



Nim's Island

By Wendy Orr

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A girl. An iguana. An island. And e-mail. Meet Nim—a modern-day Robinson Crusoe! She can chop down bananas with a machete, climb tall palm trees, and start a fire with a piece of glass. So she's not afraid when her scientist dad sails off to study plankton for three days, leaving her alone on their island. Besides, it's not as if no one's looking after her—she's got a sea lion to mother her and an iguana for comic relief. She also has an interesting new e-mail pal. But when her father's cell-phone calls stop coming and disaster seems near, Nim has to be stronger and braver than she's ever been before.

And she'll need all her friends to help her.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Nim's Island By Wendy Orr Bibliography

- Rank: #25004 in Books
- Brand: Turtleback
- Published on: 2008-02-12
- Released on: 2008-02-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.62" h x .31" w x 5.13" l, .21 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 128 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Orr (*Peeling the Onion*) blithely throws credibility to the wind and inventively tweaks coincidence to create a fantasy tale as welcome as a breath of fresh tropical air. Ever since her mother died when Nim was a baby, the girl and Jack, her scientist father, have lived on a remote island. When Jack sails off on a three-day trip to collect plankton, Nim stays behind with her three best friends: a sea lion, a marine iguana and a green sea turtle. But a storm disables Jack's boat, and Nim remains alone for a full two weeks, in contact with her father only through notes delivered by a frigate bird. As the author describes the girl's daily routine of foraging for food, doing chores and playing with her pals, she neatly slips into her narrative slivers of information about the tropical habitat (e.g., Chica the sea turtle returns each year to lay her eggs on Nim's island, where Chica was hatched). A story within a story emerges as Nim strikes up an e-mail correspondence with an author who begins writing an adventure novel set on an island that looks exactly like Nim's. With ample doses of suspense and comedy, and a pleasingly sappy happily-ever-after ending, the tale portrays the improbable so cleverly that readers will want to believe everything about the likable Nim and her idyllic isle. Pen-and-ink drawings that resemble Quentin Blake's bring these enchanting characters and setting to life. Ages 9-12. (Mar.)

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From School Library Journal

Gr 2-5-Nim lives on the most beautiful island in the world (its location is a closely guarded secret) with a marine iguana, a sea lion, and her scientist dad, Jack. When he goes off to explore the world of plankton, the child occupies herself with typical Swiss Family Robinson-like chores and keeping her dad's batteries charged so she can check his e-mail on the laptop computer. When his boat becomes disabled, Nim's link to humanity becomes Alex Rover, the author of the novel she's reading, who has e-mailed Jack with some scientific questions. They correspond frequently, Nim giving Alex advice on building a raft out of coconuts, and Alex uncannily picturing spots on the island in her current book. A violent storm and volcanic eruption toward the end result in Nim saving the day, and the three characters set up life together on their paradise. And all of this occurs amid a clever plan to divert evil tourists from ever finding the island. If readers can suspend belief long enough to accept this plot, they will have a great time with this modern survival/adventure story. Children will love this unshakable, strong female character and the zany things that happen to her. They'll also enjoy the way adults seem to bungle everything. There are plenty of sketches to add visuals to this wild tale, which never loses its momentum. Teachers can springboard many geographic or scientific studies off this novel as they read it aloud, but kids can just enjoy the fun.-Debbie Whitbeck, West Ottawa Public Schools, Holland, MI

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 3-6. Nim and her father are stranded on a deserted tropical island, and she couldn't imagine a more perfect life. The two rough it in high-tech style. Their home is a wooden hut, their "family" includes a marine iguana and a protective female sea lion, and their meals consist of fish, fruit, and garden veggies, but they communicate with the world, when they want to, via a solar-panel-powered laptop and a cellular phone. Nim finds herself in crisis when she loses contact with her father's boat, a storm strikes, a volcano erupts, and tourists threaten her island paradise, and she turns to a new e-mail correspondent--a homebody author of

adventure novels-- for advice. Kerry Millard's small pen-and-ink illustrations extend the book's lively humor, action, and fantasy. Suggest this to youngsters seeking a solid, adventurous page-turner and to teachers looking for a fun upper-elementary read-aloud. *Catherine Andronik*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Pamela Brock:

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Theo Garcia:

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