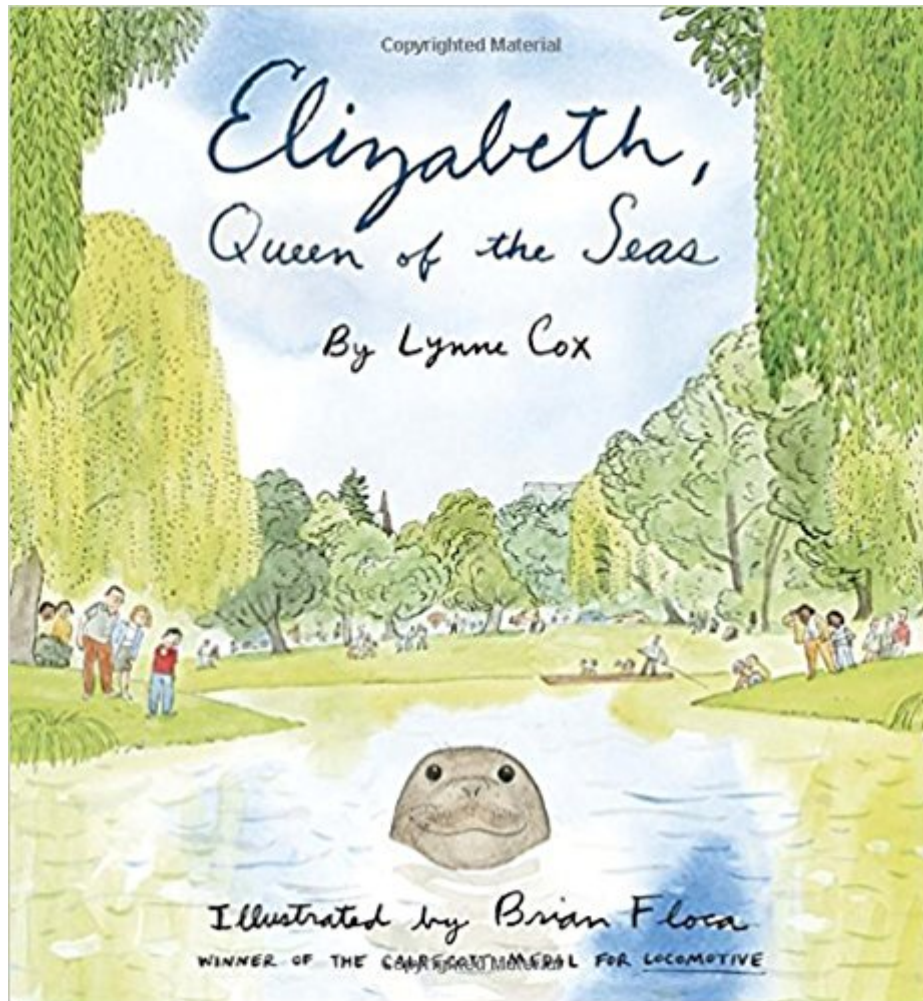




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Elizabeth, Queen Of The Seas



Synopsis

World-renowned swimmer and bestselling author Lynne Cox and Caldecott Medal-winning illustrator Brian Floca team up to bring us this inspiring story of an elephant seal who knew exactly where she belonged. Here is the incredible story of Elizabeth, a real-life elephant seal who made her home in the Avon River in the city of Christchurch, New Zealand. When Elizabeth decides to stretch out across a two-lane road, the citizens worry she might get hurt or cause traffic accidents, so a group of volunteers tows her out to sea. But Elizabeth swims all the way back to Christchurch. The volunteers catch her again and again—each time towing her farther, even hundreds of miles away—but, still, Elizabeth finds her way back home. Includes back matter with information about elephant seals.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD900L (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 26 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #118,394 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Australia & Oceania #155 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Mammals #169 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Zoology

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

K-Gr 3—Cox opens this fact-based story on just the right note: "There was once a lovely elephant seal who lived in the city." A boy named Michael is fascinated with the marine mammal that chooses to live by or swim in the tranquil Avon River that passes by Christchurch's botanical garden. When the seal, named after the Queen of England, narrowly avoids death after relaxing on a warm city street, residents volunteer to move her to an elephant seal colony. After she makes her

way back, they try two additional times to relocate her. Finally, knowing that city dwellers were secretly happy to see Elizabeth return to Christchurch, the city erects a "Slow. Elephant Seal Crossing" sign near her favorite sleeping place. The author generally avoids anthropomorphizing Elizabeth's motivation for continuing to return to the city by suggesting a few possibilities for readers to consider. Some basic facts about these huge marine mammals are woven into the highly approachable narrative, and a few paragraphs at the conclusion further explore more about their habits. A black-and-white photo of the famous seal sleeping on the pavement closes the book and reinforces its factual nature. Floca's gentle pen-and-ink and watercolor paintings perfectly capture Elizabeth's watery world. Double-page spreads nicely complement pages that feature smaller vignettes echoing the seal's rounded body. Especially effective is a page where Michael, who after nearly three months without his friend, wishes on the stars reflected in the river's water; the page turn reveals the seal's head poking through radiating rings of water while the boy shouts, "Welcome home, Elizabeth!" Children are likely to request multiple readings of this compelling told and lovingly illustrated true story.

— Ellen Fader, formerly at Multnomah County Library, Portland, OR

Starred Review Floca, fresh from his Caldecott-winning *Locomotive* (2013), lends delicate sun-washed watercolors to this charming story of an unusual elephant seal. Cox, a long-distance swimmer best known for *Grayson* (2006), a nonfiction adult book about a whale, uses a light hand and a sweet, wondrous, yet unsentimental touch to relate how Elizabeth, fondly named by the townsfolk of Christchurch, New Zealand, prefers to reside in a warm river rather than the ocean. But when Elizabeth begins to sun herself on a busy asphalt road, she is deemed a potential danger and taken out to live with her brethren at sea. Miraculously, Elizabeth manages to return to her preferred home in the shallow Avon not once but three times, even though each time she is transported further and further afield. Cox anchors the story by imagining a small boy, Michael, enjoying Elizabeth and always waiting for her reappearance. Based on a true story—there is a photo of the real Elizabeth in the illuminating afterword—this is a superior addition to shelves of titles featuring wild animals. Floca manages to convey Elizabeth's appeal by focusing on the way her expressive face plays off her tremendous bulk. Her content, happy smiles as she floats in a bucolic world of hazy riverbanks and blue skies will appeal to animal lovers of every age.

Preschool-Grade 3. --Karen Cruze

Lynne Cox, the world-renown record-breaking long distance swimmer and New York Times bestselling author, has combined forces with Brian Floca, the Caldicott Award-winning illustrator to

create a delightful and must-see book which tells the story of a beguiling elephant seal, Elizabeth, who prefers to live amongst the people of Christchurch, New Zealand, playing in the beautiful Avon River, which winds its way through the pretty little town, and lazily sunning herself on the riverbank and, sometimes, on the nice warm pavement in the middle of the streets, than to be out in the chilly ocean waters where most elephant seals tend to reside. The townspeople love Elizabeth, but when she comes close to being injured by cars in the street, they decided that for her and their own safety, she should be towed out to sea where she belongs. However, Elizabeth is a very determined elephant seal. She knows where her true home is, as does Michael, the wise little boy who dearly loves Elizabeth and keeps a lookout for her return. Each time she returns, the townspeople tow Elizabeth farther out to sea, but when she finally makes her way home, through the cold darkness of the night waters, and strong currents which would have deterred most, travelling for miles and miles on end, not letting anything get in her way of her goal to be where she belongs, the people of Christchurch heartily and lovingly welcome her back. This is a beautifully illustrated book - light and brightly lit with watercolor illustrations, illuminating Elizabeth's wonderful contented smile. She knows where she belongs. Elizabeth, Queen of the Seas is based on a true story told to Lynne Cox many years ago during a visit to Christchurch, and her book includes a photo of the REAL Elizabeth, along with some fascinating educational material about elephant seals. This is a keeper, to be read to your children and to be passed on down through the generations.

This is a really sweet story, written by a super author. Very cute illustrations. I got this for my granddaughter and she loved it! :-)

A beautiful story of a mammal clearly knowing where she belongs, showing her determination to stay there. I'm glad too, that the people of Christchurch, love, or loved her and found a way to accommodate her when they saw how determined she was to stay at Christchurch.

A good book but initially did not hold the interest of my 4 yr old granddaughter who was just starting pre-K and excited about that. Her 8 yr old sister looked at it and read it longer. But...I thought it was a good story, a real story, and had good pictures and will be talking it up and reading it when I visit. Pictures are like "watercolors" though, and I have noticed that simpler drawings and more vibrant colors are sometimes more attractive to little people.

As an early childhood teacher and one who dabbled in writing process with the children it is so well

written with example given and some repetition to be a bit predictable and very factual in such a pleasure way for any reader Will recommend and come and see her is she is still alive when I visit in2016

LOVE THIS BOOK!!!!

Lovely artwork and a true story make this a wonderful true story for children. It reminds me of the story of Hershel the sea lion in the Ballard Locks in Washington State.

love this book

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