

There is only one thing Paula Pelican loves more than flying, and that's helping others. Whether it's a drowning sailor, a forest fire, or a hungry village, each day is full of excitement as Paula enlists the help of her forest friends to prove that life can be an amazing adventure. Ms. Higbee writes about the importance of helping others in need.

PAULA PELICAN

Life On The Lagoon

By Donna Good Higbee

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A colorful illustration of a light brown pelican with a long, dark beak, sitting on a sandy bank. The pelican is looking towards the left. In the background, there is a blue lagoon, green reeds, and a tree stump. The sky is light blue. The title 'Paula Pelican' is written in large, orange, serif font at the top, and 'Life on the Lagoon' is written in smaller, white, serif font below it.

Paula Pelican

Life on the Lagoon

Donna Good Higbee

PAULA PELICAN: LIFE ON THE LAGOON gives sweet, lovely stories which provide marvelous examples of thoughtful, caring behavior, and sensitivity to the environment and to other beings. Paula's ingenuity and fast reactions to others' needs can inspire young readers to be aware of others around them and to feel satisfaction in helping others. BRAVO for this wonderful book!

- Barbara Lamb, author

Paula Pelican is a charming fable that comes with a pleasant bonus for it's young readers. The engaging adventures of Paula and her animal friends contain valuable life lessons about being helpful and caring for others.

- Raymond O'Connor, author
Shamrock Print Media

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The Lost Box

The sun had been warm all day but now a cool breeze was coming across the lagoon and soon it would be time for dinner. Paula had played hide and seek with her sisters for hours and was now happy to relax by the edge of the water. As she sat there, feeling happy with her day, Paula noticed a man strolling along the water's edge. She had seen him there quite often, walking along with his girlfriend and holding her hand. They always seemed so happy to be

together and they laughed a lot as they skipped stones on the water's surface. Today he was walking alone by the water. Paula watched as the man sat on a large rock and looked out over the water. He did not seem unhappy to be there all by himself; in fact, he had a smile on his face. Then he reached deep into his pocket and took out a small box. He opened the box and took out something very beautiful - it shined and sparkled in the sunlight. The man was obviously very pleased with the shiny object because he kept taking it out of the box, looking at it, and then putting it

back in the box again. Every now and then he would look at his watch and smile.



After a while, the man stood up and began walking along the water's edge again. He walked slowly along, still taking the box out of his pocket, looking at it and then putting it back again. Paula thought this was rather strange behavior; she had never seen anyone do this before. He looked at his watch again and then suddenly began hurrying along the path. He didn't see the rocks in his path and he tripped over them and nearly fell down. His jacket caught on an old thorny bush and the little box fell out of his pocket and rolled down the bank and went into the water. He didn't notice that the box had fallen out of his

pocket but continued walking faster and faster. Further along on the path stood his girlfriend waiting for him. They greeted each other with a hug and then walked along, arm in arm, by the water's edge. Suddenly, the man pulled his girlfriend over to a big rock and asked her to sit down. Then he got down on his knees right there in the dirt. Paula couldn't believe her eyes! She had never seen him acting so strangely before. With a big grin on his face, he reached deep into his pocket. There was nothing there! He checked this pocket and that pocket, trying to find the box. It was nowhere to be found. "Where can it be? Where can it possibly

be?", cried out the man to no one in particular. Paula felt sorry for him because he was so upset. "Where can what be?", asked his girlfriend. She did not know about the little box. "My surprise present for you!", answered the man. With that, he jumped up off the ground and started walking along the path again, looking everywhere for the box. When he came to the place where the box had fallen out of his pocket, he didn't see it because it was now several inches under the water and he didn't look in the water. Paula watched him walk right past the box. "He will never find it unless he looks into the water, and he

won't do that because he doesn't know that the box rolled there", thought Paula. She watched as the man looked up and down the path for the box, back and forth he walked. The beautiful girl followed him with a sad look on her face. "I have to help him find the box", thought Paula. " I can show him where it fell into the water!"

With that, Paula flew towards the man and his girlfriend and landed in the water just offshore. They both saw Paula but did not understand that she was there to help, so they walked on past her and kept looking. "I have to find a way to make them come over here", thought Paula. She

flapped her wings and made a lot of noise at the water's edge. "Surely this will make them come here and look at me, and then they will see the box just under the water", thought Paula. But the young couple did not pay any attention to her. "Maybe if I screech a few times, they will think something is wrong and come to the water's edge", reasoned Paula. So she let out several very loud screeches. "Screeeeech!" screamed Paula, but the young couple thought she was playing and did not come over to her. "Oh my! Oh my! What can I do to get them to look into the water?" cried Paula, who was feeling sad that her bill was

too big for her to pick up the small box in such shallow water. Suddenly Paula noticed a large turtle swimming leisurely in the lagoon. "Maybe that turtle will help me," thought Paula, as she swam over to him. "Mr. Turtle, would you be kind enough to help out with a big problem?" asked Paula. "Of course," answered Mr. Turtle, "as long as you realize that I am not very fast and it may take some time." "Oh dear," thought Paula, "we don't have much time." But the turtle was eager to help, so Paula explained the problem to him. "We need the young couple over there to come back to the water's edge after you have pushed the

little box up out of the water. Do you think you can do it?" asked Paula. "I will do my very best," answered the turtle, who was already starting to swim over to the little box. By now the young couple was starting to walk back along the path, getting closer to Paula and Mr. Turtle. "Hurry, please," cried Paula, as the turtle very slowly started pushing the box along the bottom of the water, moving it closer to the bank. Slowly, slowly he pushed the box toward the shore. Quickly, quickly walked the young couple coming back along the path. "I must slow them down," thought Paula, as she watched

them hurrying along. With a couple of hops



on the water, Paula took flight and flew above the path, then landed right in front of them. When they tried to walk around her, she moved in front of them. They moved right and she moved right ... they moved left and she moved left. Back and forth they went from one side of the path to the other, with Paula blocking them wherever they went. Finally, Mr. Turtle called out with great joy, "The box is on the path. I did it! I did it!" With this happy news, Paula waddled over to the side of the path and let the young couple pass. Closer and closer they got to where Mr. Turtle had the box waiting for them. "My little box!" cried out the man

with great excitement, as he came to the spot where the turtle had pushed the box. He picked it up and did a little dance right there along the water's edge. When he had calmed down, he asked his girlfriend to sit down on a nearby rock. Then he knelt down in the dirt again and opened the box. He took out the very shiny object and took his girlfriend's hand in his. He then placed a beautiful engagement ring on her finger and asked her to marry him. Paula knew the girl had said yes because she jumped up quickly and gave the man a very big hug. The excitement was almost too much for Paula, who flew around and around in circles

above them. "Screeeech! Screeeech!" Mr. Turtle had gone back into the water and was feeling very pleased with himself for getting the box on the path in time.

Finally the man and his girlfriend walked off together holding hands, just like they had done so many times before. "What a great day", thought Paula, as she flew home and told her family all about it.

The Sad Fishermen

Paula could hardly contain her excitement! Her mother had just told her that the whole family was going on a journey to visit friends at a different nesting and breeding ground south of where they now lived. It would be a day's journey and they would have to get started right away. Paula had never been away from home and she looked forward to seeing new places. After the whole family had eaten a good breakfast, they got in line with Paula's

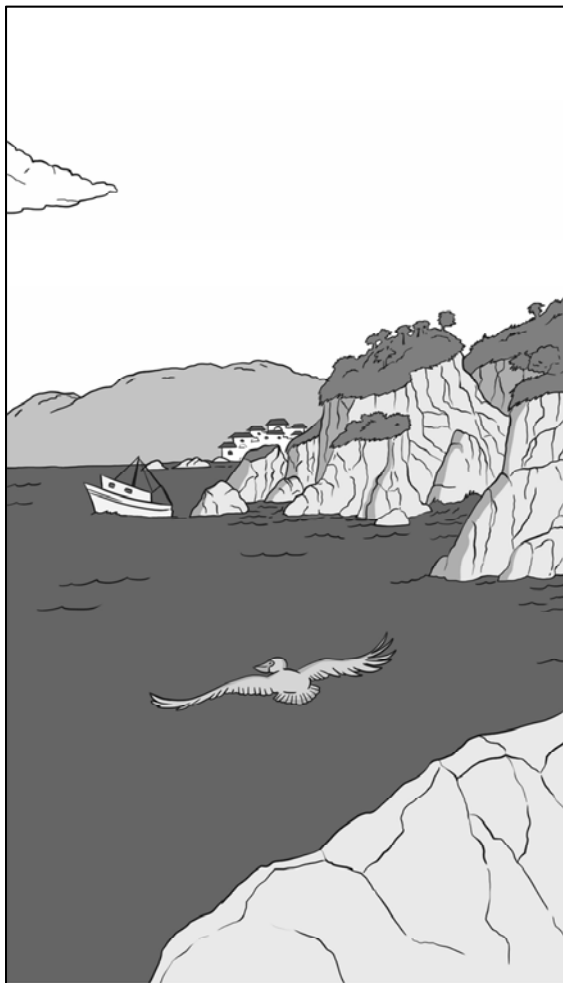
father in the lead. They hopped a few times on the water and took off into the air. It was a beautiful day for a journey.

They flew along the coast and only stopped once or twice to catch fish. Mile after mile they went until they finally arrived at their destination. This was a pretty area where many pelican families had made their homes. Paula's mother and father soon found their friends and went for a swim in a secluded little cove. Paula's sisters decided to show off their flying tricks to some new friends. But Paula didn't feel like doing tricks, so she flew out over the ocean and looked down at the village on the

shore below. "What a lovely little village; I think I will fly closer to get a better look," thought Paula. She landed on the dock by the boats and did some people-watching.

The village was quite small; only a few hundred people lived there. There were elderly women sitting in groups and weaving baskets; and young women were along the shore washing out clothes. Paula watched some children playing with a ball nearby, but she did not see any men anywhere. "I wonder where all the men are who live in this village," thought Paula. She looked up and down the village but did not

see one man. "This is a strange village indeed", Paula said to herself.



Then she noticed a lot of fishing boats coming towards the shore. She looked closer and could see men on the boats folding up nets. "Oh, so that is where all the men are. They probably all fish for a living", exclaimed Paula to herself. "I think I will fly down close to them. Maybe they will give me some fish."

Paula flew quietly down to one boat and landed right beside the men. "Hi there, pelican", said a friendly man who was still folding up his net. "I bet you would like a fish. I'm very sorry but I don't have even one fish to give you, my friend. We have not been able to find any fish for a week

and we are terribly worried. Our wives and children are hungry and we don't know how we will be able to feed them." Then the man turned away to finish his work, but Paula saw the sad, troubled look on his face. There were a lot of fish out there in the ocean, lots and lots of fish, but these men just didn't know where to look. "How can I help them?", thought Paula, who wanted to do something for them. " I know ... I will join them tomorrow when they go out fishing and show them where the fish are swimming."

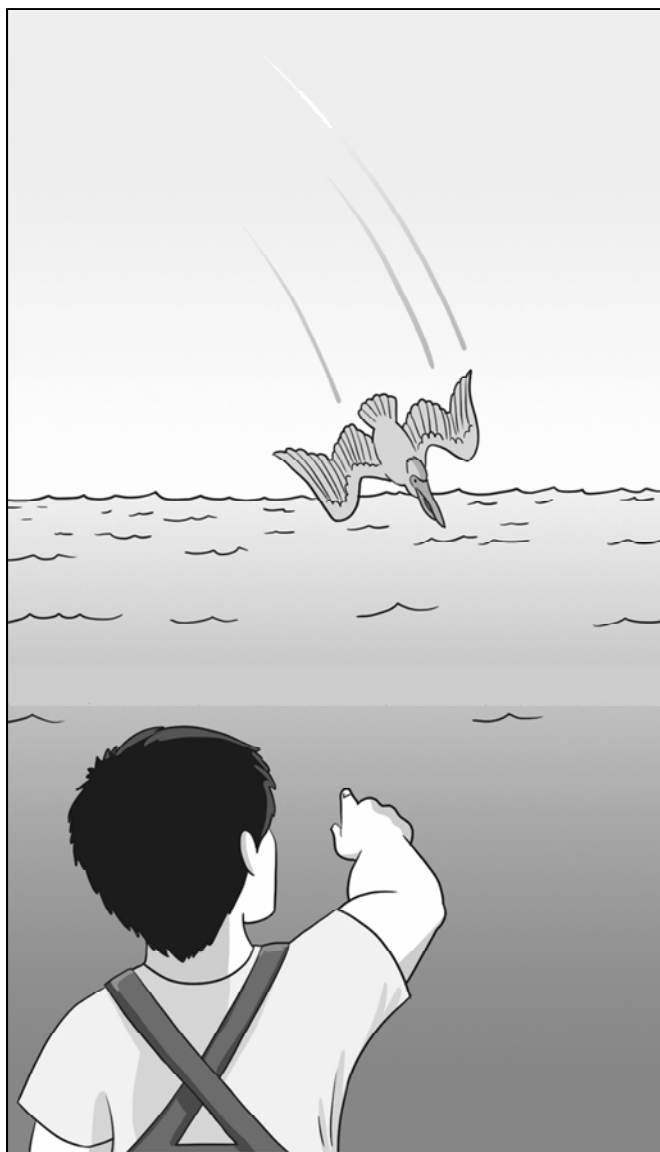
It was starting to get dark, so Paula headed back to the inland cove where her

family would be spending a couple of days visiting with their friends. As she settled down to go to sleep near her sisters, she thought about the day and was happy that she had come with her family to this new place for a visit. She yawned and fell fast asleep before you could count 1-2-3.

The night passed and the sun was just peeking over the hills, but Paula was eager and ready to go. She assured her parents that she would be fine and then off she flew, back to the little village she had found the day before. The men were just getting ready to go out and try again to find fish for their families. As their boats left the shore

and headed out to the ocean, Paula flew way above them, very high up in the air, and looked down into the water. From that great height, Paula was able to see where the schools of fish were in the ocean. There are plenty of fish right here if only the men come over this way. But the men didn't know that there were fish in that direction and they went the other way. "I must let them know that they are going the wrong way. They will never find fish over there", thought Paula worriedly.

PAULA PELICAN: Life On The Lagoon



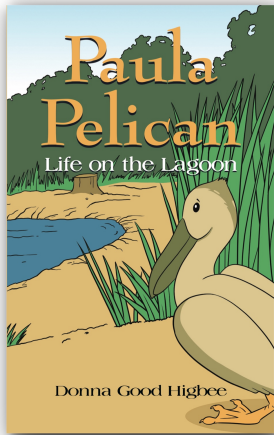
She flew directly over the school of fish, screeched very loudly to get the fishermen's attention, then folded in her wings and dove straight down into the water. She came up with a pouch full of fish, hopped on the water and took off into the air. She flew to the fishing boats and dropped the fish right on the deck of one boat. Then she flew back to the school of fish and dove into the water. Again she came up with a load of fish in her pouch and flew right over the men on the boats and dropped the fish. "Do you see what that pelican is doing?", asked one man to another. "She is catching fish and giving them to us", replied the other man. "She is

a very smart pelican. It is wonderful that she is trying to help us, but these few fish won't feed all our families." "You are right", said the first man, "but she is showing us where the fish are swimming and we can go over there and catch them for ourselves!" Suddenly there was joy and laughter on the fishing boats as the men all yelled to one another, "Let's go fish over there. There must be hundreds of fish in that direction, if that pelican can catch so many at one time." The men pulled in their empty nets and turned their boats around. Paula circled around in the air directly over all the fish until the boats arrived, then she quietly

landed on one of the larger boats to watch. The men were very busy throwing their fishing nets into the water. It only took a few minutes until their nets were full of fish and they pulled them back into the boat. Over and over again they threw their nets into the water and brought up loads of fish. There was much laughter and joking among the men as they worked together. Now they were going to be able to feed their families and have fish left over to sell at the market. Paula was having a good time, too, as a fish would be thrown to her every now and then by one of the men. By that evening, all the boats were full of fish and the tired men

started for home. Paula realized it was time to fly back to the cove and let her family know that she was alright. As she faced the water and got ready to take flight, the men all called to her, "Thank you! Thank you so much, and our families thank you, too. Now we know where to look for fish and we will come back here again."

Paula left her friends and the little village and flew back to meet her family in the cove. She was tired but happy as she snuggled down into some soft, dry leaves in the nesting area, next to her sisters, and closed her heavy eyes in sleep.



There is only one thing Paula Pelican loves more than flying, and that's helping others. Whether it's a drowning sailor, a forest fire, or a hungry village, each day is full of excitement as Paula enlists the help of her forest friends to prove that life can be an amazing adventure. Ms. Higbee writes about the importance of helping others in need.

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