Scientists in the Field: The Manatee Scientists: The Science of Saving the Vulnerable

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In this book, scientists detail their work with manatees and what goes into deciding that a species should be on the endangered list. In the Amazon, Dr. Fernando Rosas specializes in manatees and how to help them survive in that area. He tracks manatees with a transmitter so he can study manatee physiology in the wild along with his studies of manatees in tanks when baby or injured manatees are brought to the scientists. For him, a major challenge is finding a safe place to release these manatees into the wild. Other scientists study Florida manatees and do population surveys to see how healthy the manatees are and how many are in the wild. More scientists, particularly Lucy Keith, explores a third manatee species in West Africa work to combine information on what is known about manatees so that people can determine how endangered these animals are and study manatee bones to find additional information.

This book is a terrific resource for students to learn about manatees, conservation, science, and how scientists work. Each section discussing one type of manatee and the scientist that studies that type is color-coded so it is easy to see the sections at a glance. Each section gives some information about that type of manatee, the specific work that scientist does to learn more about these creatures, and details a particular activity. High-color photographs of manatees, scientists at work, and the people who interact with manatees in daily life help break up the large amount of text about the scientific work done to learn more about these animals. There is a lot of information in this book, so some readers might want to read only one of the sections or skim to get the basic ideas about researching manatees. This book helps readers feel like they’re on a scientific expedition themselves and will help them become more familiar with the work that scientists do and this particular species.