

Teen Fiction and Nonfiction

Teen Fiction

[Silent Spring](#) by Rachel Carson *HoughtonMifflin (1962)*

Silent Spring appeared in September of 1962 and the outcry that followed its publication forced the banning of DDT and spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. Carson's passionate concern for the future of our planet reverberated powerfully throughout the world, and her eloquent book was instrumental in launching the environmental movement. It is without question one of the landmark books of the twentieth century. (From Amazon)

[Chita: A Memory of Last Island](#) by Lafcadio Hearn *University Press of Mississippi (1886)*

Originally published in 1889, this long out-of-print novella is a minor masterpiece that is by turns mysterious, mesmerizing, and tragic. In the aftermath of the storm, a Spanish fisherman wades into the Gulf to pick through debris. Among the bodies, he finds one that is yet alive, a young Creole girl. Her parents are presumed to have died in the storm. Raised by the fisherman's family, Chita grows into a strong, independent young woman. Her story is counterpointed by that of her lost father, a doctor who thinks that his daughter is dead and, as a result, devotes himself to helping others in need. When he comes to Last Island to help stem a yellow fever epidemic, he encounters Chita. The consequences are devastating. (From University Press of Mississippi)

[The Highest Tide](#) by Jim Lynch *Bloomsbury USA (2006)*

One moonlit night, thirteen-year-old Miles O'Malley sneaks out of his house and goes exploring on the tidal flats of Puget Sound. When he discovers a rare giant squid, he instantly becomes a local phenomenon shadowed by people curious as to whether this speed-reading, Rachel Carson obsessed teenager is just an observant boy or an unlikely prophet. But Miles is really just a kid on the verge of growing up, infatuated with the girl next door, worried that his bickering parents will divorce, and fearful that everything, even the bay he loves, is shifting away from him. As the sea continues to offer up discoveries from its mysterious depths, Miles struggles to deal with the difficulties that attend the equally mysterious process of growing up. (From Amazon)

[The Log from the Sea of Cortez](#) by John Steinbeck *Penguin (1995)*

In the two years after the 1939 publication of Steinbeck's masterful *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck and his novel increasingly became the center of intense controversy and censorship. In search of a respite from the national stage, Steinbeck and his close friend, biologist Ed Ricketts, embarked on a month long marine specimen-collecting expedition in the Gulf of California, which resulted in their collaboration on the *Sea of Cortez*. In 1951, after Ricketts' death, Steinbeck reissued his narrative portion of the work in memory of his friend and the inspiration for Cannery Row's "Doc". This exciting day-by-day account of their journey together is a rare blend of science, philosophy, and high-spirited adventure. This edition features an introduction by Richard Astro. (From Barnes & Noble)

Meely LaBauve by Ken Wells *Random House (2001-2003)*

Fifteen-year-old Meely LaBauve is growing up on Catahoula Bayou and living by his wits. Not since Huck Finn rafted down the Mississippi has there been a coming-of-age story like this, told in such an utterly authentic unlettered American voice. From a charming encounter with first love in the Canciennes' corn patch to an adventurous paddle through wild and timeless places little explored, Ken Wells has cooked up a zesty gumbo of a book--rich, poignant, and often hilarious. (From Barnes & Noble)

Other titles in this series: Junior's Leg, Logan's Storm

Crawfish Mountain by Ken Wells *Random House (2007)*

Justin Pitre's marsh island, a legacy of his trapper grandfather, is a scenic rival to anything in the Everglades, and he has promised to protect it from all harm. But he hasn't counted on oil bigwig Tom Huff's plans to wreck his bayou paradise by ramming a pipeline through it. When cajolery doesn't sway Justin to sign the land over, Huff turns to darker methods. But Justin and his spirited wife, Grace, prove to be formidable adversaries--and the game is on.

Into the fray comes the charismatic Cajun governor Joe T. Evangeline, who seems more interested in chasing skirts than saving Louisiana's eroding coast. The Guv, though, is a man on the edge, upended by a midlife crisis and torn between a secret political obligation to Big Oil and the persuasive powers of Julie Galjour, a feisty environmentalist. Julie is clearly out to reform more than the Guv's ecopolitics, but will his tragicomic Big Oil deals wreck both his career and his chances with the brash and beautiful activist? (From Amazon)

Teen Nonfiction

Ocean: The World's Last Wilderness Revealed from the American Museum of Natural History *DK Adult (2008)*

Breathtaking, powerful, and all-encompassing in its sheer scope and visual impact, *Ocean* sweeps you away on an incredible journey into the depths of our astonishing marine world. As the site where life first formed on Earth, a key element of the climate, and a fragile resource, oceans are of vital importance to our planet. This definitive visual guide to the world's oceans - including the geological and physical processes that affect the ocean floor, the key habitat zones, the rich diversity of marine life - is now available in paperback. (From Amazon)

Salt Marshes: A Natural and Unnatural History by Carol Butler and Judith S Weis *Rutgers University Press (2009)*

Tall green grass. Subtle melodies of songbirds. Sharp whines of muskrats. Rustles of water running through the grasses. And at low tide, a pungent reminder of the treasures hidden beneath the surface. All are vital signs of the great salt marshes' natural resources. Now championed as critical habitats for plants, animals, and people because of the environmental service and protection they provide, these ecological wonders were once considered unproductive wastelands, home solely to mosquitoes and toxic waste, and mistreated for centuries by the human population. Exploring the fascinating biodiversity of these boggy

wetlands, *Salt Marshes* offers readers a wealth of essential information about a variety of plants, fish, and animals, the importance of these habitats, consequences of human neglect and thoughtless development, and insight into how these wetlands recover. (From Goodreads)

[The Sea Around Us](#) by Rachel Carson *Oxford University Press (1951)*

This classic work remains as fresh today as when it first appeared. Carson's writing teems with stunning, memorable images--the newly formed Earth cooling beneath an endlessly overcast sky; the centuries of nonstop rain that created the oceans; giant squids battling sperm whales hundreds of fathoms below the surface; and incredibly powerful tides moving 100 billion tons of water daily in the Bay of Fundy. Quite simply, she captures the mystery and allure of the ocean with a compelling blend of imagination and expertise.

Today, with the oceans endangered by the dumping of medical waste and ecological disasters such as the Exxon oil spill in Alaska, this illuminating volume provides a timely reminder of both the fragility and the importance of the ocean and the life that abounds within it. Anyone who loves the sea, or who is concerned about our natural environment, will want to read this classic work. It remained on the New York Times Bestseller List for more than a year and a half and ultimately sold well over a million copies, has been translated into 28 languages, inspired an Academy Award-winning documentary, and won both the 1952 National Book Award and the John Burroughs Medal. (From Amazon)

[Going Blue: A Teen Guide to Saving Our Oceans, Lakes, Rivers & Wetlands](#) by Cathryn Berger Kaye and Philippe Cousteau *Free Spirit Publishing (2010)*

Written by service learning expert Cathryn Berger Kaye and celebrity ocean spokesperson Philippe Cousteau, *Going Blue* educates young people about the earth's water crisis and gives them tools and inspiration to transform their ideas into action. With lively photos and practical suggestions, the book helps teens plan and do a meaningful service project that benefits our planet's water system. Along the way, readers learn about issues such as clean water access, coral reef damage, runoff pollution, trash islands, factory fishing, bottled water, and much more. (From Goodreads)

[Shadows on the Gulf](#) by Rowan Jacobsen *Bloomsbury USA (2011)*

Surveying the Gulf Coast by sailboat, skiff, car, and kayak, Jacobsen journeys from the bayous of Terrebonne Parish, where he goes on oil patrol with a Native American man whose tribe is being displaced as their island disintegrates; to the last shucking house in New Orleans's French Quarter, whose oyster supply has vanished; to the pristine barrier islands of Mississippi, where a Kafkaesque cleanup effort is underway. He discovers a little-appreciated ecological wonder of breathtaking natural beauty and rich culture struggling to hold on to the things that have always sustained it.

Shadows on the Gulf details the catastrophe creeping across the region and reveals why the damage to the Gulf will affect us all. Not only are the Gulf's wetlands the best oyster reefs and fish nurseries in the world, they also provide critical habitat to most of America's migratory songbirds and waterfowl. If the Gulf is allowed to fail, the effects will ripple across America. And fail it will, unless BP's blunder can somehow galvanize a national effort to save it. (From Amazon)

The Oceans by Ellen Prager and Sylvia A. Earle *McGraw-Hill (2000)*

This exhaustive overview of oceanography captures the excitement of discovery in the making. The Oceans opens up the world of ocean science to the general reader and raises significant questions about the future of the ancient, nurturing ocean itself. The oceans cover more than 70 percent of the globe, yet less than 5 percent of that expanse has been explored. But, as Drs. Prager and Earle show in this vivid survey of ocean research, our knowledge is suddenly accelerating: various dives, soundings, computer analyses, and other probes are uncovering amazing facts about the 142 million square miles beneath the seas. (From Amazon)

The Florida Manatee: Biology and Conservation by Roger L. Reep and Robert K. Bonde *University Press of Florida (2010)*

Having played integral roles in many of the research efforts discussed in the book, Reep and Bonde humanize the sometimes difficult-to-grasp characteristics of manatee biology, their relation to the environment, and the biopolitics that result from the intersection of science and wildlife management. They weave fact with real-life scenarios to explain what science has learned about this unusual animal—from microorganisms that cause manatee die-offs during red tide blooms to the complexity of long-distance migrations to the curiosities of manatee physiology. The evolutionary basis of the sirenian language (how manatees communicate with each other) is also revealed. Reep and Bonde argue that increasing interaction between man and manatee, most notably through the shared use of waterways, makes ongoing scientific research essential if successful coexistence is to be possible. (From Amazon)

Generation Green: The Ultimate Teen Guide to Living an Eco-Friendly Life by Linda Siversten and Tosh Siversten *Simon Pulse (2008)*

We all know about the Earth's environmental crisis, but there is someone who can truly make a difference: you. If you text your friends or chat with them online, download music to your iPod, or toss bottles and papers into recycling bins, you're already more eco-savvy than you think. It's just as easy to do even more to help save the earth, and Generation Green shows you how. It doesn't matter if you can't vote or drive. Your efforts -- big or small -- will contribute to saving the planet. It's time for all of us to take action. It's time to go green! (From Simon & Schuster)

Bayou Farewell by Mike Tidwell *Vintage Books (2003)*

The Cajun coast of Louisiana is home to a way of life as unique, complex, and beautiful as the terrain itself. As award-winning travel writer Mike Tidwell journeys through the bayou, he introduces us to the food and the language, the shrimp fisherman, the Houma Indians, and the rich cultural history that makes it unlike any other place in the world. But seeing the skeletons of oak trees killed by the salinity of the groundwater, and whole cemeteries sinking into swampland and out of sight, Tidwell also explains why each introduction may be a farewell—as the storied Louisiana coast steadily erodes into the Gulf of Mexico. (From Overdrive)

Kraken: The Curious, Exciting, and Slightly Disturbing Science of Squid by Wendy Williams *Harry N. Abrams (2011)*

Kraken is the traditional name for gigantic sea monsters, and this book introduces one of the most charismatic, enigmatic, and curious inhabitants of the sea: the squid. The pages take the reader on a wild narrative ride through the world of squid science and adventure, along the way

addressing some riddles about what intelligence is, and what monsters lie in the deep. In addition to squid, both giant and otherwise, *Kraken* examines other equally enthralling cephalopods, including the octopus and the cuttlefish, and explores their otherworldly abilities, such as camouflage and bioluminescence. (From Amazon)