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Crocodile: Disappearing Dragon

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This fine picture book takes us through a crocodile's reproductive cycle from a Spring mating, egg laying in a sandy nest in early May to scooping out the hatchlings in midsummer. We think of crocodiles as ferocious predators, but here the focus is just as much on the dangers they face from other creatures, including humans. We see the female crocodile protecting her eggs against 'rooting pigs and creeping racoons'. Then we follow the hatchlings' perilous journey to the water where only a handful escape the beak of a heron, the pincers of a blue crab or the talons of an osprey. The book's subtitle, 'Disappearing Dragon', the factual page and the map of Florida alert us to the threat that exists to the very survival of this crocodile species: only four or five hundred are left in Florida's mangrove swamps and canals. The book is illustrated with vivid oil paintings - wonderfully colourful and evocative - which give a powerful sense of the distinctive environment in which the crocodiles live. These pictures would encourage children from about five to eight years to talk and reflect. The poetic text has the immediacy of an informational narrative and combines successfully with the illustrations to make this a book likely to awaken a desire to know more.

Running Order:

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