

Picture the World
April Ide, Library Director

I really enjoy reading illustrated children's books. The interplay between stories and words makes the experience so rich. The artwork can add so much context that isn't there in the words alone, especially for young readers who are still learning the nuances of English. One of my favorite types of picture books are those that help us learn more about our world, especially our natural world. These are a few illustrated children's books I've enjoyed lately.

"Marvelous Maps: The World as You Have Never Seen It Before" by Simon Kuestenmacher is a collection of illustrated maps that depict things you might not be used to seeing in cartographic form: how our data travels the world, how the world snores, dogs and cats of the world, and many more. I enjoyed browsing this book, especially the illustrations by Margarida Esteves. I also loved that it was easy to skip to the maps that interested me most.

"Home" by Isabelle Simler is a lovely, poetic tour through the homes of 27 different creatures, illustrated with engaging, colorful drawings. My favorites were the octopus and the diving bell spider, which builds a bubble nest underwater and swims down to rest in the pocket of air. I had never heard of the diving bell spider before this wonderful book!

It's time for bed and every creature is nestling inside its home for peace and rest: rabbits, puppies, songbirds, raccoons – wait! Those raccoons are awake! I highly recommend sharing "While You're Asleep" by Emmy Kastner as a bedtime story. This gentle and funny book helps wind readers down with rhyming, learning about nocturnal creatures, and quite a bit of whimsy.

"The Great Lakes: Our Freshwater Treasure" by Barb Rosenstock and illustrated by Jamey Christoph guides the reader through the history of our Great Lakes, from formation to their current ecological state. I loved learning about the path of a drop of water from Lake Superior to the Atlantic Ocean (it can take 300 years for it to make the journey!), as well as how glaciers formed the lakes. This is a great picture book to share with young readers who want to know more about our natural world.

If any of these books caught your interest, visit www.newulmlibrary.org and choose Library Catalog to make a request. Library staff can also help you place requests if you call 507-359-8331.

New Ulm Public Library is located at 17 North Broadway and is open Monday-Thursday from 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m. and Friday-Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. We hope to see you soon!