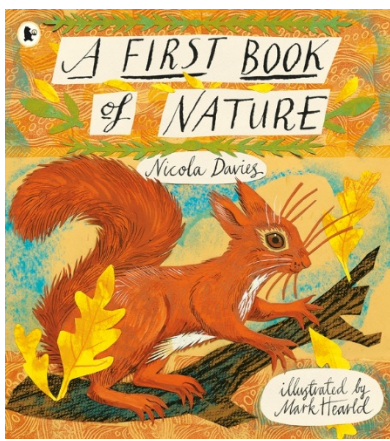


Author Focus

Nicola Davies

Nicola Davies writes enthusiastically for a wide age range and in a variety of genres and her work has been illustrated by many of the best children's illustrators. She is equally at home writing verse and poetic prose and lively factual texts about subjects ranging from poo to parasites, bats to bears, sharks to snakes. Nicola's passion for the natural world and especially for animals shines through in her writing and when she talks. A knowledgeable expert who can write well for children, Nicola takes this further by actively promoting the wider and more imaginative use of non-fiction in education. At the same time she actively campaigns around issues concerned with conservation, biodiversity and climate change. Find out more about Nicola here: www.nicola-davies.com

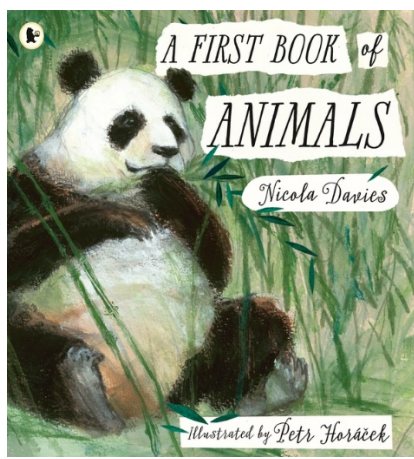
Information Books



A First Book of Nature illustrated by Mark Hearld
Walker 9781406349160

Stunning mixed media illustrations which make particularly effective use of collage complement text which includes verse and prose, conveying information in a variety of ways. Seasonal sections range over many aspects of the natural world visible at a child's level. A book that will repay many revisits as the year rolls by, encouraging exploration of nature and inspiring children's own artwork.

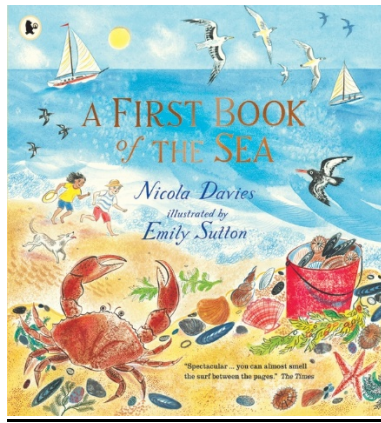
A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/first-book-nature>



A First Book of Animals illustrated by Petr Horáček
Walker 9781406378122

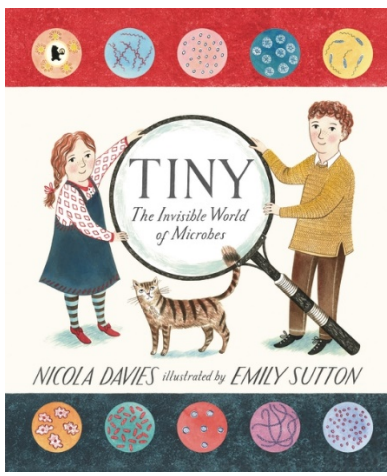
Nicola talks of making the words delicious when offering scientific observations and here she uses a well-chosen blend of descriptive and technical vocabulary that both delights and astounds. Her poems demand to be read aloud, lifting the language and meaning off the page; each one celebrating the dazzling variety of wildlife with whom we share the planet. Petr Horáček's illustrations add depth and richness to this gorgeous book, exuding a sense of place and illustrating the individual character of each animal.

A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/first-book-animals>



A First Book of the Sea illustrated by Emily Sutton
Walker 9781406391015

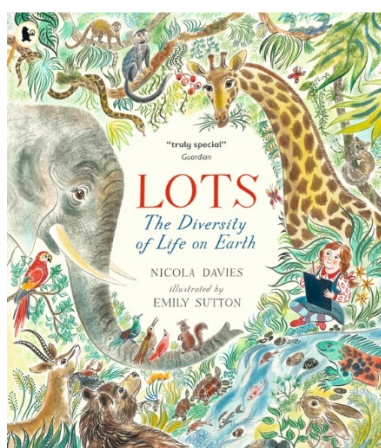
Starting with the seashore, Nicola Davies explores the oceans in verses that describe the wildlife within and beside it and how humans interact with these. There's an alliterative verse about sharks, instructions for how to sing like a humpback whale, a poem asking what is the deadliest thing in the sea (and no, it's not a living creature!). All are surrounded by Emily Sutton's illustrations that display in detail the diversity of colours and patterns in nature, combining delicacy and boldness.



Tiny. The Invisible World of Microbes illustrated by Emily Sutton
Walker 9781406360707

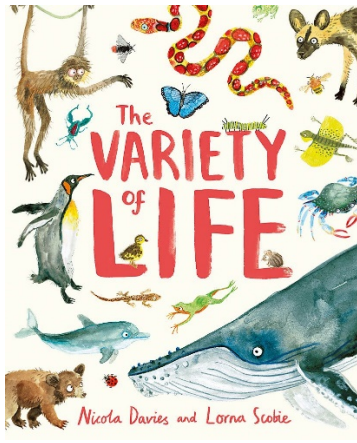
A combination of imaginative language and complementary illustrations demonstrates the enormous role played in the world by microscopic life forms. Understanding is gradually built from a simple and enticing opening by means of evocative comparisons, such as equating the number of microbes in a teaspoon of soil with the population of India. Readers discover what microbes are, what they do and how fast they multiply. There is a wealth of fascinating facts but the presentation ensures that this is not overwhelming. Visual representations are pleasingly varied in their composition and design.

A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/tiny-invisible-world-microbes>



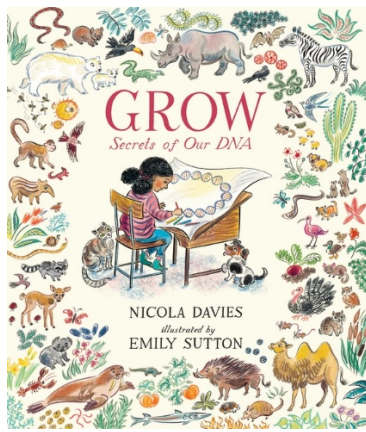
Lots. The Diversity of Life on Earth illustrated by Emily Sutton
Walker 9781406378894

An introduction to the rich biodiversity on Earth and how humans still don't know just how many kinds of living things exist, although the latest count is about two million. Alongside the exciting fact that thousands of new life forms are discovered every year is concern about the disappearance of many species. The central explanatory text, combined with absorbing illustrations depicting a child exploring the amazing natural world, make the subject of the complex interconnecting web of life accessible to young children.



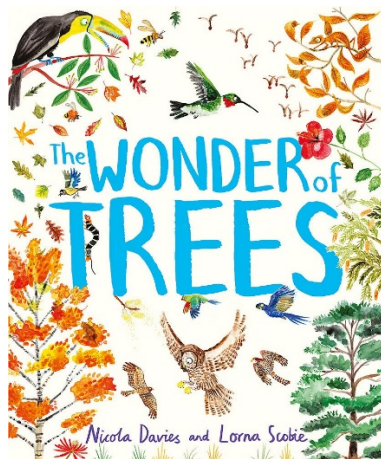
The Variety of Life illustrated by Lorna Scobie
Hodder 9781444931198

A different approach to the subject of biodiversity than that in *Lots*, this large format book comprises double page spreads each devoted to highlighting the range of species for a variety of plants and animals, not forgetting fungi! Each expressively illustrated living form is labelled with its common and Latin names and a single sentence fact about it. The number of species, noted discreetly in the bottom left hand corner of each spread, ranges from 6 species of sheep to 400,000 species of beetle. A beautiful tree of life diagram tells the story of life on earth in graphic form. Love of language as well as love of nature is at the heart of this volume, as Nicola emphasises in her introduction the significance of noticing and naming as many living things as we can.



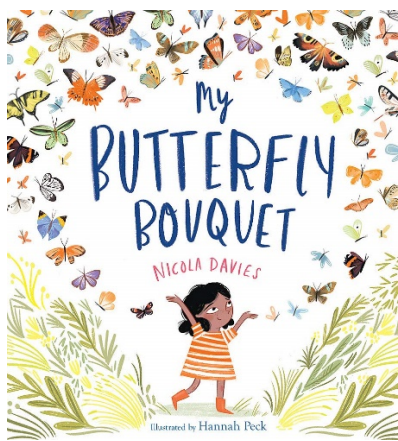
Grow: Secrets of Our DNA illustrated by Emily Sutton
Walker 9781406394337

In this accessible introduction to a complex subject, Nicola builds up an explanation of how the genetic code made from DNA unites not only human beings but all living things, past and present. Her words and Emily Sutton's pictures, which are peopled with friendly and inquisitive children, demonstrate the underlying sources of growth and change.



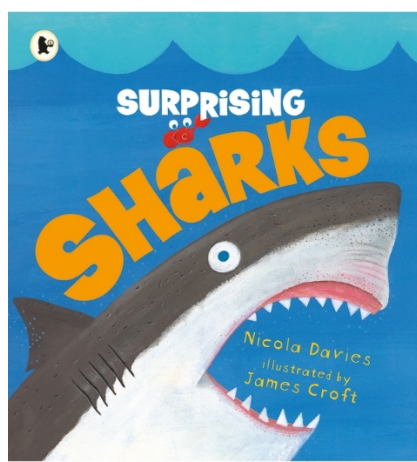
The Wonder of Trees illustrated by Lorna Scobie
Hodder 9781444938197

Using a similar luxuriously large format to their earlier book, the author and illustrator explore the world of trees. Beginning with a brief arboreal history and geography, they then go on to focus on the functions of trees' constituent parts and their relationships with other living things. Readers encounter some of the types of environment in which they grow and the ways in which humans interact with them are described in a thought provoking way before the book ends with a helpful glossary.



My Butterfly Bouquet illustrated by Hannah Peck
Wren & Rook 9781526361295/9781526361318

A child comes out of hospital in winter and, to cheer her up and bring some colour into her life, her father takes her to a glasshouse where the air is warm and steamy and they can discover the beauty of the butterflies there. When they get home they begin to prepare their own garden to attract butterflies in spring. Many facts about butterflies can be gleaned from the story and there is additional information at the back of the book about pollination, the butterfly life cycle and how humans can help them survive.



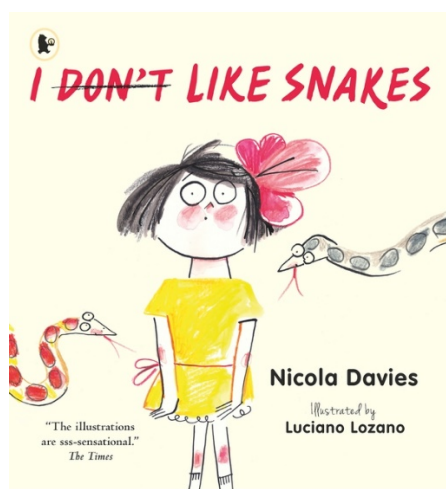
Surprising Sharks illustrated by James Croft
Walker 9781406366976

An excellent introduction to sharks which will ignite interest in what lurks beneath the sea. The book is full of interesting facts about sharks that will challenge their reputation as a “giant man-eating killer”. The first shark the author introduces is a Dwarf Lantern Shark that is smaller than a chocolate bar. The author’s snippets of information fall into playful shapes and sizes of print which go beside bright and colourful illustrations. Nicola Davies shows that sharks come in various shapes and sizes by using descriptions such as the lantern shark has ‘built in fairy lights’ and the wobbegong lies ‘on the sea floor like a scrap of old carpet’.

A CLPE core book

<https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/surprising-sharks>

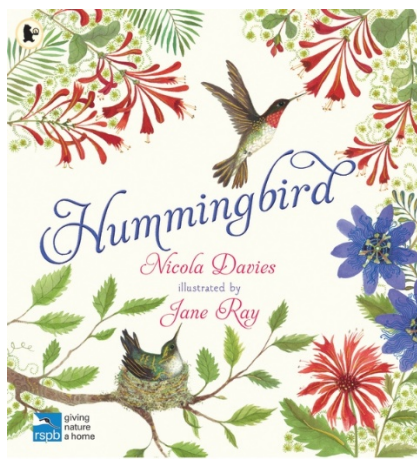
Subscribers to Power of Reading can access a teaching sequence for this book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading>



I [Don't] Like Snakes illustrated by Luciano Lozano
Walker 9781406365689

A girl is aghast because her family keeps snakes which she can't abide. She enumerates all her objections, such as the way they slither and the texture of their slimy, scaly skin. In return she receives fascinating detailed explanations of the features of snakes in all their international variety. Will she change her mind? The narrative in this picture book is cleverly combined with explanatory text which converts it into a very informative non-fiction book. The illustrations are by the same artist but he uses two distinct styles to accompany the story and the information text, at times skilfully interweaving them.

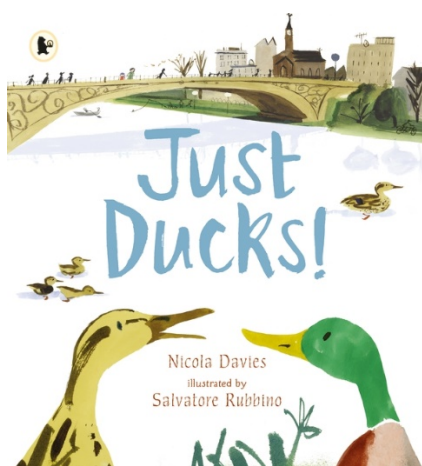
A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/i-dont-snakes>



Hummingbird illustrated by Jane Ray
Walker 9781406379273/9781406391336

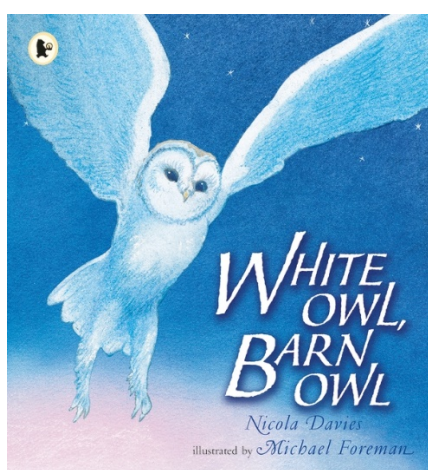
After revealing the amazing information that there are 300 different kinds of hummingbird, this book then focuses on one of them - the ruby-throated hummingbird - and makes connections with the paths of migration of these tiny creatures and of humans between Central and North America. Jane Ray's jewel-like illustrations encourage paying close attention to detail and interact with Nicola Davies's text which combines elements of intercultural family life with factual information about the hummingbird.

A CLPE core book <https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks/hummingbird>
Subscribers to Power of Reading can access a teaching sequence for this book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading>



Just Ducks! Illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino
Walker 9781406367034

Lovely smudgy illustrations using a colour palette which is predominantly green, brown and blue convey an appropriately watery feel for this picture book all about mallard ducks and their habits. The narrative is in the voice of a child who describes her discoveries about these birds as she observes them on her way to and from school throughout the year. As in all the Nature Storybooks series, there are gobbets of additional information in a different font on each spread. A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/just-ducks>



White Owl, Barn Owl illustrated by Michael Foreman
Walker 9781406365443

In this picture book in the Nature Storybooks series, a child and her grandfather watch a family of barn owls nesting in a box that they have placed in a tree to help protect them from predators, as the trees and barns where they usually make their homes have been destroyed. Their close relationship is evident in the way the grandfather gives explanations at the same time as encouraging the child to make her own observations. The central narrative is from the child's viewpoint. Additional facts about barn owls appear on each spread in a different font. The main text and some vignettes appear on a sepia background while Michael Foreman's signature palette of shades of blue is perfect for the night time scenes portrayed in the larger illustrations.

A CLPE core book <https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks/white-owl-barn-owl>

Other titles by Nicola Davies in the Walker Nature Storybooks series:

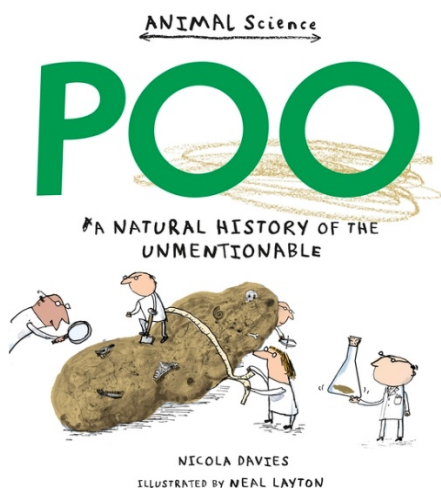
Dolphin Baby illustrated by Brita Granström 9781406367003

One Tiny Turtle illustrated by Jane Chapman 9781406364637

Big Blue Whale illustrated by Nick Maland 9780744578966

Bat Loves the Night illustrated by Sarah Fox-Davies
9781406367010

Ice Bear illustrated by Gary Blythe 9781406364644



Poo: a natural history of the unmentionable illustrated by Neal Layton
Walker 9781406356632

This book explains the whys and wherefores of animal excretion. It covers the role of faeces in communication, as nourishment and its role in natural recycling in addition to providing clues to this as a means of animal identification. The author's mix of scientific and colloquial language, and the humorous illustrations are both very engaging.

A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/poo-natural-history-unmentionable>

Other titles in the Animal Science series:

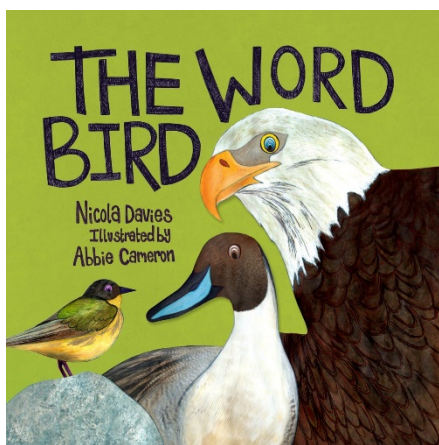
Deadly! The Truth about the Most Dangerous Creatures on Earth 9781406357424

Talk, Talk, Squawk! How and Why Animals Communicate
9781406357486

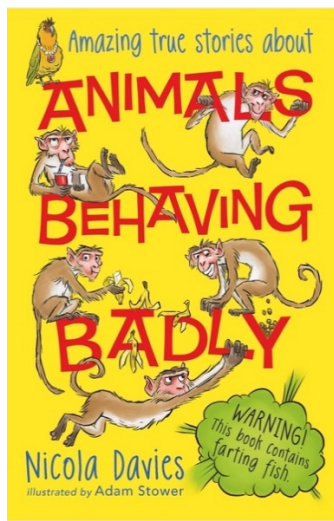
What's Eating You? Parasites – the Inside Story 9781406356649

Survivors: The Toughest Creatures on Earth 9781406356656

The Word Bird illustrated by Abbie Cameron
Graffeg 9781910862438



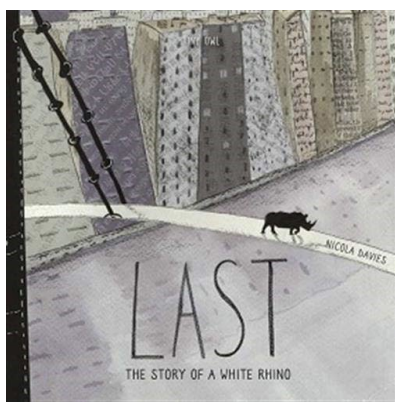
A lively rhyming and patterned text encourages exploration of the huge variety within the world of birds. The words, with a particular focus on verbs associated with our feathered friends, swoop and swirl around the illustrations. One of a series of picture books that inspire close looking at the detail of the natural world. The others are *Animal Surprises* (9781910862445), *Into the Blue* (9781910862452) and *The Secret of the Egg* (9781913134600).



Animals Behaving Badly illustrated by Adam Stower
Walker 9781406366051

Nicola sets out to show that, while some animals may behave in a manner that is a nuisance or even dangerous to humans, this is usually related to ways they have adapted so that they can survive. Having talked to scientists and filmmakers who study and document animal behaviour in the wild, she tells readers about, for example, wolverines in Alaska who wreck traps and scent-mark food rendering it inedible to others and kea birds in New Zealand who create mayhem by shredding stuff to bits to get human attention which will usually result in them getting fed.

Picture Books



Last
Tiny Owl 9781910328484

From the small enclosure where he is incarcerated in a zoo in the middle of a city, a rhino remembers his childhood in the wild. He reflects that he believes he is the last of his kind along with other animals being held there in captivity. However, this picturebook – the first that Nicola has illustrated as well as written – ends on a note of hope as the rhino is returned to the wild.



Every Child a Song illustrated by Marc Martin
Wren & Rook 9781526361431

Inspired by the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Nicola writes about how every child is an individual with their own song to sing and how all have the right to life, love and liberty. 'No song should be worn away to silence... No song should be drowned out'. Marc Martin's illustrations echo and extend this global message.



The Day War Came illustrated by Rebecca Cobb
Walker 9781406382938

A child describes how her life and her world were totally disrupted when war came to her country and how she had to flee alone. When she eventually comes to a place which she believes war has not reached, she finds a school where children are learning about the same things she was learning about in her home country. The teacher tells her that there is no room for her but in a hopeful and moving dénouement the children each bring chairs so that the refugee child and others in her situation will be able to come to school and symbolically be able to find a new home, a new place to be. The voice of the child in the text and Rebecca Cobb's illustrations of friendly-faced children encourage empathy, enabling young children to think and ask questions.

A CLPE core book <https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks/day-war-came>
Shortlisted for the CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal – teaching notes written by CLPE can be accessed here

<https://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/shadowingsite/groupleaders/resources/2019/Shadowing-Resources-The%20Day%20War%20Came.pdf>



The Promise illustrated by Laura Carlin
Walker 9781406355598

A girl who is hardened by the harsh urban environment that surrounds her is transformed into a guerrilla gardener by the unexpected booty resulting from a mugging. The burgeoning wildlife opens up people's hearts and minds and the girl moves on to multiply the magic. In spare poetic prose, Nicola Davies has fashioned a variation on the myth of the Green Man for a modern age. Laura Carlin has drawn absorbing grey and brown cityscapes which gradually become permeated with brightly coloured birds and flowers as the girl plants 'among rubble, ruins and rusty railings, by train tracks, tramlines and traffic lights'.

A CLPE core book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks/promise>
Subscribers to Power of Reading can access a teaching sequence for this book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading>

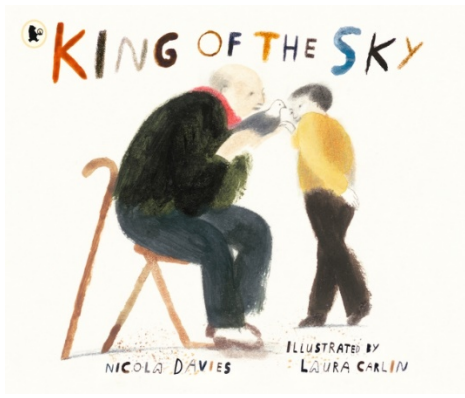
An animated film based on this story can be seen here
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ea7W4EfhZGk>

Signed version here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4cfQkelUBU>

An introduction by Nicola Davies

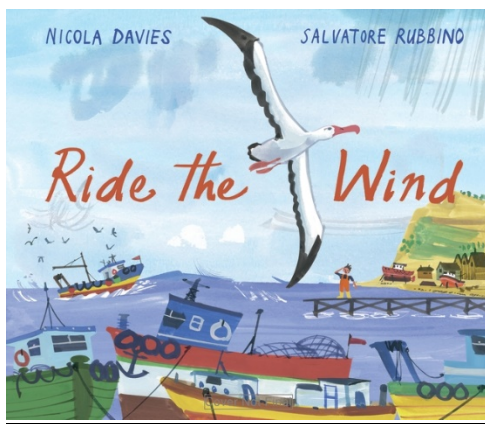
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANYjX8dWbWk>



King of the Sky illustrated by Laura Carlin
Walker 9781406379198

This second collaboration between author Nicola Davies and illustrator Laura Carlin is another sensitive and subtle picture book. Words and pictures combine to evoke a Welsh mining town where a boy feels excluded and misses his Italian home. He develops a bond with a retired miner who keeps racing pigeons and the boy comes to a fresh understanding of the meaning of belonging.

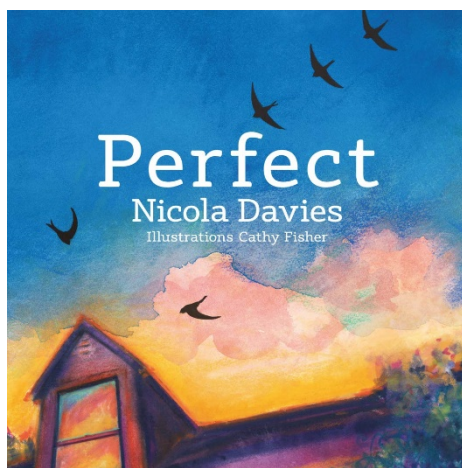
A CLPE core book <https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks/king-sky>
Subscribers to Power of Reading can access a teaching sequence for this book <https://www.clpe.org.uk/powerofreading>



Ride the Wind illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino
Walker 9781406394580

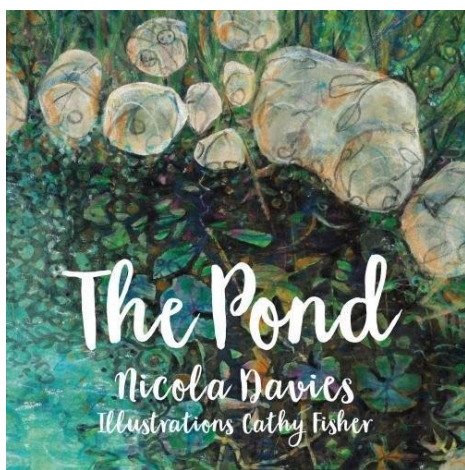
Javier helps his father and uncle who make their living fishing from a small boat, the Magdalena. The boy and his father have had a tense relationship since the death of his mother. On one of their fishing-trips, an albatross gets caught on the fish hooks and Javier smuggles the bird to safety and begins nursing it back to health. Every day, the albatross accepts a little more food, but she shows no sign of wanting to use her wings. Just as Javier works out how to encourage the albatross to fly, an action of his father's leads to a dramatic dénouement. Salvatore Rubbino's brooding watercolours perfectly match the atmosphere in this picturebook. A CLPE core book

<https://clpe.org.uk/corebooks/ride-wind-0>



Perfect illustrated by Cathy Fisher
Graffeg 9781912213498

A child eagerly anticipates the arrival of a baby sister, imagining racing and chasing with her. However, when the baby arrives, the older child realises that she will never be able to do these things unaided. The experience of helping an injured swift makes the child realise that, with a little help, the baby may also be encouraged to soar and that she is perfect in her own way.



The Pond illustrated by Cathy Fisher
Graffeg 9781912213504

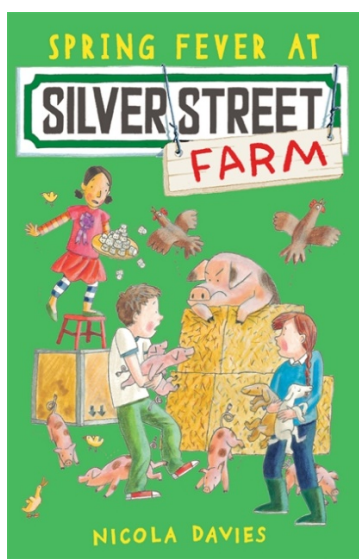
A deeply moving picture book about a boy's emotional journey through different stages of grief, following the death of his father. They were going to build a pond together but his father did not have time to achieve this aim. Instead the pond is developed with the remaining family members and serves as a connection to the man they have lost. Cathy Fisher's rich illustrations add depth to the emotional impact of the text which explores the ways we can use places, objects and acts of creation to help us remember those we have loved and lost. The book also reveals the way in which connecting with nature can be a healing process, for many different reasons.



The New Girl illustrated by Cathy Fisher
Graffeg 9781913733605

A new girl is ostracised and bullied by her classmates - they don't understand her language or appreciate the food she has in her lunchbox. Then one day a beautiful paper flower appears in their classroom followed by more and more and this provides a way in to understanding and friendship. The story is told from the viewpoint of one of the bullies and readers can only imagine the feelings of the new girl who is named by the end of the story.

Fiction



Spring Fever at Silver Street Farm illustrated by Katharine McEwen
Walker 9781406323061

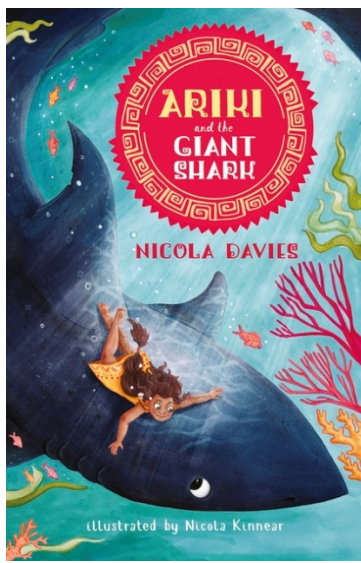
The Silver Street Farm series is set on a city farm started by three children, Meera, Karl and Gemma, who are actively aided by supportive adults and other children. In this episode, everything goes haywire when the pigs, goats and sheep all start giving birth at the same time as the team are preparing their locally produced cheeses for the Lonchester Cheese Show. Also in this series:

Welcome to Silver Street Farm 9781406320596
Escape from Silver Street Farm 9781406323047



Butterflies for Grandpa Joe illustrated by Mike Byrne
Barrington Stoke 9781781128824

Ben notices how depressed his widowed grandfather is. By building his own knowledge about the butterflies that have always been fascinated Grandpa Joe, they form a new bond which helps Grandpa to begin to heal and take an interest in the world and in his family again. This touching short novel explores family dynamics from a child's perspective and whets the appetite for young readers to find out more about butterflies for themselves.



Ariki and the Giant Shark illustrated by Nicola Kinnear
Walker 9781406369793

Ariki lives on a tiny island in the Pacific where she was washed up on the shore as a toddler and taken into the guardianship of the Star Walker, Arohaka. Ariki has a great affinity with the creatures of the ocean and is more at home in the sea than out of it. So when most of the islanders believe that a giant shark is their enemy, how can she convince them not to harm it? Nicola Kinnear's illustrations draw out the playful aspects of this short novel which reveals connections between the stars in the sky and the life of the ocean and between humans and the natural world. There is a second story *Ariki and the Island of Wonder* (Walker 9781406369809).



Flying Free/ The Little Mistake both illustrated by Cathy Fisher
Graffeg 9781912654093/9781912654086

The first two titles in the series Country Tales, short fiction with some mature themes aimed at middle grade readers and illustrated with line drawings. In *Flying Free* Colin faces the consequences when he uses an airgun bought for him by his older brother in a story which ultimately has an uplifting ending. The title of *The Little Mistake* has a double meaning referring to words Rosie overhears her mother saying and to her own 'mistake' of accidentally letting their sheepdog Trixie find an unexpected mate.

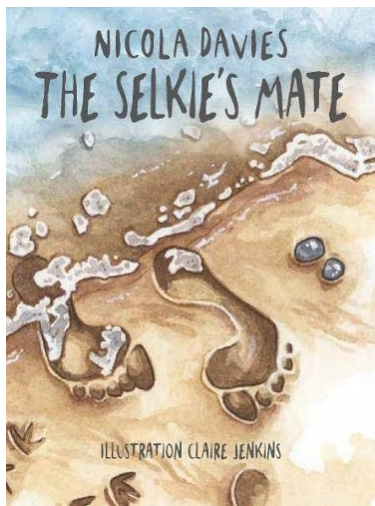
Further titles in the Country Tales series:

The Mountain Lamb 9781912654109

A Boy's Best Friend 9781912654116

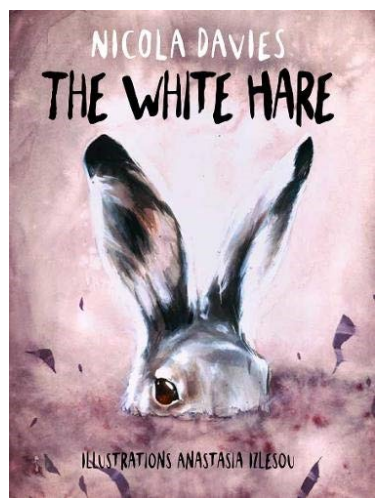
Pretend Cows 9781912654123

Spikes and Sam 9781912654130 (June 2022)



The Selkie's Mate by Nicola Davies illustrated by Claire Jenkins (Shadows & Light)
Graffeg 9781910862490/9781913733483

A Selkie entrusts a young crofter with her sealskin, on condition that he takes care of it and returns it to her if she asks. After seven years of happiness during which time she gives birth to twins, the Selkie asks the crofter to give her back her skin. Three times she asks him, but each time he procrastinates, crafting gifts that combine natural elements of land and sea. The loss of trust wears away at their relationship until one day their children become the agents of their mother's restoration to her old life. Claire Jenkins' illustrations, with their partial revelations, encapsulate the mystery underlying the tale – for example, never showing the faces of the characters.



The White Hare illustrated by Anastasia Izlesou (Shadows & Light)
Graffeg 9781910862483/9781913733476

A story of shapeshifting between the human and animal worlds. Ostra is tempted into marriage with Wolvas the huntsman so that she can escape a harsh life but the birds and animals that befriend her warn her against him.

Other titles in the Shadows and Light series:

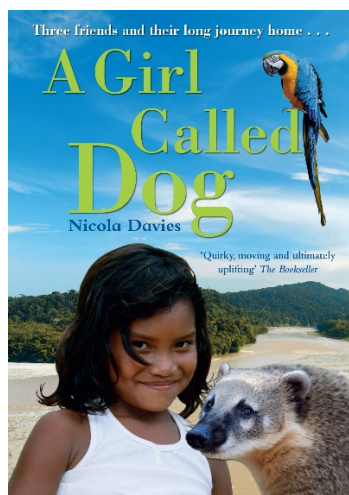
Mother Cary's Butter Knife illustrated by Anja Uhren
9781910862476

Elias Martin illustrated by Fran Shum 9781910862506
Bee Boy and the Moonflowers illustrated by Max Low
9781910862513

The Eel Question illustrated by Beth Holland 9781910862520

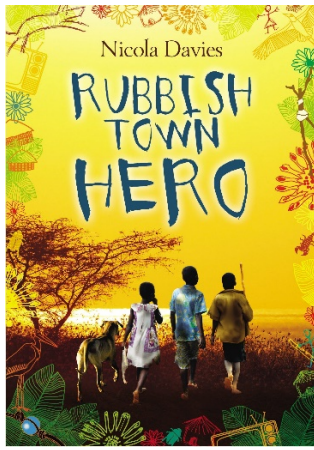
Nicola writes about the gestation of this series here:

<https://folklorethursday.com/creative-corner/shadows-light-discovering-story-power/#sthash.0cNyXCbG.trJlVD0l.dpbs>



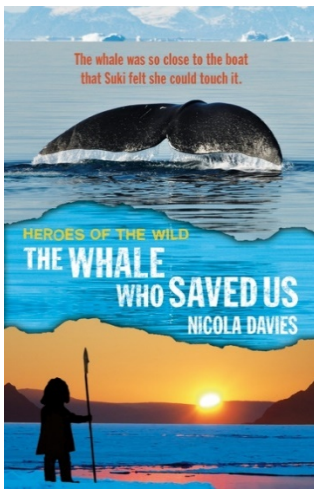
A Girl Called Dog illustrated by James de la Rue
Corgi 9780552563017

A child lives an enslaved life in a pet shop, ill-treated by the owner, and with no memories of her earlier life. Her only friend is a ringtailed coati who also lives there. The arrival of a loquacious macaw leads to a dangerous journey and the discovery of the place where they all truly belong.



Rubbish Town Hero
Corgi 9780552563024

Three children, orphaned and abandoned in a war torn country, along with the dog they adopt, find ways to escape from exploitation, first as sifters and sorters of rubbish, followed by an even more dangerous situation. Will hope and humanity triumph?



The Whale Who Saved Us illustrated by Annabel Wright
Walker 9781406356106

A story that does not compromise on making clear the difficulties for young Inuit people 'stuck between two worlds, the old one where Inuit had hunted seals and lived in snow houses and the new one of cities and computers.' By focusing on the situation of a young Inuk girl Suki learning to know the lives of her older relatives, Nicola Davies has been able to create a story which involves human difficulties and environmental issues but that ends with optimism.

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