



2015

# The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy

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Frazier, Cynthia (2015) "The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 36 : Iss. 6 , Article 55.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol36/iss6/55>

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# Book Review

**Title:** The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy

**Author:** Jeanne Birdsall

**Illustrator:** David Frankland

**Reviewer:** Cynthia Frazier

**Publisher:** Alfred A. Knopf

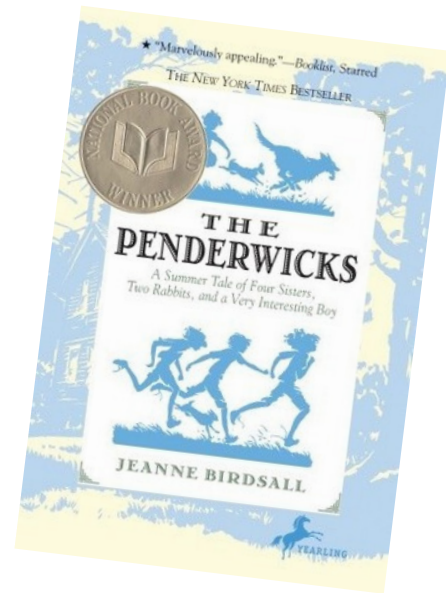
**Publication Year:** 2005

**ISBN:** 9780440420477

**Number of Pages:** 262

**Interest Level:** Primary, Intermediate

**Rating:** Outstanding



## Review

What do you get when a widower takes his four daughters, ages twelve to four, and a dog on vacation? You get a story set in a time before cell phones and internet, when playing sports, make believe, and exploring was the way to spend an enjoyable summer. Mr. Penderwick, a biologist, loves plants and the country is full of interesting specimens. Rosalind, Skye, Jane and Batty are his daughters. Each has her own personality, talents, and foibles weaving a wonderful story of family love and sibling interaction. Add a young boisterous dog, named Hound, who eats inappropriate things like travel maps, two rabbits who accidentally get loose the morning of a special garden party, and a new friend named Jeffrey, whose mean mother is thinking of marrying Dreadful Dopey Dexter Dupree and the stage is set for a most enjoyable read. Adventures with a dangerous bull, climbing out the bedroom window and having to be rescued by the gardener, soccer ball kicking contests with calamitous results, escaping through a tunnel in the hedge and hiding in an urn are just a few of the delightful exploits these children get into.

Though Jeanne Birdsall at eight years old wanted to become a writer, she didn't begin writing until she was forty-one. This, her first book, won the National Book Award for Young People's Literature. Written in 3rd person, Birdsall uses dialogue to develop characterization and expand the storyline. Dialogue also makes this book fun to read aloud to children. Beware that laughing and giggling may accompany the reading of this novel. Birdsall has written three more books about the Penderwick family, each as engaging and delightful as the original, and is working on the fifth and last of the series.