



# The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy

By Jeanne Birdsall

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This series of modern classics about the charming Penderwick family from National Book Award winner and *New York Times* bestseller Jeanne Birdsall is perfect for fans of Noel Streatfeild and Edward Eager. Over one million copies sold, now with a bright new look!

This summer the Penderwick sisters have a wonderful surprise: a holiday on the grounds of a beautiful estate called Arundel. Soon they are busy discovering the summertime magic of Arundel's sprawling gardens, treasure-filled attic, tame rabbits, and the cook who makes the best gingerbread in Massachusetts. But the best discovery of all is Jeffrey Tifton, son of Arundel's owner, who quickly proves to be the perfect companion for their adventures.

The icy-hearted Mrs. Tifton is not as pleased with the Penderwicks as Jeffrey is, though, and warns the new friends to stay out of trouble. Which, of course, they will—won't they? One thing's for sure: it will be a summer the Penderwicks will never forget.

Deliciously nostalgic and quaintly witty, this is a story as breezy and carefree as a summer day.

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 4-6 -This enjoyable tale of four sisters, a new friend, and his snooty mother is rollicking fun. The girls' father is a gentle, widowed botany professor who gives his daughters free reign but is always there to support or comfort them. Rosalind, 12, has become the mother figure. Skye, 11, is fierce and hot-tempered. Jane, 10, is a budding writer of mysteries who has the disconcerting habit of narrating aloud whatever is occurring around her. Batty, four, is an endearingly shy, loving child who always wears butterfly wings. The family dog, Hound, is her protector. The tale begins as the Penderwicks embark on a summer holiday in the Berkshire Mountains, at a cottage on the grounds of a posh mansion owned by the terribly snobbish Mrs. Tifton. Her son, Jeffrey, is a brilliant pianist, but her heart is set on him attending a military academy like her beloved father. The action involves Rosalind's unrequited love for the 18-year-old gardener, Skye's enmity and then friendship with Jeffrey, Jane's improvement in her melodramatic writing style, and Batty's encounter with an angry bull whom she rather hopefully calls "nice horsie." Problems are solved and lessons learned in this wonderful, humorous book that features characters whom readers will immediately love, as well as a superb writing style. Bring on more of the Penderwicks!-*B. Allison Gray, John Jermain Library, Sag Harbor, NY*

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From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* Gr. 3-6. Adults who have been longing to find books for children that remind them of their own childhood favorites need look no further. Birdsall follows in the footsteps of Elizabeth Enright, Edward Eager, and Noel Streatfeild, updating the family story yet keeping all the old-fashioned charm. The motherless Penderwick sisters--Rosalind, 12; Sky, 11; Jane, 10; and Batty, 4--are spending the summer in a Berkshire cottage on the Arundel estate. Their botanist father and protective dog, Hound, are also in attendance, though Hound is far more involved with the girls than their absentminded professor dad. After a bad beginning, the girls become friends with Jeffrey, the son of the lady of the manor, Mrs. Tifton, whose main concern is the welfare of her garden. On one level, Birdsall might be criticized for one-dimensional characterizations (Mrs. Tifton, her boyfriend), and certain minor elements that don't ring true: Tifton's prizewinning garden would hardly be left in the hands of a teenager (on whom Rosalind develops a crush). But what this comforting family story does offer are four marvelously appealing sisters, true childhood behavior (disobeying, running away, a first crush), and a writing style that will draw readers close. So satisfying, the story begs for a sequel: it would be nice to see more of the Penderwicks. *Ilene Cooper*  
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Review

"Problems are solved and lessons learned in this wonderful, humorous book that features characters whom readers will immediately love, as well as a superb writing style. Bring on more of the Penderwicks!"  
--*School and Library Journal*, starred

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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