

Water Week Reading List

Descriptions and impressions from the Water Week planning committee and Mr. Doug McLaren, naturalist and retired UK Extension forester.

Adult

[Water in Kentucky: Natural History, Communities, and Conservation](#)

By Brian D. Lee (Editor), Alice L. Jones (Editor), Daniel I. Carey (Editor)

In this generously illustrated book, experts from a variety of fields explain how water has defined regions across the Commonwealth. Together, they illuminate the ways in which this resource has affected the lives of Kentuckians since the state's settlement, exploring the complex relationship among humans, landscapes, and waterways.

The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress 1817-1862

By Carol Sheriff

As an early-19th-century public works project, the Erie Canal dwarfed all others in terms of cost, size and imagination. By connecting Buffalo to Albany, the canal opened a waterway between New York City and the Great Lakes, dramatically transforming U.S. commerce and industry.

The Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi River Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America

By John M. Barry

Tells the riveting and nearly forgotten story of the greatest natural disaster this country has ever known - the Mississippi flood of 1927

River of Enterprise

By Kim M. Gruenwald

The commercial origins of the Ohio Valley 1790 - 1850. Discusses how Marietta, Ohio was the hub of the commercial ventures of the Ohio River. Very good discussion of the river's limitations (low water), how the river divided political processes, the importance of the river and how that importance faded away in mid 1800's

[Where the Water Goes - Life and Death Along the Colorado River](#)

By David Owen

The Colorado River is an essential resource for a surprisingly large part of the United States, and every gallon that flows down it is owned or claimed by someone.

River Horse: A Voyage Across America

By William Least Heat-Moon

The author sets off aboard a small boat named Nikawa ("river horse" in Osage) from the Atlantic at New York Harbor in hopes of entering the Pacific near Astoria, Oregon. He and his companion, Pilotis, struggle to cover some 5,000 watery miles.

[The Source: How Rivers Made America and How America Remade Its Rivers](#)

By Martin Doyle

An examination of the many ways America has used its rivers for interstate commerce, travel, and sustenance. This historical account explores how America's rivers have been utilized politically, economically, and for basic survival.

[Where the Crawdads Sing](#)

By Delia Owens

Beautifully written fictional coming of age story focusing on a self-taught naturalist, set in the marshlands of North Carolina.

[Always a River: The Ohio River and the American Experience](#)

Edited By Robert L. Reid

Seven pieces brought together to celebrate the dialogue of the Ohio River and Ohio River Valley. Begins with the "discovery" of the river by Europeans to the current status of the river. (Noted: steam boat travel began on the Ohio River in late 1811, six years - almost to the day - from the return of the Lewis and Clark expedition)

[The Pie Seller, The Drunk, and the Lady: Heroes of the 1833 Cholera Epidemic in Lexington, KY](#)

By Terry Foody

Local author alert! Fascinating historical account of Lexington during the 1833 cholera epidemic in Lexington, focusing on three key players.

[Waste: One Woman's Fight Against America's Dirty Secret](#)

By Catherine Coleman Flowers

The author tells the story of environmental injustice that plagues many areas of rural America, that of inadequate sanitation. She reveals and shines light on a topic that many may find unpleasant and shocking, yet the absence of this basic need is making people sick and creating deeper social injustices.

[Elkhorn: Evolution of a Kentucky Landscape](#)

By Richard Taylor

Driven by topophilia (love of place), Taylor focuses on the eight-mile stretch of the creek from the Forks of the Elkhorn to Knight's Bridge to provide a glimpse into the economic, social, and cultural transformation of Kentucky from wilderness to its current landscape.

[Ruthless Tide: The Heroes and Villains of the Johnstown Flood, America's Astonishing Gilded Age Disaster](#)

By Al Roker

This rich text examines the 1889 flood in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Known as The Great Flood, this event remains the deadliest flood in U.S. history, killing more than 2,200 people and causing \$17 million in damage. Roker looks at the factors that led to the tragedy - including neglected infrastructure and inequality- and changes to the legal system that were enacted as a result.

[ShantyBoat: A River Way of Life](#)

By Harlan Hubbard

The story of a leisurely journey down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. In the fall of 1944 the Hubbards built a houseboat, small but neatly accommodated to their needs, on the bank of the Ohio near Cincinnati, and in it after a pause of two years they set out to drift down the river. In their small craft they became one with the flow of the river and its changing weather.

Children

[All the Water in the World](#)

By George Ella Lyon

Local author alert! A beautiful lyrical account of the water cycle.

[The Lorax](#)

By Dr. Seuss

A classic Dr. Seuss tale of taking up for nature and fighting for justice.

Trout Are Made of Trees

By April Pulley Sayre

A fun children's book explaining an aquatic food web and the life cycle of trout.

Crawdad Creek

By Scott Russell Sanders

Two siblings explore their backyard stream in search of gold and discover the diversity of wildlife that call the creek home, including, as you might imagine, crawdads.

[Water Dance](#)

By Thomas Locker

A poetic tribute to the many forms water can take, from a gentle rain to a rushing river.

Did a Dinosaur Drink This Water?

By Robert E. Wells

Do you really know about the water cycle? Young readers will explore the many places water may have travelled before it made its way into your drinking glass.

[The Magic School Bus at the Waterworks](#)

By Joanna Cole

One of the original Magic School Bus adventures. This time crazy 'ol Ms. Frizzle takes her students on a wild and crazy exploration as a water droplet, moving through the water cycle.

[The Water Princess](#)

By Susan Verde

A young girl dreams of bringing water to her small African village. This book tells the story of young girls carrying drinking water for miles to supply their community, and how one dreams of the village having a water source of its own.

[Hey, Water!](#)

By Antoinette Portis

Inspire a young scientist with this beautifully illustrated exploration of the many forms water takes.

[Water is Water: A Book About the Water Cycle](#)

By Miranda Paul

A beautifully illustrated poetic children's book, following two siblings as they learn about the different phases of the water cycle and move through the seasons.

[Over and Under the Pond](#)

By Kate Messner

A book about a boy and his mother paddling a canoe over the "rich, inter-connected ecosystem of a mountain pond," as the sun sets and nighttime sets in.

[We are Water Protectors](#)

By Carole Lindstrom

A children's book inspired by Indigenous-led protest movements to protect water, this is a reminder that we all depend on water and a call to action to cherish and safeguard it.

[A Different Pond](#)

By Bao Phi

A story about a father telling his son stories about fishing in his homeland of Vietnam, as they fish in their new home of Minnesota.