

# SPIRIT ANIMALS

The Legend Lives in You

## Q&A with Brandon Mull, author of Spirit Animals Book 1: Wild Born



Photo © Angela Liddle.

**Brandon Mull** is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the Fablehaven and Beyonders series. As a kid, he had a dog, a cat, a horse, some goldfish (won at a school carnival), and briefly a tarantula (captured in his neighborhood). He now lives in Utah with his wife, four kids, and the family dog.

**Though Spirit Animals is a fantasy, all the animals are based on real ones. How did you research for the books? Did you find out any cool animal facts?**

I mostly looked at videos and articles on the Internet. When it came time to describe the animals, it helped a lot to have visual references for how they look and move. Among many other fun facts, I learned that leopard spots are called rosettes, and that wolves can see visions of the future. (I may have made up that second one.)

**Which of the four animal/kid pairings was your favorite to write?**

That's so hard to pick! Rollan and his falcon were fun to write because they are both very independent. The attributes that make them similar also keep them from trusting each other. I enjoyed Abeke and her leopard for the opposite reason—they were the most in sync of the pairings, and it let us glimpse how these relationships can work when things go well.

**The four main characters are all so different. In terms of personality, who is the most like you? Who do you wish you were more like?**

I'm probably most like Conor, who is eager to please and pretty loyal. I wish I had Meilin's confidence and fighting skills.

**What excites you most about writing for a multiplatform series?**

I'm thrilled about the many ways people will be able to interact with the story. If readers enjoy the world of Erdas, they can go online, get a spirit animal of their own, and join the fun. It's also really cool to see talented designers create a look for characters that I can only describe with words.

**When did you start writing fantasy? Has it always been your favorite genre?**

I've loved fantasy ever since reading the Narnia books. For some reason, I tend to daydream about adventure stories with fantasy elements. I live half in the real world and half elsewhere. I like messing with the rules of reality and seeing what story possibilities emerge from the new set of rules.

**Who or what influenced your love of reading and writing?**

I have a very short attention span when I get bored. Growing up, adventure stories like *Ender's Game* and *The Lord of the Rings* felt like the opposite of boredom. The more I read stories like those, the more I daydreamed about my own adventures and wanted to share them.

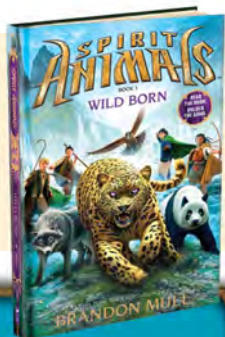
**Of course we have to ask...what's your spirit animal?**

I'm reasonably smart, generally friendly, and kind of goofy. Though I'm no great swimmer, a good match might be a dolphin.



Photo credit: Marguerite La Riviere

Brandon carefully attempts to bond with a spirit animal.



In the world of Erdas, four children summon spirit animals, a rare bond between human and beast that gives great powers to both. Now the four heroes and their animals must band together on a dangerous quest to save their world. Readers can join the quest and get their own spirit animal at [scholastic.com/spiritanimals](http://scholastic.com/spiritanimals).

**Spirit Animals Book One: Wild Born**

By Brandon Mull

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