

Respect All Creatures:



A Dunehopper Story about Respecting All Creatures



Outer Banks, North Carolina

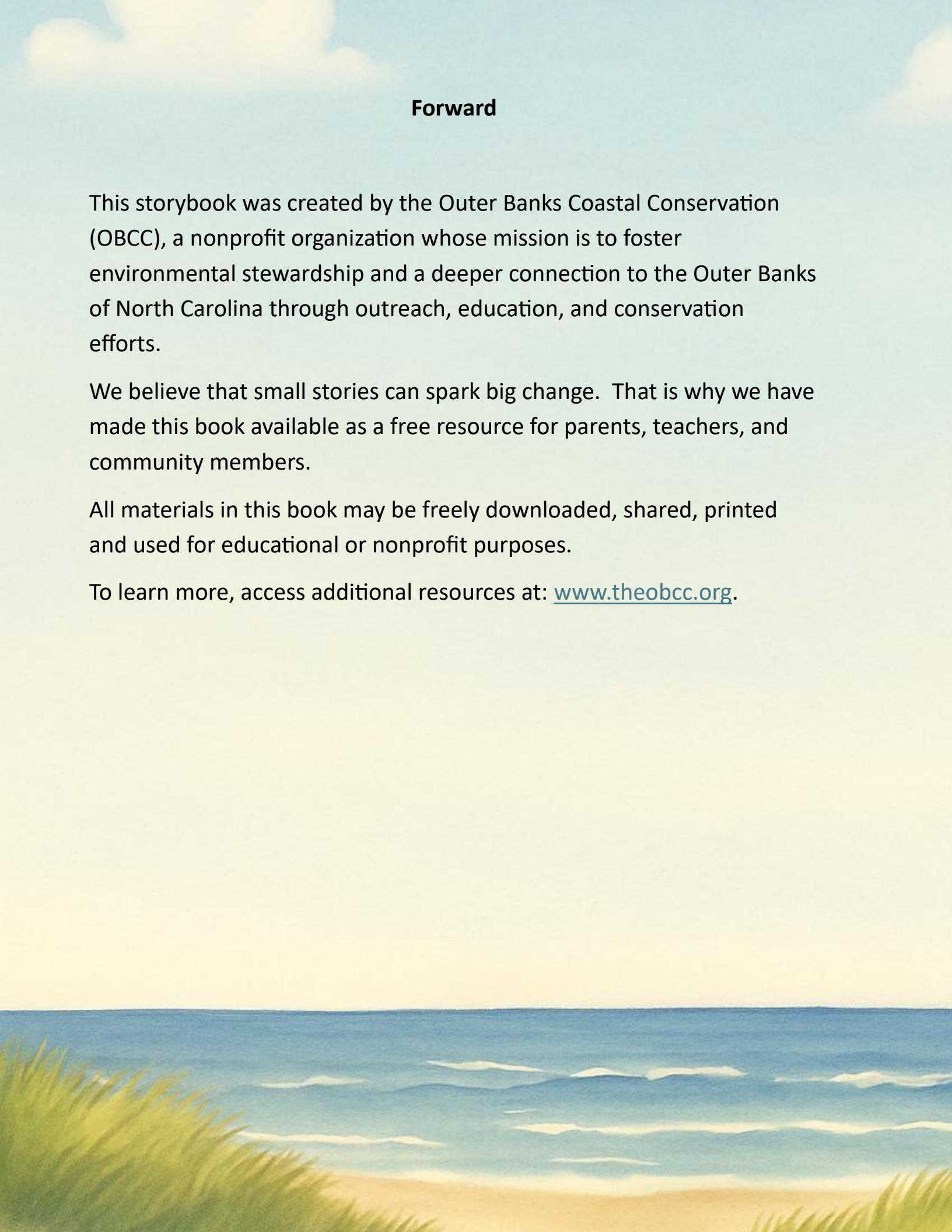
Forward

This storybook was created by the Outer Banks Coastal Conservation (OBCC), a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster environmental stewardship and a deeper connection to the Outer Banks of North Carolina through outreach, education, and conservation efforts.

We believe that small stories can spark big change. That is why we have made this book available as a free resource for parents, teachers, and community members.

All materials in this book may be freely downloaded, shared, printed and used for educational or nonprofit purposes.

To learn more, access additional resources at: www.theobcc.org.



One sunny morning, Sandy Dunehopper scurried along a sandy path through the dunes, her claws brushing softly against sea oats that swayed in the ocean breeze. Tucked under her arm was her little bucket, ready to collect leftover scraps visitors sometimes forgot to take home.



As she walked, Sandy noticed a tiny sea turtle hatchling resting near the sand. "Don't worry, little one," she whispered kindly. "I won't step near your home."

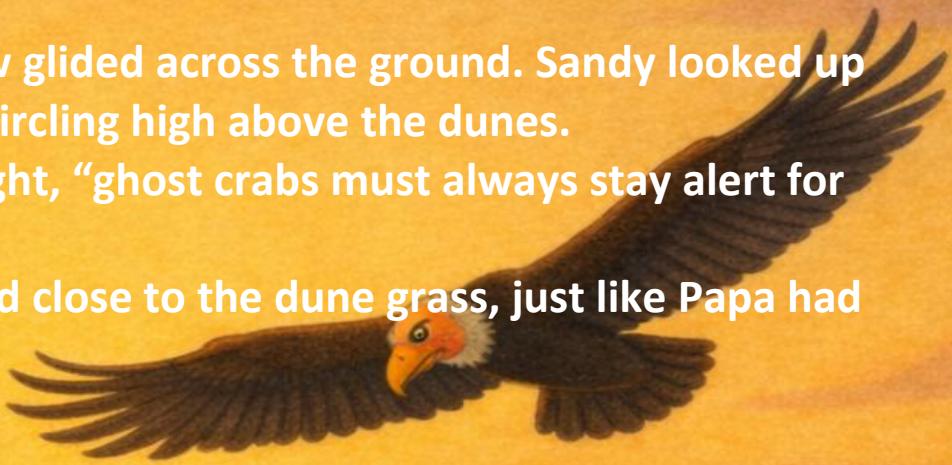
She carefully tiptoed around the nest, proud to help keep it safe.



Suddenly, a shadow glided across the ground. Sandy looked up and saw a vulture circling high above the dunes.

“Oh my,” she thought, “ghost crabs must always stay alert for predators.”

She stayed calm and close to the dune grass, just like Papa had taught her.



A few steps later—*rattle, rattle!*

Sandy froze.

“A sss-snake?” she gasped.

There, resting quietly in the warm sand, was a rattlesnake, coiled and calm. Its tail gently shook, saying, *Please stay back*. Sandy’s heart thumped, but she remembered an important lesson.

“I won’t bother you,” she said softly. “And I won’t let anyone hurt you either.”

Taking a careful step back, Sandy watched as the snake peacefully slithered into the tall grass.



Down by the shoreline, something shimmered on the wet sand—a jellyfish glistening in the sunlight. “I’ll leave you alone,” Sandy said gently. “Every creature deserves a chance to live.”



Later that morning, near the Dunehopper burrow, Sandy spotted something new. Between two blades of dune grass, a tiny spider was spinning a silvery web. At first, Sandy froze—those wiggly legs looked a little spooky! But instead of yelling or swatting, she paused and remembered what Mama always said: *Every creature has an important job.*

Sandy watched in wonder as the spider carefully wove its web—strong enough to catch bugs and delicate enough to sparkle in the sun. Smiling, Sandy stepped around the web and whispered, “I’ll give you space.”



As Sandy headed home, her bucket still empty but her heart full, she felt proud. By choosing kindness and respect, she learned that even the smallest creatures matter—and the dunes are safer, healthier, and happier when everyone is treated with care.



Did You Know?

- The dunes and beaches of the Outer Banks are home to many amazing creatures—big and small!
- Ghost crabs help keep beaches clean by eating leftover scraps, spiders catch pesky insects, and even predators like vultures and snakes play important roles in keeping nature balanced.
- Sea turtles, jellyfish, and many other animals depend on people giving them space so they can stay safe and healthy.
- When we watch quietly, don't touch wildlife, and respect their homes, we help protect the dunes—and every creature that calls them home. Small acts of kindness can make a big difference!

