

NCTE News Release

A Professional Association of Educators in English Studies, Literacy, and Language Arts

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NCTE Announces Outstanding Nonfiction for Children Award

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has awarded the 2007 Annual Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children to *Quest for the Tree Kangaroo: An Expedition to the Cloud Forest of New Guinea* by Sy Montgomery with photographs by Nic Bishop (Houghton Mifflin). NCTE, through the Committee on the Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children, established the annual award to promote and recognize excellence in the writing of nonfiction for children.

Each year, one winner and up to five honorable mention books are awarded as well as a list of recommended nonfiction children's titles. Books are judged on accuracy, organization, design, and style. In addition, each nomination should be useful in classroom teaching grades K-8, should encourage thinking and more reading, model exemplary expository writing and research skills, share interesting and timely subject matter, and appeal to a wide range of ages.

In *Quest for the Tree Kangaroo*, Montgomery and Bishop continue their outstanding collaboration to introduce readers to scientists at work. They document their participation in an expedition to the rugged and remote cloud forest of Papua New Guinea in search of the elusive and fascinating Matschie's tree kangaroo. Biologist Lisa Dabek heads a team of scientists from around the world who work with local guides to locate the creatures and fit them with radio collars to learn more about them. Montgomery describes both the hardships and exhilaration of the expedition while Bishop's photographs capture the expedition in splendid detail.

This year's Honorable Mention books are *Gregor Mendel: The Friar Who Grew Peas*, by Cheryl Bardoe, illustrated by Jos. A. Smith (Abrams Books for Young Readers); *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott* by Russell Freedman (Holiday House); *John Muir: America's First Environmentalist* by Kathryn Lasky, illustrated by Stan Fellows (Candlewick Press); *Something Out of Nothing: Marie Curie and Radium* by Carla Killough McClafferty (Farrar, Straus and Giroux); *Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon* by Catherine Thimmesh (Houghton Mifflin)

This year's list of recommended books includes *An Egg is Quiet* by Diana Hutts Aston and Sylvia Long (Chronicle Books); *Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement* by Ann Bausum (National Geographic Children's Books); *Owen & Mzee: The True Story of a Remarkable Friendship* by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff, and Dr. Paula Kahumbu (Scholastic); *Onward: A Photobiography of African-American Polar Explorer Matthew Henson* by Delores Johnson (National Geographic Children's Books); *Rescues* by Sandra Markle (Millbrook Press); *Saving the Buffalo* by Albert Marrin (Scholastic); *The Cat with the Yellow Star: Coming of Age in Terezin* by Susan Goldman Rubin and Ela Wiessberger (Holiday House); *Construction Zone* by Cheryl Willis Hudson, photographs by Richard Sobol (Candlewick Press).

Nomination of individual titles may come from the membership of NCTE and from the educational community at large. Any title of nonfiction or informational literature, which has as its central purpose the sharing of information, may be nominated. This includes biography, but excludes textbooks, historical fiction, folklore, or poetry. Books must have been published in the United States during the previous calendar year. For more information about the Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction for Children, see www.ncte.org/elem/awards/orbispictus.