Olivia’s Birds

Saving the Gulf

By Olivia Bouler

Submitted by Julye Lerma – Librarian, Levi Milton Elementary School, Walker, LA

Bouler, Olivia. *Olivia’s Birds – Saving the Gulf.* Sterling Publishing Co. 2011. 32 pages.

**SUMMARY**

In 2010, after the BP oil spill occurred in the Gulf of Mexico, 11-year-old Olivia Bouler single-handedly raised $200,000 for the Audubon Society through her Save the Gulf campaign. Olivia’s Birds is full of her artwork, which was given to donors, interesting facts about birds, and ideas about how you can also help to make the world a better place to live.

**AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR BIOGRAPHY**

Olivia Bouler, an aspiring ornithologist and advocate for birds and wildlife, was 11 years old when the BP oil spill occurred. Concerned over the plight of the birds in the area, Olivia created and donated over 500 paintings of birds that raised over $200,000 for the John James Audubon Society. In 2010, she was named the “Tommy P. Monahan Kid of the Year” by the ASCPA, was a recipient of the Global Appreciation World of Colors Award and was a “Featured Friend” of Disney’s Friend for Change Project Green initiative. In December of 2011, she was a guest at the White House. Now 15, she lives in New York with her family and continues to draw birds. Her art has been part of a traveling exhibition.

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**

1. Investigate what has happened to the birds in the Gulf of Mexico since the oil spill. Create a backboard/flyer that shows them before, during and after the spill.

Extension: How wew other sea animals affected by the spill?

www2.scholastic.com/browse/collection.jsp?id=745

[www.lpb.org/oilspill](http://www.lpb.org/oilspill)

1. What is an oil spill? How does an oil spill affect wetlands? [www.nwf.org/eco-schools-usa/become-an-eco-school/special-report/oil-spill-and-wetland-activities.aspx](http://www.nwf.org/eco-schools-usa/become-an-eco-school/special-report/oil-spill-and-wetland-activities.aspx).

education.nationalgeographic.com/education/collections/oilspill/?

library.thinkquest.org/CR0215471/oil\_spills.htm

1. The BP oil spill was not the first disastrous spill. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast the effects of another spill, the Exxon Valdez, with the BP Gulf spill.

answers.askkids.com/Nature/what\_is\_exxon\_valdez

library.thinkquest.org/CR0215471/oilk\_spills.htm

1. Investigate activities that kids can do to help promote environmental change in the world?

[www.dosomething.org/tipsandtools/11-facts-about-bp-oil-spill](http://www.dosomething.org/tipsandtools/11-facts-about-bp-oil-spill)

[www.epa.gov/students/](http://www.epa.gov/students/)

[www.childrenoftheearth.org/kids\_activities.htm](http://www.childrenoftheearth.org/kids_activities.htm)

[www.active.com/protect-your-playground/articles/Environmental-Activities-for-Kids](http://www.active.com/protect-your-playground/articles/Environmental-Activities-for-Kids)

1. Choose a bird from Olivia’s book, and draw your own artwork. Write a report about your choice using books from the library, the internet or the encyclopedia.
2. Who was John James Audubon? Investigate his life and write a report. What was his connection to Louisiana?

[www.noteablebiographies.com/An-Ba](http://www.noteablebiographies.com/An-Ba)

[www.homegrownlearners.com/.../artist-study-john-james-audubon](http://www.homegrownlearners.com/.../artist-study-john-james-audubon)

news.nationalgeographic.com/…/110426-john-james-audubon-for-children

[www.jjaudubon.net](http://www.jjaudubon.net)

Google – Audubon and Louisiana

1. Interview a local artist.
2. Generate a list of questions you might ask Olivia about her life before and after the publication of her book.
3. Why was Dawn detergent used as a cleaner for the wildlife affected by the oil spill? What are some other uses for Dawn?

[www.dawn-dish.com/us/dawn/savingwildlife](http://www.dawn-dish.com/us/dawn/savingwildlife)

[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/15/AR2010061501694.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/15/AR2010061501694.html)

savvy-living.com/26-things-you-can-do-with-origional-blue-dawn-soap/

**LITERATURE LIST**

The Boy Who Drew Birds: A Story of John James Audubon by Jacqueline Davies. Houghton

 Mifflin. 2004. 32 pgs.

Into the Woods: John James Audubon Lives His Dream by Robert Burleigh. Antheneum Books

 For Young Readers. 2003. 34 pgs.

Birds of America by John James Audubon. Sterling Books. 2011 448 pgs.

A Nest for Celeste: A Story About Art, Inspiration and the Meaning of Home by Henry Cole.

 Katherine Tegen Books. 2010. 342 pgs.

Roscoe and the Pelican Rescue by Lynn R. Reed. Holiday House. 2011. 32 pgs.

Oil Spill! by Melvin Berger. Harper Collins. 194. 31 pgs.

The BP Oil Spill by Peter Benoit. Children’s Press. 2011. 48 pgs.

The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill by Peter Benoit. Children’s Press. 2011. 48 pgs.

Citizen Scientists: Be a Part of Scientific Discovery From Your Own Backyard by Loree Griffin

 Burns. Henry Holt. 2012. 80 pgs.

50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth. Andrews and McNea. 1990. 156 pgs.

Kids Care! 75 Ways to Make a Difference for People, Animals and the Environment. Williamson

 Books. 2007. 128 pgs.

77 Creative Ways Kids Can Serve by Sandra Clark. Wesleyan Publishing House. 2008. 175 pgs.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

How do you think Olivia’s life has changed since she wrote her book?

How did she get the idea to start her Save the Gulf campaign?

What is your opinion of the BP oil spill?

What do you think you can do to make the earth a better place?

What is your opinion of the art of John James Audubon?