

Kobee Manatee: Shipwreck Sea Friends

Robert Scott Thayer

Susan Korman, Editor

Lauren Gallegos, Illustrator

Thompson Mill Press LLC (Feb 21, 2017)

Hardcover \$16.99 (32pp)

978-0-9971239-3-7

This book will help children appreciate the ocean and the beauty and diversity of the world below the water's surface.

With lush, vibrant illustrations and appealing, friendly characters, Robert Scott Thayer's *Kobee Manatee: Shipwreck Sea Friends* entertains young learners while educating them about the inhabitants of the Caribbean coral reefs.

Shipwreck Sea Friends is the third book about Kobee and his friends Tess and Pablo. In this installment, the three are headed off on a new adventure to explore the *SS Antonio López*, a Spanish ship that sank near Puerto Rico in 1898. On their way to the ship, the three learn about lots of interesting new creatures.

The story is lighthearted and full of adventurous spirit. Kobee, Tess, and Pablo are friendly and welcoming to everyone they meet, and they in turn are offered help by their new friends when they need it most. To complement the story, there is a section on each page devoted to "Kobee's Fun Facts."

Famed oceanographer Fabien Cousteau collaborated with the author on these notes to offer interesting information on sea life, such as the octopus: "Using pigments in its skin and muscles, the octopus can blend right into its surroundings!" Children will be entertained by the simple story while learning new information seamlessly and with pleasure.

Illustrations by Lauren Gallegos are a wonderful accompaniment to the story. The sea is depicted as a magical place full of color and movement. The characters and other sea creatures are brought to life with adorable images full of emotion. These are sure to appeal to all ages. The layout of the book works well, with an appropriate amount of text on each page for children ages four to eight, and a clear separation between the fictional story and the facts being shared.

Kobee Manatee: Shipwreck Sea Friends is a delightfully appealing book. Children will be drawn to the colors and images, and amused by the story of Kobee and his friends. Far more significantly, they will learn some important information that may help them to appreciate the ocean, and the beauty and diversity of the world beneath the water's surface.

CATHERINE THURESON (April 17, 2017)

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