

The Reading Agency's March booklist for Children and Young People
– Wonders of the World



March 3 is World Wildlife Day, a United Nations International day to celebrate all the world's wild animals and plants and the contribution that they make to our lives and the health of the planet. We're joining the celebration with our *Wonders of the World* booklist. It's definitely one to go wild about! Don't forget to tell us what you thought of any of the books on the list by tagging us on social media using #booklist and tagging @readingagency!

Picture books and younger readers

***Outside* by Bee Chuck (Caterpillar Books), ISBN: 978-1838913946**

Outside is a place that nobody thinks much about. It's somewhere to go for a walk in the park or a trip to the duck pond or to get from one place to another. Inside is much more important. Until suddenly, no one is allowed to go outside and everything changes...

***Blobfish* by Olaf Falafel (Walker Books), ISBN: 978-1406397659**

Deep, deep, deep under the sea ... lives Blobfish! Blobfish loves telling jokes, although he has no one to share them with, so he sets off on an adventure to find a friend. But sometimes friends turn up in the most unexpected places, even at the bottom of the ocean.

***All the Animals Were Sleeping* by Clare Helen Welsh and Jenny Løvlie (Nosy Crow), ISBN: 978-1839940262**

On the dry, grassy plains of the Serengeti, a little mongoose makes his way home to his burrow. On his way, the mongoose passes giraffes, zebras, monkeys, elephants, storks, lizards, butterflies and cheetahs, all sleeping in their own unique ways.

***Every Leaf a Hallelujah* by Ben Okri and Diana Ejaita (Apollo), ISBN: 978-1800241626**

In the forest near Mangoshi's village in Africa there grows a very special flower. Mangoshi knows that only this flower can save her mother's life. It can save her village too. All she has to do is find it.

Ben Okri and Diana Ejaita have created a magical world of beauty and colour, an enchanting array of extraordinary trees, each with its own personality and voice. The chief among them, the great baobab, invites us into his branches to travel the world and see for ourselves the perils of not listening to nature. All around us, forests are vanishing, and no one is listening.

***The Friendly Mammoth* by Anna Terreros-Martin (David Fickling Books), ISBN: 978-1788452311**

A sprinkle of magic, and a whole lot of snow, transport Mansi and the Friendly Mammoth back to the Ice Age. Once there, they explore the world as it once was, meet the animals that have long-since disappeared, and learn that sharing what you love is one of the best ways to make new friends.

***A Way With Wild Things* by Larissa Theule and Sara Palacios (Bloomsbury Children's Books), ISBN: 978-1526628565**

Poppy loves bugs, and can usually be found carrying on conversations with ladybirds or sitting outside among the brightly coloured wildflowers . but good luck spotting her indoors and around people! She's a master of camouflage, always finding a way to blend into her surroundings.

But when a very special bug lands on her grandma's birthday cake, Poppy can't resist popping out to see it. Soon the rest of the guests notice the beautiful dragonfly, and Poppy too. Maybe it's OK to stand out sometimes, just like the vibrant wildflowers and shimmering insects Poppy loves.

Middle Grade

***October, October* by Katya Balen and Angela Harding (Bloomsbury Children's Books), ISBN: 978-1526601933**

October and her dad live in the woods. They know the trees and the rocks and the lake and stars like best friends. They live in the woods and they are wild. And that's the way it is.

Until the year October turns eleven. That's the year October rescues a baby owl. It's the year Dad falls out of the biggest tree in their woods. The year the woman who calls herself October's mother comes back. The year everything changes.

***The Wild Life of Animals* by Mike Barfield and Paula Bossio (Buster Books), ISBN: 978-1780558196**

Featuring key habitats, including seas, forests, deserts and grasslands, this book uncovers the little-known but amazing adaptations, bonkers behaviour and cunning natural skills of the world's most interesting animals. Each story is told from the animal's own perspective. Covering creatures from all over the world, readers will meet flying snakes in the rainforest, vampire squid in the ocean and meerkats in the desert. This hilarious guide, full of fascinating facts, will entrance animal lovers everywhere, and reveal the wild lives of animals like no other.

***Asha and the Spirit Bird* by Jasbinder Bilan (Chicken House), ISBN: 978-1911490197**

Asha lives in the foothills of the Himalayas. Money is tight and she misses her papa who works in the city. When he suddenly stops sending his wages, a ruthless moneylender ransacks their home and her mother talks of leaving.

From her den in the mango tree, Asha makes a pact with her best friend, Jeevan, to find her father and make things right. But the journey is dangerous: they must cross the world's highest mountains and face hunger, tiredness – even snow leopards.

And yet, Asha has the unshakeable sense that the spirit bird of her grandmother – her nanijee – is watching over her...

***Wildsmith: Into the Dark Forest* by Liz Flanagan and Joe Todd-Stanton (UCLan), ISBN: 978-1780558196**

When war threatens her beloved city, Rowan and her mother must flee to the Dark Forest, meeting Grandpa and his white wolf Arto for the first time. Though she misses her father, Rowan makes new friends - including a trio of powerful witches. When she rescues a baby dragon from poachers, she discovers the secret of her own identity: Rowan is a wildsmith! Fostering a whole clutch of dragons, the summer speeds by. But when danger threatens, Rowan and her grandpa must call on all their friends for help.

***How To Survive Anywhere: Staying Alive in the World's Most Extreme Places* by Ben Lerwill and Daniel Long (Nosy Crow), ISBN: 978-1788008129**

From the dense rainforests of the Amazon to the chill of the snowy Arctic, come on an intrepid adventure to the world's most extreme places, and find out just what it takes to survive there.

Discover how to navigate the vast Australian outback, keep yourself alive in a sandstorm in the Arabian desert, avoid a bear attack in a North American forest, explore the dark depths of the Atlantic Ocean and even perform a spacewalk up in orbit!

***Tyger* by S F Said and David McKean (David Fickling), ISBN: 978-1788452830**

Adam has found something incredible in a rubbish dump in London. A mysterious, mythical, magical animal. A TYGER.

And the tyger is in danger.

Adam and his friend Zadie are determined to help, but it isn't just the tyger's life at stake. Their whole world is on the verge of destruction. Can they learn to use their powers before it's too late?

YA (Some titles are for mature readers due to themes included)

***We Were Wolves* by Jason Cockcroft (Andersen Press) ISBN: 978-1839132001**

Boy lives in a caravan on his own in the woods. His dad, John, is in prison and promises to get out soon. All the boy needs to do is survive alone for a little while longer.

But dark forces are circling – like the dangerous man in the Range Rover, who is looking for his stolen money. And then there are the ancient forces that have lain asleep in the woods for an age...

***Aftershocks* by Anne Fine (Old Barn Books) ISBN: 978-1910646823**

A family mix-up means Louie has to tag along with his engineer father and his team as they head for a routine job in the farthest flung and most neglected province of the Federation. A massive earthquake, with ensuing tsunami, devastates the entire isolated coastal region, laying bare the other-worldly manner in which the silent and strange Endlanders deal with life, death and the hinterlands of memory and loss. Their curious and unsettling ways raise ghosts for Louie, who has recently lost his own brother.

***The Children of the Anthropocene: Stories from the Young People at the Heart of the Climate Crisis* by Bella Lack (Penguin Life), ISBN: 978-0241501085**

Across the planet, the futures of young people hang in the balance as they face the harsh realities of the environmental crisis. Isn't it time we made their voices heard?

The Children of the Anthropocene, by conservationist and activist Bella Lack, chronicles the lives of the diverse young people on the frontlines of the environmental crisis around the world, amplifying the voices of those living at the heart of the crisis.

***Lark* by Anthony McGowan (Barrington Stoke), ISBN: 978-1781128435**

Things are tense at home for Nicky and Kenny. Their mum's coming to visit and it will be the first time they've seen her in years. A lot has changed since they were little and Nicky's not so sure he's ready to see her again. When they head for a trek across the moors to take their minds off everything, a series of unforeseen circumstances leaves the brothers in a vulnerable and very dangerous position. There might even be a chance that this time not everyone will make it home alive

***Diary of a Young Naturalist* by Dara McAnulty (Milkweed Editions) ISBN: 978-1571311801**

Diary of a Young Naturalist chronicles the turning of a year in Dara's Northern Ireland home patch. Beginning in spring—when "the sparrows dig the moss from the guttering and the air is as puffed out as the robin's chest—these diary entries about his connection to wildlife and the way he sees the world are vivid, evocative, and moving.

***The Last Whale* by Chris Vick (Zephyr), ISBN: 978-1803281612**

From killers to conservationists, *The Last Whale* is the story of three generations of the Kristensen family, their history as whale hunters and later their mission to save the great whales and our planet.