



# Media Information

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## SUBARU OF AMERICA AND AAAS ANNOUNCE WINNERS OF 2024 PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE BOOKS

Camden, N.J. and Washington, D.C., Feb 14, 2024 - [Subaru of America, Inc.](#), and the [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#), the world's largest general scientific society and publisher of the Science family of journals, today announced the 2024 winners of the [AAAS/Subaru Prize for Excellence in Science Books](#). The awards, which for nearly 20 years have recognized exceptional books about science that engage readers of all ages, this year honor books on subjects ranging from the noises of nature to the scale of the solar system.

The prize-winning books for 2024 are:

- *Whale Fall: Exploring an Ocean-floor Ecosystem* by Melissa Stewart and illustrated by Rob Dunlavey.
- *The Planets Are Very, Very, Very Far Away: A Journey Through the Amazing Scale of the Solar System* by Mike Vago.
- *Human Body Learning Lab: Take an Inside Tour of How Your Anatomy Works* by Dr. Betty Choi.
- *The Sounds of Life: How Digital Technology Is Bringing Us Closer to the Worlds of Animals and Plants* by Karen Bakker.

Since 2005, Subaru of America and AAAS have partnered to encourage the writing and publishing of high-quality science books for young audiences – and to boost their interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and inspire the next generation of scientists.

“AAAS believes that, through good science books, this generation, and the next, will have a better understanding and appreciation of science,” said Sarah Ingraffea, the AAAS/Subaru Book Prize Award manager at AAAS.

Awards are given in four categories: Children's Science Picture Book, Middle Grades Science Book, Hands-on Science Book and Young Adult Science Book. [Judging panels](#) composed of librarians, educators, scientists, and literacy experts evaluate each submission according to detailed criteria tailored to each category that include age-appropriateness, scientific accuracy, and the examination of scientific concepts without perpetuating stereotypes or misconceptions.

This year, the judges received a record number of submissions. With today's announcement, the AAAS/Subaru Prize for Excellence in Science Books has now honored 76 books and more than 100 authors and illustrators.

The author of each winning book and the illustrator of the children's book will receive a \$1,500 prize and a commemorative plaque.

"Together with AAAS, we have the opportunity to spark a child's imagination related to science, technology, engineering and math," said Jeff Walters, President and Chief Operating Officer, Subaru of America, Inc. "This year's prize-winning books can help inspire a lifelong love of curiosity, learning, and innovation."

Learn more about the 2024 award-winning books, writers and illustrator:

#### **Children's Science Picture Book**

[\*Whale Fall: Exploring an Ocean-floor Ecosystem\*](#), by Melissa Stewart. Illustrated by Rob Dunlavey. Random House Studio, 2023.

*Whale Fall: Exploring an Ocean-floor Ecosystem* captures the end of a whale's life, during which they silently sink to the ocean floor and become a food source for the dwellers of the deep sea, from sharks to microbes, for many decades to come.

Melissa Stewart has written more than 200 science books for children, including the Sibert Medal Honoree *Summertime Sleepers: Animals that Estivate*, illustrated by Sarah S. Brannen. She holds a degree in biology from Union College in Schenectady, NY, and a master's degree in science journalism from New York University. While gathering research for her books, she's explored tropical rain forests in Costa Rica, gone on safari in East Africa, and swum with sea lions in the Galapagos Islands.

Rob Dunlavey is a fine artist and children's book illustrator. His recent titles include *Whale Fall* by Melissa Stewart, *In the Woods* by David Elliott, and *Owl Sees Owl* by Laura Godwin. A native of the tall-grass prairie and oak savannas of suburban Chicago, Dunlavey studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, Southern Illinois University, and Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. Rob is married and has two daughters and two cats—but no whales.

#### **Middle Grades Science Book**

[\*The Planets Are Very, Very, Very Far Away: A Journey Through the Amazing Scale of the Solar System\*](#), by Mike Vago. The Experiment, 2022.

In its pages that open out not once but twice, *The Planets Are Very, Very, Very Far Away* dismantles the myth of nine planets orbiting the sun in tidy concentric circle and shows the true scale and vastness of our solar system.

Mike Vago is the creator of the bestselling *The Miniature Book of Miniature Golf*, *The Pocket Book of Pocket Billiards*, and the interactive board books *Train and Rocket*. He's a graphic designer and a regular contributor to The A.V. Club. He tells people he lives in New York, but he actually lives in New Jersey.

#### **Hands-on Science Book**

[\*Human Body Learning Lab: Take an Inside Tour of How Your Anatomy Works\*](#), by Dr. Betty Choi. Storey Publishing, 2022.

Aimed at kids age 8 and up, *Human Body Learning Lab* details each major body system and leads readers through hands-on activities that range from making a moving model of the eyes to creating a working model of the urinary system.

Dr. Betty Choi is a pediatrician, medical writer, and former homeschooling parent. From her roots at Boston Children's Hospital to over a decade of work in education, she is passionate about making learning memorable and meaningful.

Her debut book, *Human Body Learning Lab*, teaches kids about their amazing bodies through fun, hands-on activities. The accompanying website, [HumanBodyLearning.com](http://HumanBodyLearning.com), offers more resources for curious kids, parents, and teachers.

### **Young Adult Science Book**

[\*The Sounds of Life: How Digital Technology Is Bringing Us Closer to the Worlds of Animals and Plants\*](#), by Karen Bakker. Princeton University Press, 2022.

*The Sounds of Life* explores not just the many sounds created by plants and animals but how groundbreaking technology and traditional knowledge has deepened humanity's understanding of those sounds – and affirmed our connection with nature.

Karen Bakker was a scholar at the University of British Columbia and entrepreneur who worked at the crossroads of technology and ecology. The author of seven books and more than 100 scholarly articles, Bakker also led The Smart Earth Project, which explores the impacts of digital technologies on environmental sustainability. In a tremendous loss to the many communities of learning she inhabited and impacted, Bakker passed away in August 2023, before this latest recognition for *The Sounds of Life*.

### **About Subaru of America, Inc.**

[Subaru of America, Inc.](#) (SOA) is an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of [Subaru Corporation](#) of Japan. Headquartered at a zero-landfill office in Camden, N.J., the company markets and distributes Subaru vehicles, parts, and accessories through a network of more than 630 retailers across the United States. All Subaru products are manufactured in zero-landfill plants and [Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc.](#) is the only U.S. automobile manufacturing plant to be designated a backyard wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. SOA is guided by the [Subaru Love Promise](#), which is the company's vision to show love and respect to everyone, and to support its communities and customers nationwide. Over the past 20 years, SOA and the SOA Foundation have donated more than \$300 million to causes the Subaru family cares about, and its employees have logged nearly 88,000 volunteer hours. As a company, Subaru believes it is important to do its part in making a positive impact in the world because it is the right thing to do. For additional information visit [media.subaru.com](http://media.subaru.com). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), and [YouTube](#).

### **About American Association for the Advancement of Science**

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is the world's largest general scientific society and publisher of the journal *Science*, as well as *Science Translational Medicine*; *Science Signaling*; a digital, open-access journal, *Science Advances*; *Science Immunology*; and *Science Robotics*. AAAS was founded in 1848 and includes more than 250 affiliated societies and academies of science, serving 10 million individuals. The nonprofit AAAS is open to all and fulfills its mission to "advance science and serve society" through initiatives in science policy, international programs, science education, public engagement, and more. For additional information about AAAS, visit [www.aaas.org](http://www.aaas.org).