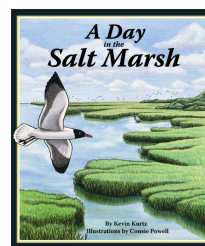


A Conversation with Kevin Kurtz *author of A Day in the Salt Marsh*



Why did you write the story?

While working as an environmental educator at the South Carolina Aquarium, I became aware that there was not a children's book available that focused solely on salt marshes. Being a salt marsh fan and a children's literature fan, I thought, "Someone needs to rectify this situation!" and then about two seconds later, "That someone could be me." I came up with an idea about how to write about the wonders of salt marshes for children in an informative and fun way, and that idea eventually turned into my book, ***A Day in the Salt Marsh***.



What are the most frequently asked questions you encounter as an author?

I am still fairly new at this, but so far they are:

How long did it take you to write the book?

This is hard to give an exact answer to, as the idea germinated in my head for about a year before I attempted to put it to paper. The initial writing was on and off for three or four months, and the editing that followed that happened on and off for over a year.

Are you a biologist?

I used to work as a lab and field technician at a marine biology lab, but since my degrees are in English literature and elementary education, if I called myself a biologist, my former co-workers would not be happy with me.

I have an idea for a children's book. Can you help me get it published?

I am still not sure how to answer this.

What sparks your creativity?

I am very passionate about nature and education, so anything related to those two areas tends to spark ideas, which has worked out well for me, considering I have worked as an environmental educator for most of the past decade. Humor is key for me, too. Even if the final product is not supposed to be funny, if an initial idea makes me laugh, it tends to shift my brain into creative gear.

What tips do you have for parents who would like to take their family to visit a salt marsh?

Salt marshes are found along coastlines around the country. Though marshes are easily visible, they are not easily accessible. One of my first experiences in a salt marsh resulted in my being dragged by a boat out of the marsh because I had sunk waist deep in mud. Taking your family for a walk through a salt marsh is not a good idea, but a kayak trip is an excellent way to really enjoy the wildlife of a marsh. The silence of kayaking allows the paddlers to get very close to great blue herons, dolphins and other inhabitants of the marsh. Many coastal towns have places to rent kayaks, including two-seaters, allowing parents and children to paddle together.

How did you become interested in writing?

As a kid, I wanted to be a cartoonist when I grew up. Unfortunately, drawing ability was not something I was naturally gifted with, and though I was able to teach myself to draw (sort of), I found it to be a frustrating process. Luckily, I found I really enjoyed writing the comic strips and became interested in writing. As I grew older, I spent more and more time writing, ultimately resulting in the publication of my first book – ***A Day in the Salt Marsh.***

Want to continue this conversation? Schedule an interview!

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