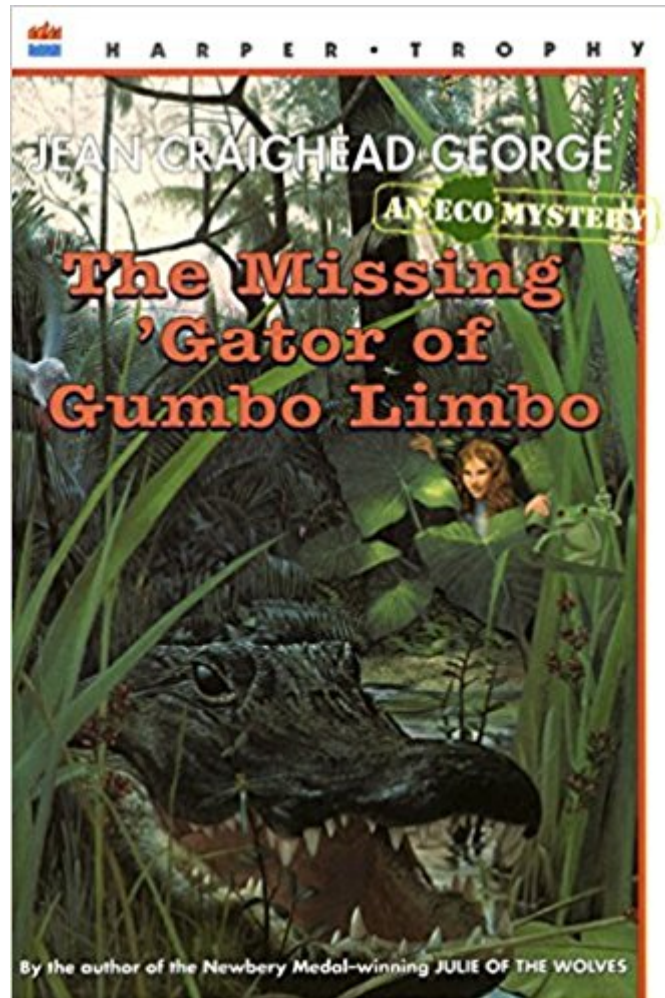




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# The Missing 'Gator Of Gumbo Limbo



## Synopsis

An exciting ecological mystery for tweens featuring a missing 'gator in the Florida Everglades, by Jean Craighead George, the beloved Newbery Medal-winning author of *Julie of the Wolves* and *My Side of the Mountain*. Liza Poole lives with her mother in one of the last balanced ecosystems in North America, the Gumbo Limbo Hammock, deep within the lush kingdom of the Florida Everglades. Some may think it strange to live outdoors, but Liza feels lucky to live in her small yellow tent amid tropical birds and exotic plants. And at the center of this natural paradise lies Dajun, the majestic alligator who protects Gumbo Limbo's environment. Then, one day, a state official arrives with frightening orders. Dajun is scaring people nearby— he must be killed! Liza takes action to save the invaluable 'gator, but suddenly, he is nowhere to be found. Now she must find Dajun before it's too late, and her search will lead her into the heart of an exciting eco mystery.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 740L (What's this?)

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; Reprint edition (June 21, 2000)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.3 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 33 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #27,831 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Alligators & Crocodiles](#) #17 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Homelessness & Poverty](#) #25 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Reptiles & Amphibians](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5-7-- The brilliant beginning of this novel will put readers in eager anticipation. In a secluded part of the Florida Everglades live a homeless, abused mother who has escaped her husband's violence; her daughter, Liza; and a 12-foot alligator. A few other down-on-their-luck individuals also share this lovely, undisturbed ecological habitat--until the big, harmless gator named Dajun begins

giving shivers to new condominium dwellers nearby. Thus, a government agent is sent to dispatch Dajun pronto; Liza and her wooded band hope to find him first to provide a hidden sanctuary. In the end, new beginnings emerge for all. Despite the knockout first chapters, the book's pace slows a bit in the middle. The find-the-alligator premise provides no actual sightings or near-misses until the end. The quiet clues that Liza uses to locate Dajun, however, will win over nature-loving readers as well as those whose fascination with the animal world is just beginning. As in *Who Really Killed Cock Robin?* (HarperCollins, 1991), George brings great authenticity and knowledge to her mystery settings. Although the story is not as strong as in *The Talking Earth* (HarperCollins, 1983), many readers will want to enter this Everglades adventure. --Amy Nunley, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, OH Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The naturalist-novelist returns to the genre she invented in *Who Really Killed Cock Robin?* (1971) with a mystery incorporating a wealth of details about a threatened Florida habitat. Here, Liza K. and her mom--escaping abusive dad--live in a tent on an island-like hammock (a raised area with a unique habitat) in the Everglades. Nearby are other homeless, including "James James," Vietnam vet and expert naturalist, as well as an oversized alligator, Dajun, endangered by a Pest Control official who's out to shoot him. Though nearby condos spew pollutants, Dajun's natural behavior keeps his pool clean. Aware of the hunter, Dajun hides; Liza K. and friends try to find him to lure him to safety. The natural history steals the show here, as George intended. Liza K.'s expertise on the functions of almost every bush, bird, and bug stretch credulity; still, a kid who is both gifted and dedicated can learn a lot, and she has a fine resource in James James. Few readers will absorb even a fraction of the information here, but the sense of an overall pattern is conveyed with enthusiasm, and they'll catch enough to understand how Liza K. finally figures out where Dajun is. The happy ending all around is pretty unrealistic (the hammock becomes a nature preserve, the vet its curator; the indigent are kindly taken care of; and Mom gets a better job), but it does make for an entertaining finish. George is a fine writer; and though the message is heavy-handed, it's one about which many young people are deeply concerned. (Fiction. 8-12) -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ty!

My 8 year old son enjoyed reading this while vacationing down in the area. We were able to see many of the things mentioned in the book.

Great book. Shipping took too long

Yet another great example of this author's feel for ecology and making the learning of it fun for young people! Love it!

Very well written informative book. I would recommend it to all those interested.

Good story. Planned for use with Middle School students.

Fantastic read for fourth grade students in science!

My son is reading "The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo" at school. I like to read what he reads in case he needs help understanding any part of the story. I also like to ask him questions. By reading the book, I can do both. The book arrived quickly so I didn't miss any time. Thanks.

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