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**CHILDHOOD ANXIETIES TURN TO LAUGHTER
AS BEACH FEARS LOOM IN NEW SCAREDY SQUIRREL BOOK**

The neurotic, endearing character of *Scaredy Squirrel* and *Scaredy Squirrel Makes a Friend* returns for a highly anticipated third adventure in Mélanie Watt's picture book, ***Scaredy Squirrel at the Beach***, coming from Kids Can Press this spring. Kids ages 4-8 will go *nuts* for Scaredy, still the world's most lovable worry-wart despite stellar reviews, a slew of awards, and international attention.

Every child has fears—whether of summer travel, monsters under the bed, or green vegetables—and kids identify with Scaredy, whose fears and phobias are hilariously detailed in Watt's new book. Young children immediately understand Scaredy's anxieties, as well as his manic efforts to ward off danger. When those efforts reach ridiculous heights, readers can't help but laugh out loud.

In his latest adventure, Mr. **S**caredy **O**rville **S**quirrel is terrified of the beach. One could get captured by pirates! Knocked out by falling coconuts! Chased by a mob of lobsters! And so, armed with a bag of kitty litter and one pleasant pink flamingo, Scaredy builds his own private, safe beach. There, he happily sunbathes—until he realizes that the soothing sound of the ocean is missing. He decides to make a quick trip to the real beach to fetch a seashell, equipping himself with a passport, a map of potential beach hazards, and protective beach wear. But as every kid knows, no plan is fool-proof, and even the smartest of squirrels can't think of everything. "Mission Operation Seashell" soon goes awry.

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Scaredy Squirrel at the Beach is a fun visual treat for kids, adults, and forest animals of all kinds. Salutes to Scaredy include an ALA Notable, a Junior Library Guild Selection, a Cybils Award, an Independent Publisher Book Award, a National Council of Teachers of English Notable Children's Book in Language Arts, and many more.

Fans of Scaredy's previous books should be aware that readers of *Scaredy Squirrel at the Beach* are required to wear sunscreen (Scaredy himself never hits the beach without his 65 SPF in paw).

Mélanie Watt's most recent book for Kids Can Press is *Chester*. A resident of Montreal, Quebec, she has never been stranded on a beach. However, she has been stranded on an elevator, at a theme park, and in the airport. Learn more at www.scaredysquirrel.com.

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Note to editors: Mélanie Watt is available for interviews in Chicago and the Twin Cities in April, and nationally by phone or email.

Scaredy Squirrel at the Beach

Written and illustrated by Mélanie Watt

Kids Can Press, April

Ages 4 to 8 • 32 Pages

\$15.95 Hardcover

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