

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

A Day in the Salt Marsh. By Kevin Kurtz with Illustrations by Consie Powell. Sylvan Dell Publishing. 2007. (ISBN 0976882353). 32 pp. Hardcover. \$15.95. Ages 4 through 8.

A Day in the Salt Marsh by Kevin Kurtz with illustrations by Consie Powell introduces readers to hourly changes as the tide comes and goes in the salt marsh using rhyming verses. All of the animals and plants are depicted in their natural habitats. Features such as panoramic views, bold colors, and picture-in-a-picture (PIP) provide extensive visual perception that will enhance reading skills. Throughout the book, examples abound of adaptations made by animals—fiddler crabs defending themselves, the terrapin biting into a snail's shell, and the great blue heron using its beak to catch fish. In addition, pictures of river otters running, splashing, and swimming while their mother watches are striking and will appeal to young readers as they relate to their mothers watching while they play.

The story of cordgrass drinking salt water and spitting the salt out in order to preserve the salt marsh will fascinate young readers. In addition, two types of *Spartina* grass are discussed in this dynamic ecosystem—one type providing food, fertilizing the grass in the marsh, and producing “wrack,” a floating pile of grass which provides food and refuge for small animals in the sea. On the other hand, another type called “alterniflora” is a weed that is growing too fast and destroying the habitat of valuable marsh plants. Kurtz also explains the importance of the salt marsh as a protector of our inland waterways and coastline.

In the section “For Creative Minds” several activities are listed, some of which may be downloaded

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