

Come Along on 'Mato's Journey' and Watch a Bird Take Flight

written by Dave Bowles; illustrated by Elizabeth Lester; on sale February 2, 2023

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES, February 1, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Belle Isle Books](#) of Richmond, Virginia, is pleased to announce the upcoming release of a new children's book, 'Mato's Journey', written by Dave Bowles and illustrated by Elizabeth Lester.

Have you ever wished you were somewhere, or someone, else? Mato has. Ever since he hatched in a nest in a holly tree in the backyard of a suburb teeming with wildlife, he's envied the flashy feathers and feeding habits of the other birds around him. He even wants to migrate south like the cedar waxwings, to the Faraway Place where food is plentiful and it's warm all year round.

But Mato is a mockingbird, and as the bullying blue jay constantly reminds him, mockingbirds don't have flashy feathers. They don't eat nectar, and they don't fly south. Mato's parents love and encourage him, teaching him their special songs and showing him mockingbirds have their own special niche. But when it's time for Mato to set out on his own, he'll have to learn for himself how to navigate a world that proves bigger than he ever imagined. As Mato takes off on a journey to live his dreams, he'll have to stand up for himself and others, appreciate his own talents, and find his place in the world—even if it turns out that place isn't so far away after all.

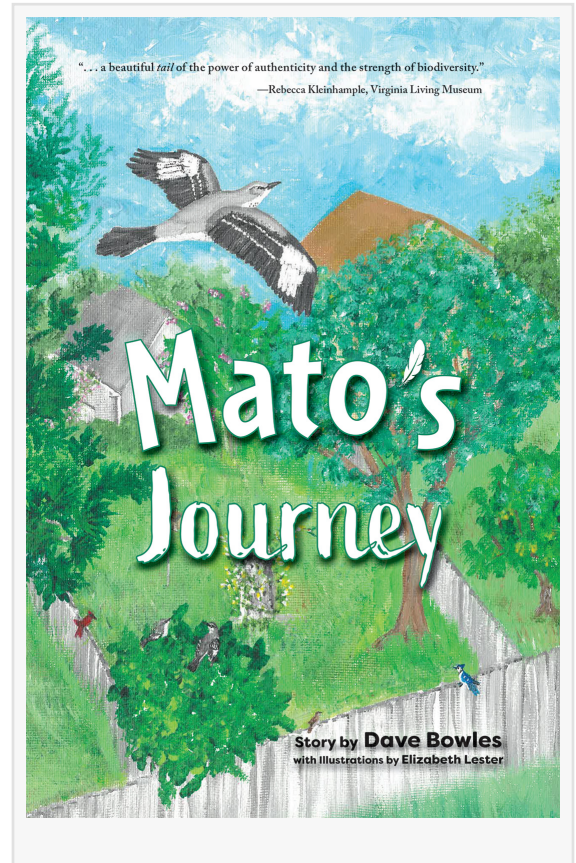
“

... a beautiful 'tail' of the power of authenticity and the strength of biodiversity.”

*Rebecca Kleinhample,
executive director, Virginia
Living Museum*

Inspiring young birdwatchers with its bright, playful illustrations of the many lively backyard birds of the Mid-Atlantic, 'Mato's Journey' is scheduled for release on

February 2, 2023.



'Mato knows he's supposed to be proud of being a mockingbird, but the loud, flashy blue jay and the other backyard birds taunt him for his dull gray feathers and his dreams of

adventure. He wants to peck insects like the woodpecker, sip nectar like the hummingbird, or join the waxwings on their exciting trip to the faraway place. However, as Mato grows up, he begins to realize that colorful feathers aren't the only things that make a bird special.

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'Join Mato on his adventures in the backyard and beyond in a coming-of-age story that reveals the hidden lives of the birds right outside your back door.'

About the Author

Dave Bowles developed a love of birds while growing up in his rural home just outside of Birmingham, Alabama. He also has a talent for writing, which was first noticed while a student at Jacksonville State University, where he wrote for the school newspaper for four years.

Upon graduation, Dave pursued a career as an Army aviator, retiring at the rank of lieutenant colonel. Dave's fascination with birds has been a lifelong interest, as has his writing talents, which served him well throughout his military career and subsequent pursuits. As a certified life and leadership coach for a large industrial company, Dave has coached dozens of individuals through difficult challenges, further developing his insight into human behavior, and authored widely read leadership columns.

Dave and his wife Abby live on the Chesapeake Bay, where they enjoy watching birds and chasing their four grandkids.

About the Illustrator

Elizabeth Lester is an art teacher, artist, illustrator, and author. As a painter of nature, Elizabeth has endeavored to engage children with the wonder of nature through the illustrations in this book. As an art teacher, she has inspired her students of all ages to create and express themselves through art. Her field study work has been to document the salt marshes of the Eastern Shore of Virginia through 'plein air' painting. Her paintings inspired Elizabeth to write historical fiction novels set in the 1800s on the beautiful Eastern Shore of the Delmarva Peninsula. Her pen name is Dollie Veralice.

Interviews available upon request.

Belle Isle Books, an imprint of Brandylane Publishers, Inc., is an independent press located in Richmond, Virginia that has published books since 1985.

'Mato's Journey' (paperback, 56 pages, \$14.95) is available for pre-order from [Amazon](#), Barnes & Noble, and other fine booksellers.

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