story of unlikely friendships, the wonders of the wild and the everyday leaps of faith that set our souls to flight.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 600 (What's this?)

Paperback: 304 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.9 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 30 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #42,886 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #27 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Europe #34 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa #63 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Environment

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Wild Wings By Gill Lewis Though Callum first sees Iona as an intruder on his family's farmland, she reveals a secret that overcomes his reluctance to befriend her: she's discovered a rare osprey

aerie. For months, they watch a pair of raptors and their chicks until it's nearly time for the birds' migration to Africa. Keeping his closeness with Iona as deep a secret as the endangered ospreys' nest, Callum begins to draw away from his other friends at school. After a shocking event, he gradually learns not only that he needs them, but also that he can depend on them and the rest of his village community more than he knew. Set in contemporary Scotland, this engaging novel is built on a solid foundation of characters who respond realistically to people and experiences. Even the minor characters are well drawn and convincing, and the interplay of individuals from different generations is portrayed with unusual finesse. A strong ecological theme runs through the novel.

Striving to protect the osprey nesting on his family's farm in Scotland, 11-year-old Callum McGregor watches the bird throughout summer, uses a computer to follow her migration to Africa and sets in motion a remarkable chain of events. This rich, moving tale begins with a shared secret: It was classmate Fiona McNair who found the nest. When the bird is snagged in fishing line high in her pine, the circle expands to include Callum's sheep-farming family and a ranger from a nearby preserve. When she migrates, Callum and friends Rob and Euan track her through the transmitter she carries on her back. When her signal disappears in a Gambian mangrove forest, 10-year-old Jeneba, hospitalized with broken legs, mobilizes the fishermen of her village and a visiting American doctor to rescue and rehabilitate her. Eventually--and entirely naturally--the bird's story reaches around the world. The suspenseful story line is surrounded with precise details: the Scottish landscape, osprey behavior, the work of a sheepdog and the joy and pain of riding a trail bike. Short chapters, some with cliffhanging endings, will read aloud well. Callum's first-person narrative is occasionally paralleled by the osprey's own experience, as Callum imagines it. With universal themes of life and death, friendship and respect for the natural world, this is still quite particular, a powerfully memorable story of a boy's grief and determination to keep a promise. - "KIRKUS,"

"March 1, 2011 *STARWild WingsBy Gill Lewis Though Callum first sees Iona as an intruder on his family's farmland, she reveals a secret that overcomes his reluctance to befriend her: she's discovered a rare osprey aerie. For months, they watch a pair of raptors and their chicks until it's nearly time for the birds' migration to Africa. Keeping his closeness with Iona as deep a secret as the endangered ospreys' nest, Callum begins to draw away from his other friends at school. After a shocking event, he gradually learns not only that he needs them, but also that he can depend on them and the rest of his village community more than he knew. Set in contemporary Scotland, this engaging novel is built on a solid foundation of characters who respond realistically to people and experiences. Even the minor characters are well drawn and convincing, and the interplay of individuals from different generations is portrayed with unusual finesse. A strong ecological theme

runs through the novel, as the characters together work to protect one of the ospreys, even tracking an electronically tagged bird's journey to Africa and finding allies to rescue her when she's in danger. Full-page drawings, not seen in final form, will illustrate this vividly imagined and well-written novel. --"Booklist", March 1, 2011, *STARWild Wings Written by Gill Lewis and illustrated by Yuta Onada (Atheneum; ISBN: 9781442414457; May 2011; Spring catalog p. 68) The worlds of two villages in Scotland and the Gambia intersect through modern technology and the determined efforts of children to save an injured osprey. When 11-year-old Iona moves in with her elderly grandfather, who is considered a "nutter," most children ostracize her. But an unlikely friendship develops between Iona and her classmate Callum after she shares her discovery of an osprey nest on his farm. Knowing ospreys are endangered, they keep Iris's existence secret until a fishing line entangles her, forcing them to seek help. A naturalist saves Iris and tags her, allowing the children to track her flight from Scotland to Africa online. In her first novel, picture book author Lewis (The Most Precious Thing) deftly explores painful divisions within friendships and communities, which lead to broken relationships and unexpected tragedies, as well as surprising connections made across barriers of culture and distance when one person's passion inspires acts of generosity, kindness, friendship, and hope. Callum narrates most of the story, though several short chapters share Iris's perspective in this unsentimental and powerfully moving tale. Final art not seen by PW. Ages 8-12. --"Publishers Weekly", March 14, 2011, *STAR

> is the author of >and >. A veterinarian, her love of animals and the natural world plays a big part in her writing. She lives in the UK.

I just finished reading this to my 6 year old, a huge bird lover. We both enjoyed the book. Several reviewers made points that are valid in how plot points were built up but not really followed through... but that didn't hinder our enjoyment of the story overall... I think the story is pretty cool. I found myself continuing to read it after my son would fall asleep each night because I wanted to see what was going to happen with Iris, the osprey. Although the way the story was developed may have weak points or frustrate some people, I appreciated the topics that were covered... although I was really surprised by the sudden death of one of the young characters. This part has given us lots to talk about, and I was surprised by the empathy my son showed for the Callum after this event. And he literally cheered at some parts of the book. It provided us with new things to research and learn about and gives links at the end to get you started if you have an interest in osprey research too. Overall we recommend this book and may even read it again soon.

This is a beautiful, powerful book about taking action from a place of compassion. I recommend it to readers young and old who seek an uplifting and inspiring journey. This book follows five children and the endangered, migrating osprey that teaches them how to expand their positive influences globally by observing and engaging with their communities locally. An emotionally charged, highly satisfying story, lovingly written.

This is a meaningful, timeless story with lots of modern touches that kids can relate to. The story flows along very naturally making it an enjoyable read for young people and their parents too. There are scientific facts about ospreys that a child who loves natural science or animals will appreciate. If you know a child who usually only wants to read non-fiction, there is a good chance he or she might really love to read this story. There is plenty of depth to appeal to the deeper thinkers, and the children in the book lead the story while the adults take a supportive yet secondary role, and most kids will like that. This story has much to offer such as decisions about friendships, not giving up, moving on after losses, and awareness of how we take things for granted in our relatively privileged society. Young readers will appreciate that the book is never preachy, obvious, or patronizing. The kid characters in the story are very "normal", and the dialogue is natural but not "in-your-face" disrespectful. In this age of addiction to thinking about oneself and getting wrapped up in relatively petty problems, this is a wonderful story about what kids can do to help someone or something else and or working as a community to help solve what seem at first to be insurmountable problems.

It is an awesome book stuffed with knowledge and emotions. For example: when I read it I was up and jumping in my seat but I also cried a little too. It is action packed and I recommend it to any young reader looking for a good read.

Wonderful story filled with the themes of friendship, loss, bullying and reflections. For grade 6 and above. This book will provoke a great deal of discussion.

Bought this book for a read-aloud for my sons' class. We are all loving it! Fascinating and captivating story. We all can't wait to hear what happens next!

This book is an excellent read for the second grade children in my class. The content was appropriate and the story enticing.

Super book for pre-teens. Lots of food for thought concerning friendships, loss, environmental issues and overcoming difficult odds.

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