



simplification. Archibald Egbert Binkle, nine years old, notices a noxious smell and tracks in to a brown, sludgy slime oozing from the town dump. He scoops up some of the horrible gunk, and forces it upon the attention of the Mayor and Councilors, but, in convincingly lifelike fashion, they insist, holding their noses, that "We cannot be disturbed." The problem can't wait. Inventive Archibald constructs a fierce-faced Crunch Machine, "Like a very fat elephant with ferocious teeth," and sets it to work eating up the garbage at the dump. No sooner is the dump cleaned up, however, than the garbage

problem, again in lifelike fashion, creeps back bag by bag.

It isn't a Crunch Machine, however clever, that will solve the problem. Cure of the garbage dilemma will require sorting, reusing, recycling and composting, and this will have to be done by people. Prodded by Archibald, the community as one, joyfully gets into the act, and all is well again. If only it were really that simple.

These three books, in their disparate ways, work with others like them toward the same necessary end: that of helping to change the ways in which all of us, and children in particular, look at and treat our irreplaceable big blue marble in space.

Joan McGrath is a *Library Consultant with the Toronto Board of Education.*

ANIMALS ON THE MOVE

Wolf Island. Celia Godkin. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989. Unpag., \$18.95 cloth. ISBN 0-88902-753-6; **The flying ark.** Carolyn Jackson. Illus. Graham Bardell. Oxford University Press, 1990. 32 pp., \$14.95 cloth. ISBN 0-19-54037-7.

Parents and teachers looking for a book to explain graphically but simply why people should be concerned about disturbing the balance of nature will find *Wolf Island*, written and illustrated by Celia Godkin, an excellent choice.

Basing her story on an actual happening in Northern Ontario, the author relates the ecological damage that occurs when a family of wolves, at the top of the food chain, deserts an island and moves across to the mainland. At first it appears the wolves' leaving ensures the safety and well-being of the deer, but as time passes and the story develops, it becomes clear that all the animals on the island are interdependent, and once the chief predator has gone, all other living things, including the plants, suffers. The island wolves fare no bet-

ter on the mainland because they have to compete for food with the wolves who belong there, and there is not enough to sustain them all. The balance is only restored when the wolves return to the island.

The book is beautifully illustrated with full-page coloured pictures. The text is short and descriptive and the reality of some animals devouring others is treated matter-of-factly as part of nature and not dramatized. Children aged eight and up will enjoy reading *Wolf Island* by themselves, but the book could be shared with a class or small group to generate valuable discussion about ecosystems.

While *Wolf Island* deals with animal life in the wild, *The flying ark* explains what happens when animals in captivity are transported by people from one place to another by air. Carolyn Jackson has researched the air travel arrangements for a wide variety of creatures ranging from bees to flamingoes and octopi to elephants. When we see these animals in zoos and pet stores, little thought is given to the question of how they were brought there. In an aircraft, each species is given individual care and treatment to protect and provide for its needs. The author describes the different kinds of containers used, what special foods the animals favour and how the animals are likely to behave when they are nervous or upset, all in a very amusing way. Included on each page of text are three or four interesting and often little-known facts about the animals: for example, male penguins hold the eggs on top of their feet to hatch them and gorillas dislike water, even to drink.

The flying ark is illustrated by Graham Bardell, whose brightly coloured, humorous and imaginative animals, suitably attired for their journeys, ideally complement the text.

The book will be enjoyed by children in junior grades particularly, but many intermediates will also find it very funny and informative.

Brenda Schmidt taught in England and South Africa before coming to Canada. For the past 14 years she has been a teacher-librarian in Markham, Ontario.

DANCING POPCORN AND TRICKY FLIES EXPLAINED

David Suzuki asks did you know... About light and sight? Laura Suzuki and Peter Cook. General Paperbacks, 1990. 64 pp., \$4.95 paper. ISBN 7736-7245-1; **Dr. Zed's sensational science activities.** Gordon Penrose. Illus. Tina Holdcroft. Greedy de Pencier, 1990. 48 pp., \$9.95 paper. ISBN 0-920775-53-5.

Dr. Zed has long been capitalizing on a zany, fun-filled approach to science, and his latest, *Dr. Zed's sensational science activities*, is no exception. Twenty-