



A great way to learn about the natural world is to go to a natural history museum or zoo. I spent time at the Harvard Museums where I did research for the borders of my book. In Victorian times, the period I set Mossy in, many amateur collectors set up small museums. The building I used for Dr. Carolina's museum is my old nursery school Wilder Memorial Hall in Hingham, Massachusetts, built in 1879.

When I decided to put collections in my borders, I put objects I could find in my backyard around the pages showing Lilypad Pond. Inside the museum the collections are from all over the world. Learning from zoos has been an enjoyable and productive way to observe the creatures I paint in my books. I observed box turtles in the Richmond Children's Museum and many animals in the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago, where animals are monitored to make sure they are not under stress, and their environments are carefully studied to provide a healthy life for each creature.

