

EPISODE **62**

Inspiring a love of nature through books

Guest: Greta Eskridge

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Meet Greta Eskridge



She's the creative genius behind the lovely and inspiring [Ma and Pa Modern](#) on Instagram.

Greta was homeschooled herself. Now she lives in Southern California, and writes about homeschooling her four children at [her blog](#).

Greta was a guest on [Episode 42](#) of the RAR podcast.

In This Episode

Sarah and Greta talk about using literature to inspire a love of nature.

Greta talks about the books that she read as a child that sparked her imagination and connected her to the wider world. She offers book recommendations ranging from picture books to read-aloud novels to field guides and journaling inspiration.

The Listening Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.

- 4:30 Why nature is so important to Greta
- 7:15 Why it's hard to get out in nature
- 9:45 Books that fuel nature love
- 14:00 Books as a gateway to wonder
- 17:00 Falling in love with nature through picture books
- 18:30 The Burgess books
- 21:15 The Holling books
- 23:00 Books that transport us
- 25:30 Nature journaling through books
- 31:00 Books to begin with
- 34:30 Getting started with nature journaling
- 43:30 Let the Kids Speak

When I can touch my kids' heart that makes them want to learn more, it makes them care about what they're learning, and for me, the best way to reach their heart has been through stories. - Greta Eskridge

Quotes and Questions

* **A world wouldn't have known ...**

“Because I’ve read that book and I saw it through Jody, the character’s eyes, and I’ve read the beautiful description it’s opened up a world to me that I would not have known otherwise.”

This sounds a lot like the windows and mirrors that Linda Sue Park mentioned in [Episode 53](#). Some books reflect our own experience back to us. Other books open new doors, new places to explore in our imaginations. Are your kids getting both kinds of stories?

* **Books are a magic gateway.**

“A good book is a magic gateway into a wider world of wonder, beauty, delight, and adventure. Books are experiences that make us grow, that add to our inner stature.” — Gladys Hunt

Do you know the work of Gladys Hunt, *Honey for a Child’s Heart*? Sarah says it’s one of [the best collection of booklists](#) around. It’s also got gentle, loving advice for parenting. I re-read it every few years and keep learning from it!

* **Kids’ books count.**

“I use it as a science book and it’s a narrative at the same time and I learned more about the life in the tide pools and marine biology from that book than I did from my marine biology class in college so that says a lot.”

Sometimes we discount the books that we read with our children. Because it’s not primarily a science book, then it can’t “count” as science. But Greta is encouraging us to let the stories touch our children and draw them into the science. [Laura Purdie Salas](#) writes poems on science topics—a perfect blending of genres! It all counts! Reading aloud doesn’t have to be a long, protracted affair.

Show Notes

Books from today's episode:

- Charlotte's Web
- The Secret Garden
- Heidi
- The Wind in the Willows
- Little Women
- My Side of the Mountain
- Caddie Woodlawn
- Farmer Boy
- Little House in the Big Woods
- Blueberries for Sal
- Miss Rumphius
- Make Way for Ducklings
- The Swiss Family Robinson
- Listening for Lions
- Little House on the Prairie
- A Tree is Nice
- The Yearling
- The Big Snow
- Mandy
- The Little Island
- One Morning in Maine
- The Burgess Bird Book for Children

- [The Burgess Seashore Book for Women](#)
- [Minn of the Mississippi](#)
- [Pagoo](#)
- [The Call of the Wild](#)
- [Time of Wonder](#)
- [The Nature Connection](#)
- [Keeping a Nature Journal](#)
- [The Curious Nature Guide](#)
- [The Tree Book for Kids and Their Grown-Ups](#)
- [Nature Anatomy](#)
- [Farm Anatomy](#)
- [The Golden Guides](#)
- [Birds Every Child Should Know](#)
- [Trees Every Child Should Know](#)

Other links from today's show:

- Greta's [Instagram](#)
- Greta's [blog](#)
- Greta's [nature book post](#)
- Thornton Burgess on [Librivox](#) (FREE!)
- [Geography Through Literature](#) (Rea Berg on Holling C. Holling)
- [Fog](#) by Carl Sandburg
- [The Eagle](#) by Alfred, Lord Tennyson
- [Inspiring the Reluctant Nature Journaler](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.