

## A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan library programs as well as activities for the daycare, classroom, or family.

Meet Ohio writer and photographer David FitzSimmons, who has also taught high school and college!

Learn about David FitzSimmons' photography while you investigate marine life and get to know the animals of the oceans.

Explore fun activities that align with Ohio's Learning Standards for kindergarten through grade 3.

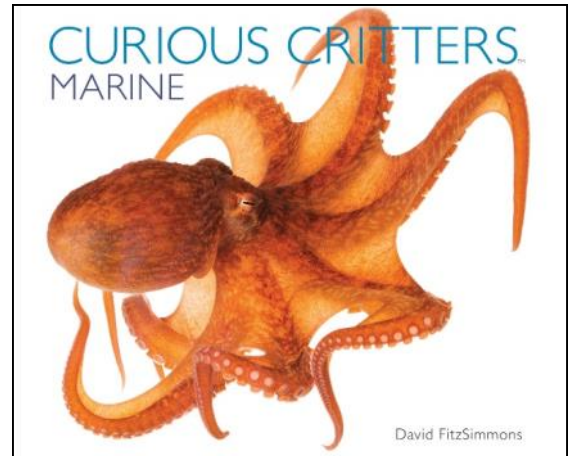
# Curious Critters Marine

By David FitzSimmons



## About the Book

Amazing marine animals—from a spectacular spoonbill to a rare blue lobster—posed for portraits. Good thing photographer and writer David FitzSimmons jotted down what the agile angelfish, proud puffin, singing sea star, and other Curious Critters had to say! The spike-covered Atlantic horseshoe crab explains that a sharp shell has allowed this spider-relative to survive since long before dinosaurs were around. A baby loggerhead sea turtle tiredly talks about his march from nest to sea after hatching. And the blue American lobster points out that, while most of his crustacean compatriots are brown or dark green, he is a rare one-in-two-million blue gem of the sea.



Permission to use book jacket image and book description granted by David FitzSimmons.

Additional material in the back of the book includes a life-size silhouettes page, a glossary, and a natural history page, where readers learn that Atlantic horseshoe crabs have blue blood, that tufted puffins may carry up to sixty fish in their beaks at once, and that California sea cucumbers eat with their mouths and their rear ends!

Wild Iris Publishing. 2015. ISBN 9781936607723. Ages 3 and up.  
[wildirispublishing.com/index.php/store/product/34-curious-critters-marine](http://wildirispublishing.com/index.php/store/product/34-curious-critters-marine)



**Curious Critters Marine** is the third in David FitzSimmons' series of nonfiction picture books featuring up-close photographs of amazing animals. A companion series of board books introduces the animals of states from Maine to Texas, of course including Ohio!

Learn more about the *Curious Critters* books, read book excerpts, send free e-cards, and download free activities: [curious-critters.com](http://curious-critters.com).



Photograph used by permission of David FitzSimmons. Biographical information courtesy of David FitzSimmons, with additional content from Ohioana Library; used with permission.

**“I’ll bet you can spot my two large compound eyes, but did you know that I actually have nine eyes and that I can see with my tail? I can also feel things with 100,000 tiny pegs covering my body.”**

## About David FitzSimmons

David FitzSimmons is an award-winning free-lance photographer and writer. David photographs and writes for various magazines, including *Outdoor Photographer*, *Popular Photography*, *Professional Photographer*, and *Shutterbug*. His work has also appeared in *Ohio Magazine* and *Natural Ohio*. His 100+ calendar credits include numerous titles by BrownTrout, Barnes & Noble, and TF Publishing. David's previous books, **Curious Critters** and **Curious Critters Volume Two**, won nine national book awards and sold over 100,000 copies.

One of nine Sigma Pro photographers in North America, David presents seminars and workshops to a wide variety of audiences, from public school, college, and university classes to photography groups and civic organizations. His works have been exhibited at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, the National Center for Nature Photography, and the Telluride Photo Festival.

Before becoming a freelance photographer and author, David taught for over twenty years—first high school English and then as a university professor, having instructed at Cornell University, Ohio State, and Ashland University. He holds a Ph.D. in English from Ohio State University, with a specialty in narrative theory—investigating the components of storytelling—something that influences his photography and writing.

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## Author Resources

David FitzSimmons' official website  
[fitsimmonsphotography.com](http://fitsimmonsphotography.com)

Interview on WXVU Radio's Around Cincinnati program (audio)  
[wvxu.org/post/author-dave-fitzsimmons-talks-ocean-critters-his-new-childrens-book](http://wvxu.org/post/author-dave-fitzsimmons-talks-ocean-critters-his-new-childrens-book)

Interview on Big Blend Radio (audio)  
[blogtalkradio.com/big-blend-radio/2015/06/01/curious-critters-with-david-fitzsimmons](http://blogtalkradio.com/big-blend-radio/2015/06/01/curious-critters-with-david-fitzsimmons)

Interview follows a 3:45 original song, "Curious Critters," by Foster Brown.

### For school and library visits:

Email [visits@curious-critters.com](mailto:visits@curious-critters.com) or call 419-892-2900, and see [curious-critters.com/index.php/education/school-visits](http://curious-critters.com/index.php/education/school-visits)

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## About David FitzSimmons' Nature Photography

As an environmental educator and professional photographer, David FitzSimmons is on a mission to get children to fall in love with animals of the ocean by making them approachable, relatable, and—most of all—up-close! He does this through his photography as well as through the animals' imagined voices. Explore David's photography techniques and how he sets up animal portrait sessions: [curious-critters.com/index.php/about/photography-techniques](http://curious-critters.com/index.php/about/photography-techniques).

In this video recording, David discusses the benefits of looking at nature, and the genesis and development of the *Curious Critters* books: [youtu.be/UhbA6jFoSK0](http://youtu.be/UhbA6jFoSK0) (from the PIX 2015 photography conference).

## Learn and Have Fun!

Ideas for extending the experience of reading and sharing *Curious Critters Marine*.

- Look through the book and point out the animals that are photographed but not labeled or given stories. A list of these animals is on p.2 ("Additional Curious Critters"). Learn about these animals using online resources available to students through INFOhio ([infohio.org](http://infohio.org)) and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library ([ohioweblibrary.org](http://ohioweblibrary.org)), or books from your public or school library. Individually or as a group, write stories about these animals based on the facts you researched, in a narrative style like that of the book.
- The black sea bass migrates four hundred miles, and lives for part of the year in water that is over a mile deep. Help children visualize and understand these distances by comparing them to known or experienced distances. Select a familiar location or landmark one mile from school, home, or library. If practical, drive or walk that mile together. The sea bass's migration passes through waters that are deeper than your trip was long! Compare the length of the migration to the children's longest trips by car—perhaps on family vacations or to visit relatives. Use a mapping app or website to calculate the mileage from your town to each child's furthest destination. Is it a longer distance than the sea bass swims each year?
- To accompany the imaginative stories in the text, the Natural History section at the end of the book provides more straightforward descriptions of each of the animals. On these pages, readers can view all the animals side-by-side (though not to scale—for that, see the following page of life-sized silhouettes). How many ways can the children group the animals? By classification (birds, fish, mollusks, etc.) and by color are two obvious groupings. Encourage the children to be creative, and to explain to the class or group why they sorted the animals as they did.
- The candy stripe shrimp and the sea anemone have a symbiotic relationship. After reading the candy stripe shrimp's story-inverse, explain symbiosis to the children. Using online resources available through INFOhio ([infohio.org](http://infohio.org)) or Ohio Web Library ([ohioweblibrary.org](http://ohioweblibrary.org)), help the children to identify other pairs of species with symbiotic relationships. Symbiosis can be beneficial to both species, as for the shrimp and sea anemone. This is called mutualism. Symbiosis can also benefit one species and have no effect on the other. This is called commensalism. Or, symbiosis can benefit one species and harm the other. This is called parasitism.
- Watch the official **Curious Critters Marine** book trailer ([youtu.be/yzeLYbTvybU](https://youtu.be/yzeLYbTvybU)) to see the puffin, lobster, and upside-down jellyfish in motion. While on YouTube, you can also view the book trailer for the first **Curious Critters** book ([youtu.be/KSc0vagAD\\_U](https://youtu.be/KSc0vagAD_U)).
- For a fun storytime, class unit, or family read-aloud, pair **Curious Critters Marine** with fiction picture books such as **Mister Seahorse** by Eric Carle and **Flotsam** by David Wiesner. Ask your school librarian or the children's librarian at your public library for suggestions. For a list of Ohio public libraries, see Find A Library: [oplin.org/fal](http://oplin.org/fal).
- The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, offers many resources for field trips and for armchair exploration, including a section of its website about watching wildlife, and another on species and habitats. Ohio doesn't border an ocean, but you will find many curious critters—including aquatic species—wherever you live in the state! See the Division of Wildlife website: [wildlife.ohiodnr.gov](http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov).
- For additional resources, check out the establishments listed on p. 2 of the book, including the Toledo Zoo ([toledozoo.org](http://toledozoo.org)) and Mystic Aquarium ([mysticaquarium.org](http://mysticaquarium.org)).

## Tie It In!

Using this book with Ohio's Learning Standards.

**Educators:** Every CTRO book may be used to support Ohio's English Language Arts reading, writing, and speaking and listening standards. Other Learning Standards also apply. Here are examples of activities using **Curious Critters Marine** that align with Learning Standards for Kindergarten – Grade 3.

**Librarians, parents, and others:** These activities are also for library programs, family activities, and other projects. Learning Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. For more information, see the Ohio Department of Education website, [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov). From the Topics dropdown menu, click on "Learning in Ohio."

**These activities are also great for library programs, family time, and playgroups.**

### Approaches toward Learning

**Creativity – Expression of Ideas and Feelings through the Arts.** David FitzSimmons' photographs are scientific but also artistic. Ask children to each select their favorite photograph from the book and identify the reasons for their choice. Provide paper and crayons, markers, or colored pencils, and invite the children to make a drawing based on their favorite photographs. Alternately, each child could select a familiar marine animal not in the book, or a familiar land animal, to draw. As a related project, the children could each create a story for their animal, in the style of the stories in the book, and share it with others in the group or class.

### Physical Well-Being

**Knowledge of Health Concepts and Behaviors: Nutrition.** Several of the animals' stories involve finding and consuming food. Discuss what is included in a healthy diet for people, and how it compares to the diets of various sea animals. What is similar about our diet and that of a fish, crustacean, or bird? What is different?

### Mathematics

**Measurement and Data (grades 1-2).** Using the page of actual-size silhouettes at the back of the book, have children compare the lengths of several of the animals whose silhouettes appear in full. They may order the animals from shortest to longest, and use a ruler to measure the length of each animal in inches or centimeters.

### Science

Note that **Curious Critters Marine** ties in with life science concepts throughout the early elementary years. Here is an example:

**Life Science: Basic Needs of Living Things (grade 1).** Many of the animals' stories center on basic needs, including food, shelter, and protection. As you read the stories together, point out the needs that are described and how each animal lives in an environment that meets its needs. How does each animal use materials from its physical environment to meet its needs?

### Social Studies

**Geography: Spatial Thinking and Skills.** Assist the children in looking up the geographic ranges of several of the animals featured in **Curious Critters Marine**, perhaps using resources available through INFOhio ([infohio.org](http://infohio.org)) or Ohio Web Library ([ohioweblibrary.org](http://ohioweblibrary.org)), or books from your public or school library. Then, use a map of North America and its surrounding oceans to map the whereabouts of the animals. Which animals overlap in range? Which have the largest and smallest ranges? While using maps, you might also map the distance from your location to the nearest part of the Atlantic or Pacific coastline. Which ocean is nearer to you? In what state is the nearest ocean coastline?

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors, illustrators, and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: [library.ohio.gov/ctro](http://library.ohio.gov/ctro).

This toolkit revised  
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