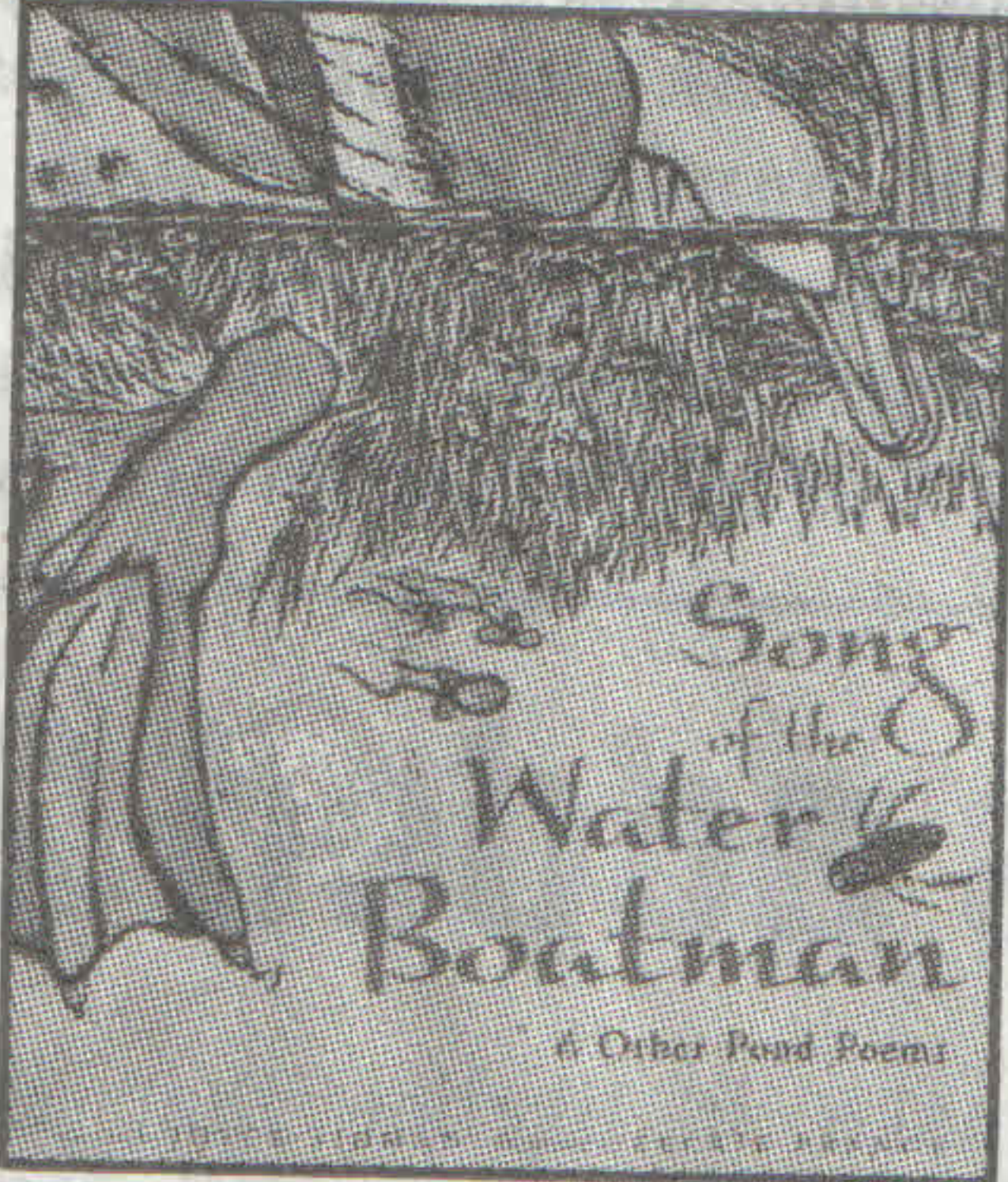




## The Village School's Children's Book of the Month



Book reviewed by  
Katrina Walton

*Katrina Walton is the grade K-1 Science Teacher at the Village School*

The Village School Children's Book of the Month, "Song of the Water Boatman" by Joyce Sidman, woodcut illustrations by Beckie Prange

Laughter erupted from the children as I read a poem from "Song Of The Water Boatman" by Joyce Sidman. This particular poem described the voracious appetite of diving beetles.

"If it moves, it is mine. If it's anywhere near me, it's mine. If I'm hungry (and I'm always hungry), it is mine, mine, mine," says the water boatman.

As a science teacher who participates in biodiversity outings in the spring to local ponds, I appreciate this book for its ability to be informative while lighthearted. It aided me in communicating the dynamics of a pond ecosystem, but in a way that kept the children engaged and entertained.

Many of us grow up being familiar with the behaviors of frogs or salamanders, but don't know what happens on a smaller scale in our ponds, which is something this book begins to illuminate. We might not know, for instance, that dragonflies hatch from larvae in water, or that caddis flies surround themselves with incredibly engineered homes — but through poems and illustrations, this book begins to build a more detailed picture of these insect behaviors.

This book of poems also incorporates larger animals, like the spring peeper, which is described in its waking moments following a winter thaw, or the wood duck, as it calls its duckling home. This book, which has colorful and intricate woodcut illustrations, teaches children about the rhythms and cycles present in our local ponds through funny and endearing poems. This book is perfect to read out loud to kindergarten and first grade children. It is also appropriate as a literary and science resource for children in second through sixth grade. It can inspire children to look a little closer during their next pond outing, and perhaps even encourage them to write their own poetry about our aquatic neighbors.

Come to the Village School Open House on Saturday, Feb. 10, and take a look at our great selection of children's books for preschool through the 6th grade. Talk to teachers about the great books in their classrooms. Having great books creates engaged, enthusiastic readers!

*Reviewed by Katrina Walton K-1 Science Teacher*