2019

The Hyena Scientist

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Loving, social, and attractive—does that describe a hyena to you? It should! Hyenas have a bad reputation, but the scientists who study them on the Masai Mara Game Reserve are trying to pioneer a new way of looking at them. From Fisi Camp, Montgomery and Bishop are taken on hyena observations where they learn about the intricacies of matriarchal hyena society and behavior. While there, they also learn about the scientists including who they are, and what brought them to study hyenas, how they live in the field. This beautifully written picture book takes the reader on a journey to understanding hyenas and the scientists who study them.

As part of the Scientists in the Field series, Montgomery masterfully describes her first-hand adventure to learn about hyenas in the African game reserve. This nonfiction book demonstrates curiosity and science as a way of life. Scientific language and processes are explained in a simple and inviting way. Bishop’s photographs beautifully capture hyenas, their environment, and the people who love them. Organized chronologically, this book also features bios of the scientists, hyena behavior and physical attributes, a little Swahili vocabulary, a bibliography, and index. Readers come to care for hyenas by name while championing ongoing research to learn more about them. Fighting misconceptions, readers will discover the true nature and importance of hyenas from trailblazing scientists.