ForeWord Reviews

PICTURE BOOKS

River Beds: Sleeping in the World's Rivers
Gail Karwoski
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Connie McLennan, illustrator
Sylvan Dell Publishing
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"All over the world, mammals burrow in snug dens or snooze on riverbeds of sand and silt," begins this soothing sequel to *Water Beds: Sleeping in the Ocean*. Animals that are familiar to youngsters such as otters, dolphins, hippos, and beavers are featured alongside rare mammals like the capybara, the water vole, and the platypus. Short texts explain that otters sleep "inside a hollow tree" in Mississippi while the river dolphin of South Asia takes naps "for mere seconds before it wakes to click and touch and breathe again."

Readers not only learn where the animals sleep, but also how they drift off to sleep. Asian short-clawed otters dry their bodies before cuddling with family members, yet a lone beaver goes to sleep while it "tucks its head between its hind legs and hugs front paws to its chest." The illustrations provide snapshots of the animal in its habitat. Two friendly otters playing together, a single otter drying his fur, a sleeping child, and an otter "letting its head droop on a neighbor's warm rump" share a double-page spread.

The "For Creative Minds" section in the back of the book includes helpful resources that teachers and parents can use to extend the story. An adaptation activity asks readers to match the adaptations and descriptions to the animal while the map activity encourages readers to locate the continent where each animal lives. The author, a former K-12 teacher who attended the University of Minnesota for graduate school, has earned numerous awards, including the Georgia Author of the Year for Children's Literature Award and the Most Outstanding Author of the Year Award from the Just for Moms Foundation for *Water Beds: Sleeping in the Ocean*. The illustrator, who has contributed artwork to *Domitila: A Cinderella Tale from the Mexican Tradition* and *Rainforest Grew All Around*, received degrees from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, California State University in Sacramento, and the Academy of Art College in San Francisco.

When *River Beds* opens, appealing illustrations show a curious boy in a boat drifting

down the river thinking about the animals that live nearby. At the end of the book, the boy is asleep in his bed on the bank of the river. Before drifting off to sleep, readers can also travel to each of the continents and dream peacefully of fellow mammals snuggling in their beds.