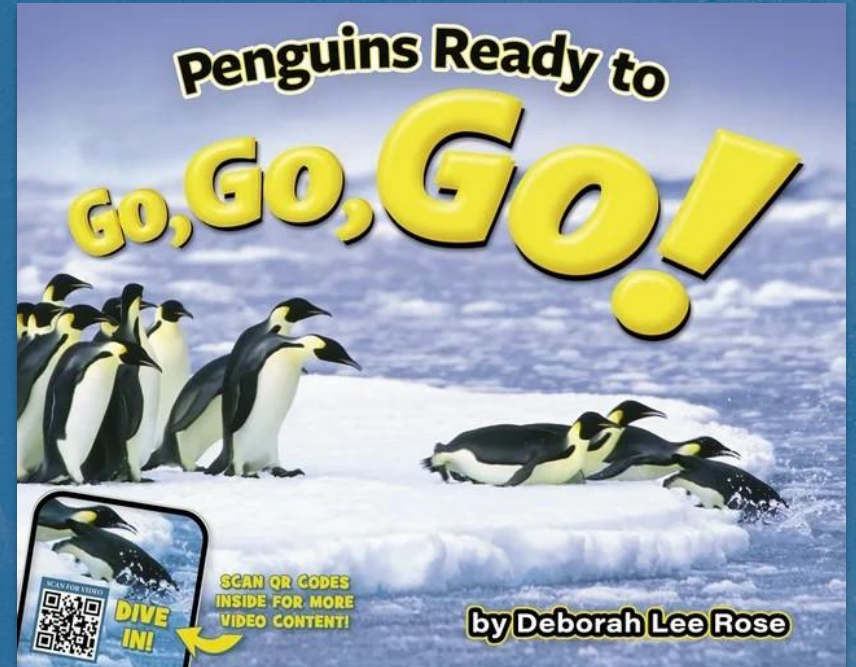


Q & A with Deborah Lee Rose,  
author of  
*Penguins Ready to  
Go, Go, Go!*



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Special thanks to Paul Ponganis, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, and Stephanie Jenouvrier, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, for their photos shown here, being published for the first time in a children's book, by Persnickety Press/WunderMill Books.





## What gave you the idea to write **PENGUINS READY TO GO, GO, GO!?**



Sometimes my initial book idea is completely different than the book I end up writing! Each idea evolves as I dive into the topic, whether it's Emperor penguins in Antarctica for this book, or astronauts on the International Space Station for **ASTRONAUTS ZOOM!** For me, the excitement of an idea and the discovery of things I never knew before, through my research, are part of the wonder of writing books. I want to share that wonder with children around the world, so it can inspire their own reading and writing.

The idea that sparked **PENGUINS READY TO GO, GO, GO!** literally came out of the blue, when a katydid landed on my car windshield as I was driving.

The sight of a “hitchhiking” insect got me thinking about animals that find help to move from here to there, then wondering about animals that don't move much at all.

I had thought that Emperor penguins fit into the “don't move much” group and just waddled a lot. But as I learned about their amazing ways of moving—on the Antarctic sea ice and in the polar ocean—I decided to create a whole book about these birds in motion in their frozen world.



## Why do you use so many strong verbs and sound words in the book?



Strong and vivid verbs like “waddle” and “skedaddle” convey a feeling of action. That’s the real sense of these birds I’m trying to capture in PENGUINS READY TO GO, GO, GO! and kids (and I) love fun sound words, especially when a book is being read aloud. By using onomatopoeia like “whoosh” and “plop,” I can bring Emperor penguins’ **highly** energetic movement to life in my words as well as through the photos.



Paul Ponganis, Scripps Institution of Oceanography,  
University of California, San Diego





## Did you take the penguin photos in the book?



Many of the photos in PENGUINS READY TO GO, GO GO! are being published for the very first time in a children's book. The spectacular photos, and videos linked to QR codes in the book, were taken by scientists and explorers who travelled thousands of miles to Antarctica. They study and photograph Emperor penguins closeup in the only place on Earth where the birds make their colonies and raise their chicks in the wild.

Wearing very special equipment, some of these brave humans even dive into the polar ocean beneath the sea ice, with the penguins. Little is known yet about these swimming birds' underwater secrets of survival, though they hunt for all their food in the water and spend long months at sea.



Kevin Schafer, Earth Justice, USFWS



Photo by Stephanie Jenouvrier, (c) Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution



**What surprised you most to learn while you were writing the book?**



Emperor penguins are full of surprises! What amazed me most was learning that they use teamwork in their huge huddles. Emperors don't just squeeze together to keep warm, especially during the worst blizzards, but keep shuffling step by step through their huddle so all the penguins get a turn in the warm middle. There the temperature can be as warm as a human body!





## Why do people love Emperor penguins so much?



Emperor penguins are so waddly, and their chicks are so fluffy. But there are even more reasons for people all over the world to love them. Emperor penguins are devoted parents, protecting their eggs and chicks even through the Antarctic winter.

Parents march for hundreds of miles to the ocean and back, hunting for food and returning to the colony to feed their young. After penguin parents have been away for a long time, they can still find their own chick among all the other birds—by recognizing its voice.



Paul Ponganis, Scripps Institution of Oceanography,  
University of California, San Diego





## Why are Emperor penguins a threatened species?



As young readers (and adults) will discover in PENGUINS READY TO GO, GO, GO!, Emperor penguins are extraordinarily adapted to life in Antarctica's freezing temperatures, intense weather, and extremely cold ocean water. But climate change is speeding up melting of the Antarctic sea ice, where these largest of all penguins spend most of their life cycle and raise their chicks. Too little sea ice means colonies don't have enough space.

And young chicks can end up in the ocean too soon, before their feathers grow in enough to protect them.

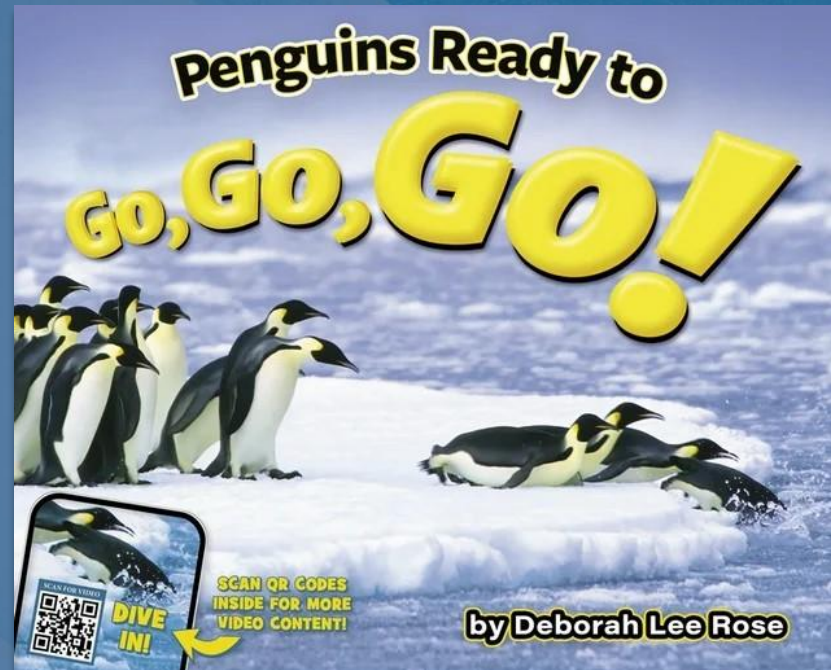
A major cause of climate change is the burning of fossil fuels for purposes like heating homes, fueling cars, and manufacturing. The book includes a special spread about how people can help protect and conserve these much-loved birds and their whole polar ecosystem.



Paul Ponganis, Scripps Institution of Oceanography,  
University of California, San Diego



# Thank you!



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Deborah Lee Rose ([www.deborahleerose.com](http://www.deborahleerose.com)) has written 19 books, and won 5 national STEM children's book awards from both reading and science organizations. Her book *ASTRONAUTS ZOOM!* (<https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/book/astronauts-zoom-astronaut-alphabet>) rocketed to the International Space Station with an astronaut crew on Read Across America Day, and was read aloud in space by astronaut Koichi Wakata for a Story Time From Space video. A graduate of Cornell University, she has coauthored two other nonfiction books about once threatened and endangered birds, *BEAUTY AND THE BEAK* (bald eagles) and *SWOOP AND SOAR* (ospreys).