

Party Your Tail Off for Reptile Awareness Day!

October 21 is Reptile Awareness Day!

Mount Pleasant, S.C. (October 17, 2008) – Scaly, slimy, slippery, and smelly: if this is what comes to mind when you think of reptiles, you need to learn more about this wonderful world of wigglers! Many people are grossed out and freaked out about reptiles, but they are actually beneficial to our environment. As with many animals, reptiles help regulate the food chain—and many people even like to keep them as pets! So if you already appreciate reptiles, or even if you want to know a little bit more about them, celebrate Reptile Awareness Day on October 21!

Little Skink's Tail (Sylvan Dell Publishing, 2007), by Janet Halfmann, and illustrated by Laurie Allen Klein, is a tale of reptile tails! It just recently won the 2009 *Learning Magazine* Teachers' Choice Award, the 2008 Florida Publisher's Association Best Picture Book Award, and the 2008 FPA Best Overall Book Award. When Little Skink loses her bright blue tail to ward off an attacker, she suddenly finds herself missing something to wiggle and wag. What would Little Skink look like with the tail of a squirrel? What about a turtle or a deer? Readers will love this imaginative tale detailed with bright and creative illustrations.

FUN FACTS from *Little Skink's Tail*:

- Many reptiles can detach their tails from their bodies in order to help them escape a predator's attack.
- Cottontail rabbits and white-tailed deer both use their small, white tails as a warning flag to alert other rabbits and deer to any approaching dangers, and they are both named after their tails, too!
- Owls use their small tails to help balance and steer as they fly through the night sky.
- Both porcupines and skunks use their tails as protection. A porcupine rubs its spiky quills off on any threatening animal, and a skunk releases a smelly spray to scare off predators.

ACTIVITIES from *Little Skink's Tail*:

- Find out what the purpose is of each animal's tail and how it helps them survive in the forest.
- Help Little Skink get from her log across the forest to where the other animals are resting.
- Match each forest animal to their original tail.
- To learn more about these activities, lizards, or all forest dwellers, visit <http://www.SylvanDellPublishing.com>.

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About Sylvan Dell Publishing

Sylvan Dell Publishing in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., is on a mission to excite children's imaginations with artistically spectacular science, math, and nature themed stories. Founded in November of 2004, Sylvan Dell's family has grown to include more than 55 authors and illustrators, in the U.S. and Canada, and 35 titles – honored as finalists or winners of more than 50 book awards. To buy Janet Halfmann's award-winning *Little Skink's Tail*, please visit

<http://www.SylvanDellPublishing.com>.
