

plunges the rod into a pool of water, Tamlynne becomes mortal. In the end, their love proves stronger than the dark power of the Elfin Queen and they are both saved.

Folktales should have the power to help us understand the rights and wrongs of our human existence—to provide us with a moral framework with which our children can work. Like all folktales, this one speaks of truths through archetypes—the forbidden forest, the red rose, the changeling beast, and the evil attraction of the faery spirit. But Muller has taken the folktale and fleshed it out to yield even more drama. The story literally pulsates with suspense and foreboding, but, as with every good folktale, all is right with the world in the end. Muller's version would work extremely well in oral storytelling—there is enough romance and excitement to appeal to people of all ages.



In the full-page illustrations that depict the faery dance, there is always one of the knights/faeries looking directly at the reader—I found that eerie and deliciously disconcerting. The paintings are extremely detailed and busy, not suited to group viewing when the story is being read aloud. The illustrations are full of wonderful nasty little creatures—perhaps some that parents would not want very young children to dwell on. While Muller's version of the tale would read aloud well, the illustrations are perhaps better suited to individual perusal by older children.

Terri L. Lyons, a librarian, is head of a department consisting of adult and young adult fiction, as well as Children's Services at the Whitby Public Library.

EXPERIENCE BECOMES A BRIDGE TO BEARS

Bears. Ian Stirling. Photos. Aubrey Lang. Key Porter Books, 1992. (Natural History Series). 64 pp., \$18.95 cloth. ISBN 1-55013-296-2.

Ian Stirling's informal, engaging style and familiar comparisons draw the reader into the world of scientific research in *Bears*, helping us to understand such things as the bear's fossil history and terms such as "carnivore lethargy" (not hibernation).

Stirling spent twenty years studying polar bears and he catalogued his experience in the thorough 220-page adult reference, *Polar bears*. In *Bears*,

Stirling's background again becomes a dramatic bridge. Readers immediately enter his world: "The temperature was thirty degrees below zero as I stood on the cliff in front of my camp ..."(6).

Fourth in the Natural History Series, *Bears* follows *Wolves* (1990), *Eagles* (1990), and *Seals* (1991). Each indexed 64-page volume examines such behaviours as mating, raising young, and hunting.

Striking photographs increase their appeal. In *Bears* more than 40 photographs support the text and show additional information. However, several photographs placed beside text measure less than six centimeters wide. One shows a black bear cub crawling over its mother in a den (30). Another shows a cub hiding in a tree (49). Visual information is difficult to read on these small prints.

Some photographs also seem framed too tightly. One half-page photograph shows a cub crying for its mother (46). The cub *appears* to be hiding in a tree trunk, but we cannot be sure because the print crops out most of the trunk.

Illustrator Dorothy Siemens also expands the text with eleven drawings which demonstrate ideas, such as comparing bears to humans (11). An illustrated world map colour-codes locations of various species throughout the world (22-3). However, it lacks place names, which may force readers to other reference works to identify countries and continents.

While *Bears* provides a useful survey of black bears, polar bears and grizzlies, one wonders why Stirling includes some of the other five species, such as the Asiatic Black Bear. The reader feels only disappointment when told "relatively little is known about it" (19). Also, there is a bit of confusion in the text regarding the eating habits of bears. Early in the text, Stirling states "Among the many carnivores, bears form their own unique family, called the Ursidae" (10). Later, he categorizes bears as more omnivorous, saying that "Black bears and grizzly bears are omnivorous" (41), that panda bears eat 99 per cent bamboo stems and leaves, that sloth bears eat insects, and that polar bears are "the most carnivorous bears" (43-44).

Such confusion extends to the photography credits. Although the cover and title page of *Bears* say "Photographs by Aubrey Lang," the next page credits three other photographers, including author Ian Stirling. It also shows that all other photographs are copyright of Lang and her photographer husband, Wayne Lynch. This makes it impossible to tell which photographs are actually hers. Perhaps Lang would be better described as the book's photo editor.

Marie Mendenhall is a freelance writer-photographer working in Regina, Saskatchewan.

MANY MYSTERIES: MICHAEL BEDARD VISITS EMILY DICKINSON

Emily. Michael Bedard. Illus. Barbara Cooney. Lester Publishing, 1992. Unpag. \$18.95 cloth. ISBN 1-895555-01-9.

Michael Bedard's *Emily* is about mystery, but it is not a whodunit. Instead of