children’s books ireland reading list

GOING GREEN

AGE RANGE 0–YA

#EveryChildaReader
About Children’s Books Ireland

At Children’s Books Ireland, we believe that every child should have access to the joy of reading, regardless of their circumstances. Our mission is to make books central to every child’s life on the island of Ireland. We work with families, teachers, libraries, publishers and communities all across the island to get books into children’s hands and to inform adults who can make a big impact on their reading. We advocate for the changes Ireland needs to grow a new generation of readers, and we support artists so that they can make excellent work for children and young people. Sign up to our newsletter to stay in touch!

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About this themed book list

This is a curated list of titles our expert reviewers recommend under the assigned theme. It is by no means an exhaustive list and we have tried, where possible, to include a spread across age ranges and genres under the theme. Our policy is to include titles dating from five years to date in English and ten years to date in the Irish language. Any titles by an Irish author, illustrator, publisher or in the Irish language will be denoted with a shamrock. After initial publication, these lists will be revisited annually and updated with new titles where suitable. Go to childrensbooksireland.ie for more themed book lists and resources.
Beyond the plea to find particular sea creatures in each page, there aren’t many words in this book. However, illustrations speak volumes: as the reader increasingly struggles to find the hiding starfish, clownfish and jellyfish amongst a growing pile of detritus, Barroux’s illustrations deliver a powerful message about mankind’s relationship to the environment. The use of colour – from the rich hues of the sea to the greys of pollution, back to multicolour spreads – complements this ultimately hopeful and clever reinterpretation of the search-and-find book. (Age 0–4)

The last tiger lives happily in the woods before hunters steal him away and imprison him in a zoo for everyone to gawk at him. While the story is very simple, it more than makes up for it with the beautiful illustrations. The contrast between the green and blue environment and the bright orange tiger is stunning. The use of watercolours in the backgrounds is lovely. The message is important, inviting the reader to think about the life of animals on the other side of the cages. (Age 0–4)

Bea is going on a holiday, away from the city, to see her grandad, who owns a lovely greenhouse that is home to more than a few exotic plants ... A charming book that highlights the benefits of involving nature in your life. The typography is fun to play with, especially when reading aloud, and the illustrations are lovely. It is a sweet story that will inspire any reader to appreciate nature and ends on an optimistic note: the world looks best when green. (Age 2–4)

A curious and playful pair of young children called Benji and Bel leave the beach one morning and go on a brilliant adventure into the sea with a friendly and eccentric dugong, who insists that she is, in actual fact, not a dugong but a beautiful mermaid. This picturebook educates young children about the endangered dugong, a marine mammal of the Pacific Ocean, all the while being funny, thrilling and visually stunning. (Age 2–4)
MINI GREY
THE LAST WOLF

In a story that highlights the need for wild green spaces, Grey has created a gem of a book! When Little Red goes hunting for a wolf in the woods, she ends up finding The Last Wolf, The Last Lynx and The Last Bear. With a simple mantra – ‘more trees please’ – Little Red proves that animals and people can coexist. This beautifully designed book contains Grey’s trademark mixed-media illustrations and clever references hidden in the scenes that will delight adults. A perfect keepsake! (Age 2–4)

JION SHEIBANI
LILY AND THE POLAR BEARS

On the beach with Grandpa one day, Lily is surprised to see lots of polar bears floating to shore. Their homes have all melted. What will they do? Lily invites them to her house for a dinner of fish fingers and ice cream and to stay. And they have so much fun! It turns out that polar bears are good at many things, and they’re very helpful. Before long, everyone is welcoming them! A funny, brightly illustrated story about our responsibility to each other and the planet. (Age 2–4)

EVELYN BOOKLESS illustrated by DANNY DEEPTOWN
CAPTAIN GREEN AND THE PLASTIC SCENE

This picturebook has a clear message: our oceans and animals are in trouble and only we can fix this. Caped crusader Captain Green helps to get a number of marine friends out of danger, but soon realises that it’s not enough to just keep clearing up the rubbish that washes onto the beach. To get to the root of the problem, Captain Green teaches people to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Illustrations and words combine to present this serious message in a fun and energetic way, without being preachy. (Age 2–4, 5–7)

PATRICIA MacLACHLAN illustrated by FRANCESCA SANNA
MY FRIEND EARTH
CHRONICLE BOOKS 2020 (HBK) 44PP £12.99 ISBN 9780811879101

Within the pages of this book, the narrator tells the story of their friend, Earth, from the moment she wakes up from a winter nap, to her next naptime the following winter. MacLachlann and Sanna portray Earth as a lively young girl, encouraging readers to view our environment as something that is to be nurtured and cherished, reminding us of all of the other life forms who share this planet and their dependency on us to look after it. A beautiful and important book. (Age 2–4, 5–7)
ISABEL OTTER illustrated by CLARA ANGANUZZI
DEAR EARTH

This is a breath-taking book, abounding in beauty, capturing the wonder of the world through the eyes of a child. A simple narrative unfurls as a little girl who pens a heartfelt letter to the Earth, extolling its beauty and engaging with the opportunities it affords for joy and care. The pairing of perfectly pitched text and stunning illustration makes the book immersive and compelling. An enchanting, informative and inspiring book, opening up the world to little eyes and minds in a fresh way. (Age 2–4, 5–7)

BROOKE SMITH illustrated by MADELINE KLOEPPER
THE KEEPER OF WILD WORDS

When Mimi realises that her favourite words, the words that keep her connected to the natural world, are disappearing from the English language, she decides that her granddaughter, Brook, must save these words by becoming their Keeper. Kloeppe's gorgeous and vivid illustrations are essential to Smith's linguistic project, beautifully capturing the relationship between words and the world they help us understand. Thoughtful, evocative and deeply resonant. (Age 2–4, 5–7)

ROBERT MACFARLANE illustrated by JACKIE MORRIS
THE LOST WORDS
PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE 2017 (HBK) 128PP £20.00 ISBN 9780241341018

It is difficult to adequately convey the sheer beauty of this book. Digging deep into those things that are all too often ignored, Macfarlane and Morris capture the splendour of the natural world with images and words that celebrate the flare of the kingfisher, ring out the rasp of the raven and reflect the dazzle of the dandelion. The illustrations are detailed and vivid and the words hit the high notes of our glorious natural world. (Poetry, Age 2–4, 5–8, 8–10)

edited by WENDY COOLING illustrated by PIET GROBLER
ALL THE WILD WONDERS: POEMS OF THE EARTH

Beautifully illustrated, this anthology brings together a diverse collection of poems exploring the wonders of nature and the impact of pollution and climate change. From William Blake to Riad Nourallah, poets span centuries, continents and forms as they celebrate our planet and mourn the destruction of ecosystems and animals. Energetic watercolour illustrations represent the natural beauty of landscapes from Africa to Russia to England, gently showing Earth’s fragility and potential. Combining many different forms, this anthology is ideal for reflecting on our precious planet with hope and would work very well in a classroom. (Poetry, Age 3–5, 5–8)
EMILY GRAVETT
TIDY
TWO HOOTS 2017 (PBK) 40PP £6.99 ISBN 9781447273998

Pete the Badger loves to keep things tidy. He begins a campaign to clean up the forest, but when he ends up going too far, Pete realises that sometimes things are best left as nature intended, no matter how messy that might be. Emily Gravett’s rhyming tale is warm, witty and perfect to read aloud. It also conveys an environmental message about respecting the natural world with its falling leaves, grubby animals and muddy surfaces, all of which are beautifully depicted in Gravett’s glorious illustrations. (Age 3–6)

SIMON JAMES
DEAR GREENPEACE
WALKER BOOKS 2016 (PBK) 32PP £7.99 ISBN 9781406367409

Emily is terribly worried that the whale in her pond might be ill or hurt. So she writes to Greenpeace. They write back! Offering the best advice, Greenpeace firmly insists that a whale cannot possibly live in a pond. But Emily persists, determined to give Arthur (the whale) the very best care until she can finally set him free. Chock-full of information, this gentle, fancifully illustrated story creates a heartwarming space for children to explore their concerns for wildlife. Simply beautiful! (Age 3–6)

SARAH ROBERTS illustrated by HANNAH PECK
SOMEbody SWALLOWED STANLEY

The strong cover and funny title set the tone for this fun and pacey read. Stanley is an ordinary plastic bag with incredible expression and character. This cheerful story, written in rhyme, follows poor Stanley, who is mistaken for a delicate dancing jellyfish, as he encounters a succession of sea and coastal creatures until he is finally recycled. It is a beautifully illustrated book that cleverly hints at responsible use of plastic. (Age 3–6)

CATHERINE ARD Illustrated by CARLA McRAE
LET’S PLAY OUTDOORS: EXPLORING NATURE FOR CHILDREN
LITTLE GESTALTEN 2020 (HBK) 56PP £12.95 ISBN 9783899558432

This book is just the ticket to get the children outside and discover the many things the outdoor world has to offer. Here, you’ll find suggestions and activities, essential information and ‘take care’ tips that promote closer observation, deeper understanding and clever interaction with nature all through the year. With a focus on independent learning and creative play, this is an exceptional resource to encourage environmental awareness in even the youngest (and oldest!) among us. A fantastic addition to any ‘forest school’ shelf. (Non-fiction, Age 5–7)
ALEJANDRO ALGARRA agus DANIEL HOWARTH
aithriste ag MÁIRE Uí MHAICÍN
SEO AGAT DAMHÁIN ALLA
AN GÚM 2010 (BOG) 35LCH €5.50 ISBN 9781857917987

(Neamhfhicsean, Aois 5–8)

PHILIPPE COUSTEAU and DEBORAH HOPKINSON
illustrated by MEILO SO
FOLLOW THE MOON HOME
CHRONICLE BOOKS 2016 (HBK) 48PP £12.99 ISBN 9781452112411

Viv and her family have a new home by the sea. On Viv’s first day at her new school the teacher challenges the class to find a problem to solve. What follows is a plan of action that helps bring together a whole community to save the Loggerhead sea turtles of the South Carolina coast. This simple but stirring story shows how an individual, no matter how young, can effect positive change on the world around them with one good idea and a lot of determination. (Age 5–8)

KATIE DAYNES illustrated by CHRISTINE PYM
WHY DO WE NEED BEES?
USBORNE PUBLISHING 2017 (BOARD) 12PP £9.99 ISBN 9781474917933

Bright, inviting illustrations, simple text and lots of amazzzing facts make this board book the perfect introduction for young children to the world of bees. It asks questions like, Why do we need bees? How do they make honey? How can we help them? And it invites the reader to lift the flaps to discover the answers to these and many other bee-related interrogations. This is a sturdy, clearly presented non-fiction title that would be a great addition to any child’s library. (Non-Fiction, Age 5–8)

SANDRA DIECKMANN
LEAF

When Leaf’s ice cap melts, he is stranded in an unknown environment. The lost polar bear creates tension among the animal community in this new place – they assume he’s dangerous and refuse to approach him. This moving story demonstrates the importance of resisting the urge to judge each other too quickly, as well as addressing environmental issues. The mesmerising and dramatically coloured illustrations perfectly guide you through the story, showing the value of trust and the power of cooperation. (Age 5–8)
SUZI ESZTERHAS
AN GORAILLE
AN GÚM 2012 (BOG) 28LCH €6.50 ISBN 9781857910841

Sa leabhar álainn fíriciúil seo tugtar léargas ar bheatha an goraille ón uair a thagann sí ar an saol go mbíonn siad ina goraille lánfhásta. Grianghrafadóir fiadhúlra is ea í Suzi Eszterhas agus cuirtear forbairt an ghoraille in úl go réadúil sna grianghraif snasta tharraingteacha. Cruthaítear gaol idir an léitheoir agus an t-ainmhí álainn fiáin seo. Áis iontach é an leabhar seo sa seomra ranga. (Neamhfhicsean, Aois 5–8)

OLIVER JEFFERS
THE FATE OF FAUSTO

Fausto wants to own everything he sees: the flowers, the trees, the mountains and the seas. Young readers will be drawn to Fausto’s silly temper tantrums, but this darkly comic tale will have an enduring depth and resonance for its readers as they age and begin to see Fausto’s greed and hubris in the world around them. Less richly detailed than many of Jeffers’s other works, but this restraint is used to great effect as the illustrations emphasise scale, status, obsolescence and wisdom. (Age 5–8)

NEAL LAYTON
A PLANET FULL OF PLASTIC

*A Planet Full of Plastic* tells the story of plastic, what it is used for, why it became so pervasive, the problems that now exist, and some of the solutions that have been devised to address those problems. A ‘How you can help’ page at the end of the book provides practical ways in which a child can make a difference. This book would be an excellent addition to any older pre-school and younger primary school collection, or indeed to any home. (Non-Fiction, 5–8)

KATE MESSNER illustrated by MATTHEW FORSYTHE
THE BRILLIANT DEEP,
REBUILDING THE WORLD’S CORAL REEFS

This empowering and uplifting true story of environmentalist Ken Nedimyer tells the story of how one curious person can make an enormous difference. Luminous illustrations bring the underwater world to life, as we watch the reefs thrive, bleach and slowly recover. *The Brilliant Deep* is enriched by a glossary and a further-reading section at the back that highlights ways for kids to help too. An uplifting call to action, beautifully told and brimming with facts and info. Just the ticket! (Non-fiction, Age 5–8)
KATE PANKHURST  
**FANTASTICALLY GREAT WOMEN WHO SAVED THE PLANET**  

This book features an array of terrific scientists, environmentalists, zoologists and campaigners who had an active part in furthering our understanding of the natural world and protecting it. From Eugenie Clark who revolutionised our knowledge of shark behaviour to Anita Roddick who founded The Body Shop and campaigned against animal testing, via Wangari Maathai who started a movement that ended up with over 51 million trees being planted in Kenya, activists from all over the world are celebrated in a busy, bright book. (Non-Fiction, Age 5–8)

JAMES SELLICK illustrated by FRANN PRESTON-GANNON  
**THERE’S A RANG-TAN IN MY BEDROOM**  

When a little girl finds a naughty orangutan in her bedroom and is about to send her away, she discovers how humans are destroying Rang-tan’s rainforest home. Told through verse, the story teaches children how they can help to bring about change. It’s beautifully illustrated, especially Rang-tan’s soft orange fur. The result is an optimistic and practical picturebook, and it is a good way to introduce children to environmental issues. (Age 5–8)

JUANITA BROWNE aistrithe ag FIDELMA Ní GHALLCHOBHAIR  
maisithe ag AOIFE QUINN  
**AINMHITHE NA hÉIREANN**  
COIS LÍFE 2018 (BOG) 66LCH €12.00 ISBN 9781907494758

Leabhar faisnéise gleoite é seo a thugann eolas dúinn ar ár n-ainmhithe dúchasacha, idir an Luch Fhéir bheag bhídeach agus an Míol Mór Gorm mór millteach. Insítear dúinn cá bhfuil cónaí orthu, an méid a itheann siad, agus cé chomh mór is atá siad i gcomparáid le duine. Tá láradhígh agus grainnghraif ghalánta ar gach leathanach, a spreagfaidh spéis an léitheora. Ag an deireadh, tá gluais chuimsitheach agus leideanna le heolas faoin bhfhiadhúlra. Oirúinach do theach, scóil nó leabharlann ar bith. Thar barr! (Neamhfhicsean, Aois 5–8, 8–10)

LARA HAWTHORNE  
**ALBA: THE HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD FISH**  
BIG PICTURE PRESS 2019 (PBK) 32PP £7.99 ISBN 9781787417298

Hawthorne’s picturebook conveys an important ecological message in a colourful and clear way aided by the use of glorious illustrations. Alba loves to roam the oceans collecting precious items, but over time Alba’s once-colourful world becomes drab and the beautiful coral reef is filled with plastic and other debris from human pollution. Alba’s friends are also slowly disappearing. This book is a great way to open up a conversation about the value of looking after our environment. Definitely one to read. (Age 5–8, 8–10)
THOMAS KINGSLEY TROUPE maisithe ag DEREK TOYE
AN gCACANN BEACHA?
AN GÚM 2016 (BOG) 24LCH €5.00 ISBN 9781857919196

Is leabhar iontach é seo a leannán grúpa cairde ar shíúlóid trí dhumpa. Le cabhair ón mbéach, lena mbuaileann siad, faigheann siad freagra ar an bpríomhcheist, an gcacann beacha? Agus iad ag taisteal tríd an dumpa, déantar plé ar mhórcheisteanna eolaíochta cosúil le hatáirgeadh agus an difríocht idir dúile beo agus neamhbheo i mbealach atá oiriúnach agus taitneamhach do pháistí. Cabhraíonn stíl scríofa, mar aon le híomhánna ildaite an leabhair, le spéis an léitheora a choinneáil. (Aois 5–8, 8–10)

ESTHER COOMBS
PLANT, SOW, MAKE & GROW: MUD-TASTIC ACTIVITIES FOR BUDDING GARDENERS

Inspired by her experimentations at the gardening club in her daughter’s school (a club she founded herself), illustrator Esther Coombs has created the beautifully illustrated Plant, Sow, Make & Grow. It is a very practical book with projects divided by the seasons, filled with useful and interesting information on nature, sustainability and healthy living, as well as how-to instructions on planting, growing and harvesting your crops and fun crafts. Recommended for big and little gardeners (even those just starting out). (Non-fiction, Age 5–8, 9–11)

EMILY HAWORTH-BOOTH
THE LAST TREE

In The Last Tree, we meet a community of adults who, in their quest for greater comfort, destroy the world around them, becoming jealous and mistrustful of each other. Fortunately, the children of the village rebel. Through their connection with the natural world and each other, the future is saved, and the last tree becomes the first. A parable of our times, this beautifully illustrated book will appeal to all eco-conscious primary school children and will undoubtedly lead to great dinner table discussions! (Age 5–8, 9–11)

MICHAEL KELLY and MUIREANN NÍ CHIÓBHÁIN
illustrated by FATTI BURKE
GIY’S KNOW-IT-ALLMANAC
GIY 2019 (HBK) 104PP €25.00 ISBN 97809993042621

Following the year from January to December this book lays out the jobs and joys that go into planting and reaping your own produce, or “Growing it Yourself” (GIY). Each month is logically laid out, but the calendar is laced with humour, the pages bulging with trivia, and the tone informative, irreverent, and laugh-out-loud funny. Fatti Burke’s illustrations are bold and beautiful, and the font choices are ideal in terms of packing in a wheelbarrow-load of information without making the pages seem cluttered. Highly recommended. (Non-fiction, Age 5–8, 9–11)
ROB MAGUIRE illustrated by AGA GRANDOWICZ

DR HIBERNICA FINCH’S COMPELLING COMPENDIUM OF IRISH ANIMALS
LITTLE ISLAND BOOKS 2018 (HBK) 64PP €25.00 ISBN 9781910411940

Dr Hibernica is on a mission to educate people about the wonderful creatures that inhabit this island, whether on land, sea or air. Taking us on a journey through some of the best known, and some more unusual, animals found in Ireland, the fictional zoologist leaves no rock unturned, blending facts and humour with magnificent drawings to create a non-fiction book like no other. Maguire’s authoritative yet gently humorous tone strikes just the right balance, and Grandowicz’s exceptional illustrations elevate the text beautifully. (Non-fiction, Age 5–8, 9–11)

EUN-JU KIM illustrated by JI-WON LEE

PLASTIC: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE
SCRIBE UK 2020 (PBK) 36PP £8.99 ISBN 9781912854325

This clear, well-rounded book does a great job of presenting all the complexity surrounding the use of plastic in modern society. Yes, it is wasteful and non-biodegradable, but it is also the reason today’s cars are lighter and use less petrol than their predecessors. Plastic is everywhere and it is not always a bad thing. From the production process to ways to recycle or reduce our use of the stuff, Plastic: Past, Present and Future is an informative, nuanced and hopeful book with fresh, vibrant illustrations. (Non-Fiction, Age 6–8, 8–10)

MARTIN DOREY illustrated by TIM WESSON

KIDS FIGHT PLASTIC

We have a plastic problem, and it’s poisoning our oceans. With the help of this brightly coloured guide, you and your friends can transform into the plastic-fighting superheroes that our planet needs. There’s great information, fun illustrations and suggested actions that range from simple changes to ambitious projects requiring planning and parental support. For more sensitive readers, I’d recommend an adult read along too, to reiterate the line between personal empowerment and taking on the full weight of a collective burden. (Non-fiction, Age 7–9)

MANDY ARCHER illustrated by KATIE ABEY

BE GREEN! MINDFUL KIDS, GLOBAL CITIZENS

This fantastic activity book encourages a mindful approach to being a responsible citizen of the planet. It can be read in any order, doodled in and dipped into. There are facts about the environment mixed with fun games and charts that encourage readers to incorporate the three Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) in their everyday lives. It highlights the importance of maintaining natural habitats, and how we can all reduce our carbon footprint, in an engaging, straightforward and entertaining way. (Non-fiction, Age 8–10, 10–12)
TED HUGHES illustrated by ANDREW DAVIDSON

THE IRON WOMAN

Walking home, Lucy feels the bridge beneath her shake. A giant head emerges from the river, then a body covered in tar ... and the iron woman rises, bent on revenge for the human pollution that is destroying her home. Written in 1993, the sequel to The Iron Man is a chilling prophecy of today’s climate crisis. Delicate black-and-white woodcuts in this twenty-fifth-anniversary edition capture both the brutality of humans’ assault on the Earth and the tenderness of the children and their mighty friends. (Age 8–10, 10–12)

MILLIE MAROTTA

A WILD CHILD’S GUIDE TO ENDANGERED ANIMALS
PARTICULAR BOOKS 2019 (HBK) 112PP £20.00 ISBN 9781846149245

This book is a celebration of the beautiful creatures who are in danger of disappearing from the world forever. There are fascinating facts throughout to delight and intrigue the reader. The front and back endpapers contain images of animals that are extinct, which is a reminder of how serious the situation is. Happily, there is also a list of ways in which readers can help save endangered animals. Each page is like a piece of art, with intricate design and beautiful colour. (Non-Fiction, 8–10, 10–12, 12–14)

JESS BUTTERWORTH

WHEN THE MOUNTAINS ROARED

Ruby is animal mad and dreams of being a wildlife photographer. The only problem is, since tragedy struck her family, she’s afraid of everything and wildlife photographers can’t be afraid of anything. Her life is suddenly turned upside down with a move to the Himalayan foothills. Here she makes new friends, both animal and human. When evil threatens the safety of the rare leopards, Ruby must face all her fears to protect them. A riveting adventure tale for all with a great heroine. (Age 9–11)

HORATIO CLARE illustrated by JANE MATTHEWS

AUBREY AND THE TERRIBLE LADYBIRDS
FIREFLY PRESS 2017 (PBK) 244PP £7.99 ISBN 9781910080504

It’s the start of the holidays and Aubrey, who can talk to and understand animals, wishes himself down to the size of an earwig with no idea how he’ll become normal-sized again. A spider friend pleads with him to help save the planet. As they set off on a whirlwind road trip, the ladybirds have arrived in Rushing Wood, but they are not wanted. Rumours abound, the animals begin to flee and only Aubrey can end this madness. A cracking adventure with an environmental message. (Age 9–11)
CHLOE DAYKIN
**FIRE GIRL, FOREST BOY**

When Maya's father disappears in Peru, she finds herself running for her life through the rainforest. Raul has grown up in Ollayntaytambo, land of the Incas, where the jungle was part of his life until he was forced to leave. As Maya and Raul’s worlds collide, they must work together to salvage the rainforest with help from Maya’s fiery secret. This magical adventure captures the unique importance of the nature and wildlife of the rainforest, reminding us why we must protect it. (Age 9–11)

GILL LEWIS
**RUN WILD**

When Izzy and her friends are forced to look for somewhere else to skateboard, the abandoned gasworks they find to practise their skills in turns out to be more than just a derelict site – it’s a vibrant wilderness in the heart of a bustling city, home to a wolf that they adopt as their own. When their fragile sanctuary is threatened by developers, the group must band together to protect it. A short, touching tale that celebrates the yearning we all have to be closer to nature. (Age 9–11)

GILL LEWIS
**SKY DANCER**

Lewis brings her usual gripping style to this evocative tale of rural life, where residents are divided over the fate of hen harriers nesting in the grouse moors. Joe, who has recently lost his father, is forced to make a difficult choice and to decide where his loyalties lie. A brilliant exploration of the ethical issues behind conservation and sustainability, this book is thought-provoking and contains wonderful descriptions of landscape and wildlife, with extra information and references at the end. (Age 9–11)

BREN MacDIBBLE
**HOW TO BEE**

How will the world survive in a future without bees? Nine-year-old Peony works hard to become the best ‘bee’ she can by hand-pollinating fruit. However, her mother wants more for their lives, and Peony is taken from everything she’s ever known. Peony is an enchanting and remarkable girl. The story is incredibly inventive and brilliantly fast paced. MacDibble’s writing is considered and poignant. A truly brilliant read. (Age 9–11)
ISABEL THOMAS illustrated by ALEX PATTERSON
THIS BOOK IS NOT RUBBISH: 50 WAYS TO DITCH PLASTIC, REDUCE RUBBISH AND SAVE THE WORLD!

The world as we know it is in jeopardy! But the good news is that there are so many new ways to reduce, reuse and recycle. This book gives you fifty tips to make a difference and help save our phenomenal planet, from planting a tree to banning glitter or hosting your very own ‘swish’ clothes-swapping party. Tackling issues like global warming, pollution and single-use plastics, there is something for everyone in the family to begin making a difference. It’s time to start taking control and ditch all this rubbish!
(Non-fiction, Age 9–11)

SAM GAYTON
THE LAST ZOO

In an only-slightly-skewed alternate near-future where misguided scientists have detonated a reality bomb, Pia lives on an ocean-bound ark filled with musical hippos, unicorns, hummingdragons, genies, ghosts and, most importantly, angels. A strange situation, to be sure, but things get even weirder when the angels go missing. Can Pia solve the mystery of their disappearance and avoid potential catastrophe for her world? This is a funny, moving and timely book, dealing with our world’s biggest problem, climate change, in an inspiring and hopeful way. (Age 9–11, 12–14)

LYNNE KELLY
SONG FOR A WHALE

As the only deaf girl in her school, twelve-year-old Iris knows what it is like to feel alone. Then she hears about Blue 55, a whale that is unable to communicate with other whales. Luckily, Iris is something of a tech genius, and she composes a song for Blue 55 before embarking on the biggest trip of her life in this heartwarming story that is sure to resonate with anyone who has ever felt as though they were alone in the world. (Age 9–11, 12–14)

GRETA THUNBERG
NO ONE IS TOO SMALL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE 2019 (PBK) 80PP £2.99 ISBN 9780141991740

‘We are now standing at a crossroads in history. We are failing but we have not yet failed. We can still fix this. It’s up to us.’ As a young activist with a massive platform, Greta has a simple message and no time for excuses or political posturing. This collection presents her most powerful and provocative speeches, delivered to world leaders on behalf of the young. A rallying cry, a warning and an insistence that we can do better. A book of our times. (Non-fiction, Age 9–11, 12–14, YA)
FRANCESCA AMOUR-CHELU
FENN HALFLIN AND THE FEARZERO

Fenn Halflin and the Fearzero follows the journey of a young sea-borne orphan who is desperately trying to escape the domination of Terra Firma and its coldblooded leader, Chilstone. The expedition involves a deadly struggle across a ferocious sea and a time in the shanties, where Fenn has to fend for his life among the metal structures and rodent epidemic. Set in a world destroyed by floods, this compelling story of a grandfather’s devotion to his grandson would suit Eoin Colfer and Rick Riordan fans. (Age 12–14)

SARAH GOVETT
THE TERRITORY
FIREFLY PRESS 2015 (PBK) 208PP £7.99 ISBN 9781910080184

Though at times Sarah Govett’s The Territory comes to rely heavily on the clichés of dystopian teen fiction, it still manages to tell a compelling story about preserving our humanity even as we struggle to survive. Following Noa as she prepares to take a test that will determine her future in an almost entirely flooded world, this first instalment of the Territory trilogy is an engaging read that asks the reader what they’d be willing to sacrifice in the name of what is right. (Age 12–14, YA)

MARCUS SEDGWICK
SNOWFLAKE, AZ
ZEPHYR 2020 (PBK) 352PP £8.99 ISBN 9781788542340

On the outskirts of the desert is a small community of people suffering from a difficult-to-define disease, as if they are becoming allergic to modern existence. In this serious and wistful novel, Marcus Sedgwick shows us how a group of misfits, including our main character, Ash, can come together in a world that is literally rejecting them. Deliberately paced with many fascinating by-roads, this is a thoughtful read for readers curious about the future health of our planet. (YA)

SM WILSON
THE EXTINCTION TRIALS
USBORNE PUBLISHING 2018 (PBK) 384PP £7.99 ISBN 9781474927345

Billed as the Hunger Games meets Jurassic Park, Wilson’s debut YA novel doesn’t fail to live up to the hype. In an over-populated dystopian Earth-like world where an ideal continent, Piloria, is inhabited by dinosaurs, annual trials see a hundred people sent to Piloria to scavenge for crops for cultivation, but most don’t return. The story is narrated from the dual perspectives of Lincoln and Stormchaser, an effective technique allowing for suspense and intrigue. Highly recommended for fans of dystopian literature. (YA)
GOING GREEN

AGE RANGE 0–YA

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