



612 Johnnie Dodds Blvd, Suite A Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Heather Williams, Public Relations
Phone: (877) 243-3457
E-Mail: heatherwilliams@sylvandellpublishing.com

Make Friends with a Wild Fox

Nature Photography and Wild Characters in New Book from Sylvan Dell

Mt. Pleasant, SC (February 15, 2013)—In *Ferdinand Fox's First Summer*, acclaimed nature photographer, naturalist and author Mary Holland brings a young fox from the wild to the living room. Ferdinand is a friend that eats, plays, even gets scolded by his mom within the pages of this vivid and exciting children's book, the latest from award-winning publisher Sylvan Dell.

"There are... times when I have a rare opportunity to witness and photographically record natural history," says author and photographer Mary Holland. "If I've managed to capture a fairly complete story with my camera, I consider its potential as a book." Mary found just such an occasion in young Ferdinand, the red fox kit that stars in its 32 vivid pages. Timid and elusive, fox's can be hard to spot for anybody, yet Mary has managed to photograph Ferdinand and document his lifestyle through early and important months of his life. In her pictures, Ferdinand runs, jumps, hides, loves his mother, searches for food... just like any other child!

The photographs of Ferdinand are then woven together with Mary's prose, to tell the story of young Ferdinand's struggles and coming-of-age, a timeless story that any child and parent can relate to. "Combining my photography with writing helped to bring what I was writing about alive."

"So much of photography is luck," says Mary, "finding the subject, having access to it... weather that allows photographs to be taken, and behavior by your subject that is not altered by your presence. When these factors are all met, magic happens." Mary can be found waiting for hours in the wilderness, hiding under a camouflage blanket for her chance to snap the right shot with her camera. "One thing most people don't know is that my dog Emma accompanies me on all of my forays," reveals Mary, "and only because she is so calm and so patient can I get the images of wild animals that I do."

In addition to its exciting photographs and story, *Ferdinand Fox's First Summer*, like all Sylvan Dell books, contains additional educational resources, backed by professionals and aligned to State and Common Core standards. The For Creative Minds section will answer any questions that come up from a child's reading, offer fun and educational activities, and fascinate with exciting facts, for example, how Emma and Ferdinand are actually related!

"My hope is that young readers will feel a kinship with wild animals after reading about this red fox family," says Mary. "If a connection is made between a human... and the natural world, my belief is that the human will care for and protect the natural world and all that live in it..."



612 Johnnie Dodds Blvd, Suite A Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Mary Holland is a naturalist, nature photographer, columnist, and award-winning author with a life-long passion for natural history. After graduating from the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources, Mary worked as a naturalist at the Museum of the Hudson Highlands in New York state, directed the state-wide Environmental Learning for the Future program for the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, worked as a resource naturalist for the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and designed and presented her own "Knee-High Nature Programs" for libraries and elementary schools throughout Vermont and New Hampshire. Her children's book, *Milkweed Visitors*, received national acclaim when it was placed on the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Science Books and Films' list for the best books of 2006 in the category Children's Books under Zoological Sciences. Mary's book *Naturally Curious: a Photographic Field Guide and Month-by-Month Journey Through the Fields, Woods and Marshes of New England* won the 2011 National Outdoor Book Award for the Nature Guidebook category. Mary lives in Vermont with her lab, Emma.

To schedule an interview or request more information about *Mary Holland* or Ferdinand *Fox's First Summer* please contact Heather Williams at heatherwilliams@sylvandellpublishing.com or (843) 971-6722.

About Sylvan Dell Publishing

Sylvan Dell is on a mission to improve child literacy with science and math through fictional picture books. Using prose and pictures, children are delighted with stories of their favorite animals, planets, or even place. This leads to the exploration of facts and learning activities in each book's *For Creative Minds* pages. Sylvan Dell carefully designs each book to portray accurately the chosen subject. Vetted by experts in that field, and aligned to common core and state standards; each book is a unique asset to educational programs. Sylvan Dell has grown to include more than 80 authors and illustrators, and honored to have won more than 70 book awards since its inception in 2005.