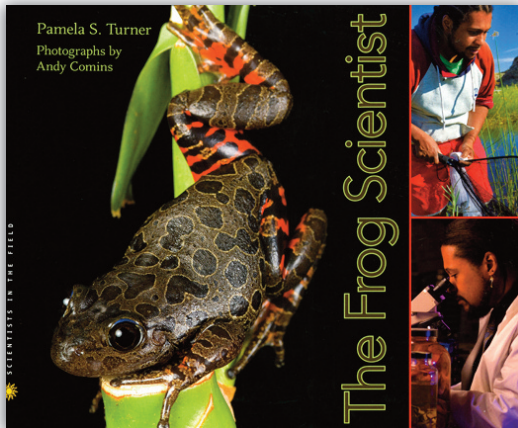


# SB&F

## BOOK | CLUB | GUIDE



### ***The Frog Scientist*** **Pamela S. Turner** **(Houghton Mifflin, 2009 )**

#### **What's it about?**

*The Frog Scientist* chronicles some of the fieldwork and experimentation done by Dr. Tyrone Hayes, all part of his persisting research into the damaging effects of pesticides on frogs and their habitat. Important points from his life are outlined, such as his entry into the professional scientific community as hundreds of frog species mysteriously

began to disappear in 1989. After exhausting possible culprits such as habitat loss or fragmentation, a lethal fungus was identified as the most likely cause for the event. Doctors like Tyrone have taken it upon themselves to search for possible solutions to the problem through their research and fieldwork. In particular, this book emphasizes his research on the pesticide atrazine and its negative effects on amphibious life. Through rigorous experimentation he draws ever closer to unraveling the mysteries of how the chemical affects frogs, and looks towards future solutions to the problem.

#### **Who is this book for?**

The book is directed at a younger audience, and may be particularly well-suited for middle-schoolers. However, it has much to offer as an introduction to conservation science. It is maturely-written and demands an involving level of comprehension on the part of the reader.

#### **Who wrote it?**

Pamela Turner rekindled her passion for writing after working in international health and as a health policy researcher, and has since earned such signs of prestige as The Golden Kite Award, the Flora Steiglitz Straus Nonfiction Award, as well as the AAAS/Subaru's *SB&F* Prize for Excellence in Science Books. She has lived in Kenya, the Philippines, and Japan throughout her lifetime. For more information, see: <http://www.pamelasturner.com/bio.htm>

#### **Why should we read it?**

This book is ideal for those less acquainted with conservational science, as it introduces them to many of the everyday problems and theories that are part and parcel of the science. *The Frog Scientist* adequately illustrates important scientific concepts such as the danger posed by invasive species, the importance of studying the effects of everyday chemicals' effect on the environment, and even explains the scientific process and how it is vital to experimentation. In addition to this, it provides us with a context for the impact we can have upon the world and wildlife around us.



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### What can we talk about?

What would you say is a major implication of the research Dr. Tyrone Hayes does in this book?

How did Dr. Hayes' early experiences influence his choice in professional research?

Would you have found his results more/less compelling if he had conducted his experiment with more species of frog?

Why do you think it's important to conduct this kind of research, when considering the devastating toll the deadly fungus has taken on the global frog population? Which problem do you think poses a greater threat?

Do you think enough emphasis was placed on the danger of invasive species such as the bullfrog?

### What are some other books like this I might like?

*Whale Scientists: Solving the Mystery of Whales Strandings* by Fran Hodgkins. Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

*Mysterious Universe: Supernovae, Dark Energy, and Black Holes* by Ellen Jackson. Houghton Mifflin, 2008.

*Extreme Scientists: Exploring Nature's Mysteries from Perilous Places* by Donna M. Jackson. Houghton Mifflin, 2009.

*Science Warriors: The Battle Against Invasive Species* by Sneed B. Collard III. Houghton Mifflin, 2008.

### Where can I find out more?

Site on the topic, maintained by Dr. Tyrone Hayes: <http://www.atrazinelovers.com/>

Information on atrazine, provided by Syngenta: <http://www.atrazine.com/AtraMain.aspx>

News article on the research of Dr. Tyrone Hayes:  
<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/03/100301151927.htm>