

The Nocturnals Explore: Unique Adaptations of Nighttime Animals

Tracey Hecht

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Woylies, jerboas, and other creatures populate Tracey Hecht's winsome Nocturnals companion *The Nocturnals Explore: Unique Adaptations of Nighttime Animals*.

Dawn, a red fox, invites her friends Tobin the pangolin and Bismark the sugar glider to travel with her and explore. They visit Australia, China, and Madagascar, acting as imaginative tour guides and introducing other animals as they go. Their narration is accompanied by endearing color photographs and fun animal profiles.

Packed with interesting facts about what distinguishes nocturnal animals from others, the book covers creatures including owls, bats, and tuataras; majestic predators and rodents, marsupials, and reptiles are covered, too. Some have extra large eyes and ears, but there are also rarer features, including echolocation, camouflage, sensitivity to smells, and the ability to tap into Earth's magnetic pull on a hunt. When it comes to adapting to their environments, these animals are resourceful, even wondrous.

The book's educational tidbits are framed in a lively, accessible fashion: Bandicoot babies are "smaller than a jellybean," while wombats have "cube-shaped poop." There are appealing details about how each animal mother cares for her babies, alongside overviews of creatures' favorite foods and cool physical attributes, such as toes that fuse to function as combs and powerful tails. There are awareness-raising notes about which animals are endangered, too, while recurring visual cues draw attention to facts and tidbits to promote further exploration. An alphabetical animal glossary sums up the characteristics, diets, and habitats of the featured animals, and a bulleted list of ways to find good sources during research concludes this informative work.

Directed by upbeat curiosity, *The Nocturnals Explore* is a welcoming introduction to nighttime animals that celebrates biodiversity.

KAREN RIGBY (November / December 2022)

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