



Spider Boy

By Ralph Fletcher

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Humorous story about a boy's adjustment to new surroundings and kids in a new school. Packed with fascinating facts about spiders, the story is told through journal entries and scenes of events. Contains a spider bibliography.

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Spider Boy By Ralph Fletcher Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-7. Bobby loves spiders and keeps a journal in which he records interesting facts about them, as well as some personal reflections. He is worried about his pet tarantula because she hasn't eaten since the family moved from Illinois to New Paltz, NY. The boy doesn't have much of an appetite himself. He doesn't fit in with the rest of the seventh graders at his new school. A group of his classmates call him "Spider Boy" and make his life difficult. The use of spiders in Bobby's journal and in the plot is a unique unifying theme of this novel. However, the character development is less successful. It takes awhile for readers to care about Bobby. The supporting characters are stereotypes (bully, understanding teacher, confident older sister). The story moves slowly and is limited in intensity until a final crisis. The resolution is predictable but upbeat. Bobby finds a niche for his unique interests, new friends with whom to play football, and even a little romance. Adele Greenlee, Bethel College, St. Paul, MN
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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5-8. Bobby Ballenger, a walking encyclopedia on spider lore, is quickly dubbed the "Spider Boy from Illinois" by his new seventh-grade classmates. With his watch and his heart still set on Midwest time, Bobby struggles with homesickness and finding his place in New Paltz, New York. Fletcher portrays the new-kid-on-the-block syndrome honestly by making Bobby a sympathetic but not perfect character who starts out spinning spider tales and ends up accepting his new life. Along the way, Bobby believably faces down the taunts, cheating, and cruelty of the class bully and finds his own sense of worth. Packed with juicy tidbits guaranteed to make arachnophobics squirm, this appealing story will be an easy sell to middle-school readers. *Candace Smith*

From Kirkus Reviews

In a story every bit as engaging as Fletcher's *Fig Pudding* (1995), and less of an emotional rollercoaster to boot, a seventh-grade arachnophile and his beloved tarantula take some time adjusting to a family move. Between missing his old home and worrying about Thelma (the spider), who has stopped eating, Bobby feels suspended, unable to accept the change in his life long enough to unpack. His parents give him plenty of room and support, plus a huge, ferocious king baboon spider he dubs "Monk" as an early birthday present. Not until two new friends take him firmly in hand, and a bully's harassment escalates into spidercide, does Bobby snap out of it. So does Thelma, who molts and once again takes to pouncing on hapless crickets. Capable of telling wild but utterly convincing tall tales about his family at school, courageous enough to make handsome apologies later (and to face his nemesis without fear), Bobby is a beguiling character who fills his notebook with fascinating spider facts (a bibliography is appended) and trenchant observations: "The female [black widow] allows the male to mate with her. And to show her appreciation she kills him. Eats him. . . . It's lucky human girls aren't this dangerous. Or who knows--maybe they are." Creating and guiding a winning cast with a light, sure hand, Fletcher puts a fine, fresh spin on a familiar premise. (Fiction. 10-13) -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marjorie Ingram:

What do you regarding book? It is not important along with you? Or just adding material when you require something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your free time? Or are you busy particular person? If you don't have spare time to accomplish others business, it is make one feel bored faster. And you have extra time? What did you do? Every individual has many questions above. They have to answer that question because just their can do that. It said that about book. Book is familiar in each person. Yes, it is correct. Because start from on kindergarten until university need this particular Spider Boy to read.

Belia Gillespie:

Nowadays reading books be than want or need but also become a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. Advantages you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The knowledge you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want attract knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want experience happy read one along with theme for entertaining like comic or novel. The actual Spider Boy is kind of publication which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

James Turco:

Do you really one of the book lovers? If yes, do you ever feeling doubt if you are in the book store? Make an effort to pick one book that you find out the inside because don't judge book by its handle may doesn't work here is difficult job because you are frightened that the inside maybe not as fantastic as in the outside appearance likes. Maybe you answer can be Spider Boy why because the excellent cover that make you consider in regards to the content will not disappoint an individual. The inside or content is usually fantastic as the outside or maybe cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly direct you to pick up this book.

Jamie Norman:

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