

**Q & A with Coauthor Jane
Veltkamp of
Swoop and Soar: How Science
Rescued Two Osprey Orphans
and Found Them a New
Family in the Wild**

By: Deborah Lee Rose and
Jane Veltkamp

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Photo: Larry Krumpelman © Jane Veltkamp

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Q Can you share a special fun fact about ospreys from your book *Swoop and Soar*?



A Fun Fact: Ospreys are found everywhere in the world except Antarctica!



Photo: Frank Morgan © Jane Veltkamp

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Q What makes ospreys like **Swoop and Soar** different from other birds of prey?

A Ospreys are like other raptors—their adaptations include sharp-tipped, curved beaks, powerful, hooked talons, and eyes that can spot prey from high above. But ospreys have a unique way of catching fish. Ospreys plunge towards the water feet first, then crash through the surface and go completely underwater. Once they grab their prey in their talons, they use their strong wings to lift themselves out of the water and back into flight.

Osprey plunging for fish, [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)

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Q Why did you write the book *Swoop and Soar*?

A Many children, parents, teachers and librarians have reached out to me since I coauthored *Beauty and the Beak*. In that true story, about Beauty the bald eagle who got a prosthetic beak, Beauty could never go back to the wild. But in the true story of *Swoop and Soar*, the two young ospreys *did* go back to the wild. I wanted to write a book about them growing up wild and free. You can see them in the new nest with their new wild parents right on the book cover.



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Q

What was the hardest thing about writing *Swoop and Soar*?

A

While we were writing the book, I was rescuing hundreds of ospreys, eagles, hawks, and owls from an extreme heat wave in Idaho. The rescue work was very hard. But Deborah and I kept working on the book—by phone, email, and text—whenever I wasn't out finding sick and injured birds or caring for them back at my raptor center Birds of Prey Northwest. (www.birdsofpreynorthwest.org).

Q **Were ospreys ever endangered as a species?**

A Ospreys were once devastated by the insect-killing chemical DDT. DDT got into bodies of water and into fish in the water. Then ospreys ate the fish, and the chemical affected the ospreys' eggs. The eggshells came out so thin, they cracked before the babies were truly ready to hatch. The loss of countless osprey chicks drove down the number of all ospreys.

Q **Are ospreys still endangered?**

A In some parts of the US and the world, osprey populations are still very low and of concern. But scientists across the US and the world—including myself—have reintroduced ospreys where they were totally or nearly wiped out. Today they're coming back, and many people can see them in the wild.

Q

What can kids do to help protect ospreys and make their species sustainable?

A

One thing kids can do is pick up plastic trash near osprey habitat. Osprey parents sometimes carry discarded fishing line and leftover baling twine into their nests, thinking these are plant material. Then chicks and adults can get so tangled, they can't move or eat. Plastic bags can also blow into a nest and smother young chicks.

Photo: © Ben Wurst

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Q How can reading *Swoop and Soar* open kids' eyes and minds to the environment, to help conserve ospreys and other wildlife?

A I am both a scientist and an environmental educator. By reading my book *Swoop and Soar*, as with *Beauty and the Beak*, kids and adults around the world can learn about these real raptors and the conservation of their magnificent, critical species. I especially hope reading *Swoop and Soar* will inspire children as they grow up to help keep Earth a place that sustains all animal and human life.



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Additional Books by Deborah Lee Rose

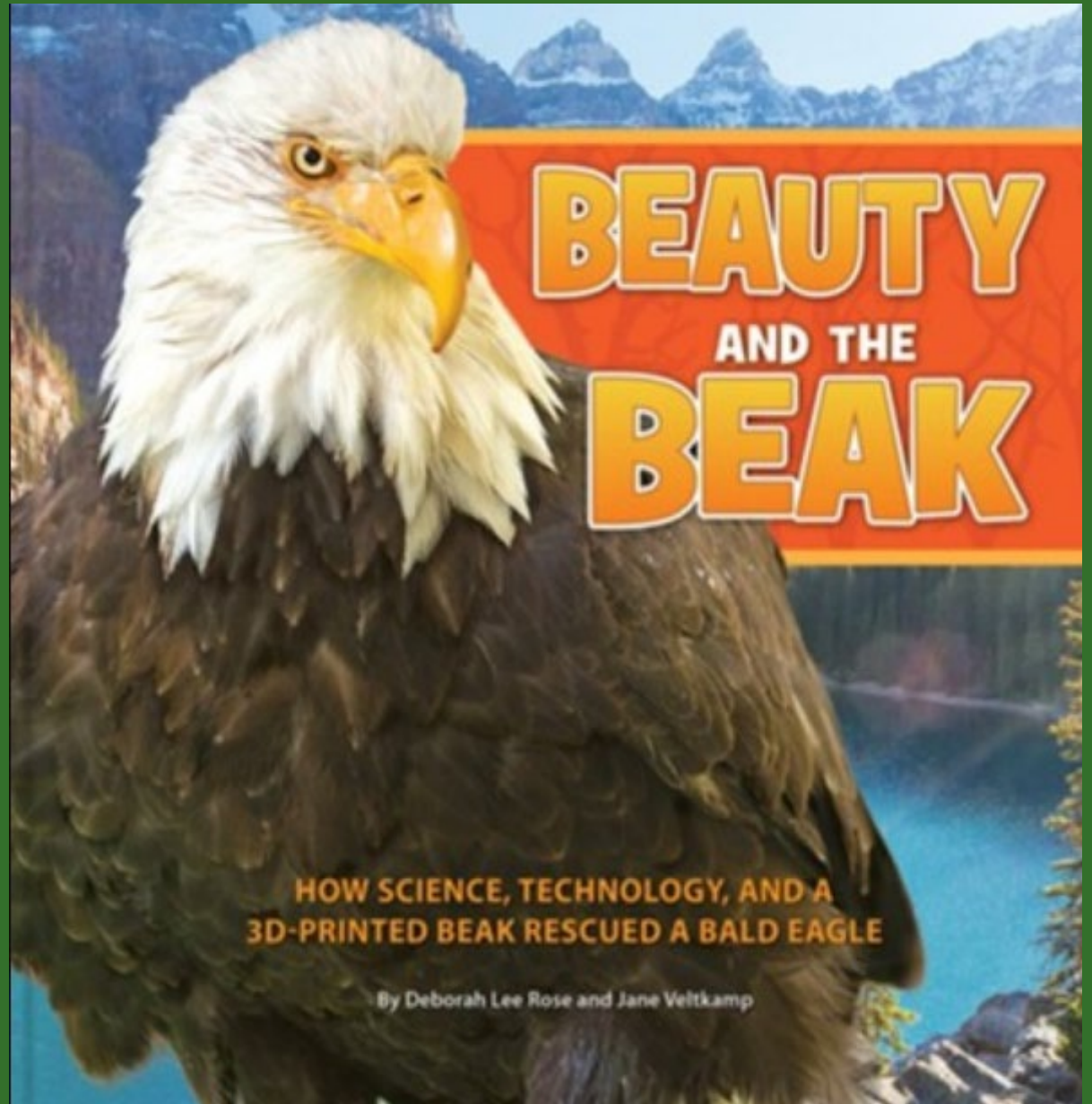
(with links to digital resources in RIF's Literacy Central - <https://www.rif.org/literacy-central>)

- Into the A, B, Sea
- Scientists Get Dressed
- Beauty and the Beak
- Astronauts Zoom!
- Jimmy the Joey
- Someone's Sleepy
- One Nighttime Sea
- Ocean Babies
- Meredith's Mother Takes the Train
- The Rose Horse
- The People Who Hugged The Trees
- Birthday Zoo
- All the Seasons of the Year
- The Twelve Days of Winter
- The Twelve Days of Kindergarten
- The Twelve Days of Springtime
- The Spelling Bee Before Recess



Additional Books by Jane Veltkamp

Beauty and the Beak



Happy Reading!

