

***The Ostrich Conspiracy: Platypus Police Squad***

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A fast-paced, action-packed detective novel, *The Ostrich Conspiracy: Platypus Police Squad* is a book youngsters will love. The novel takes place in the city of Kalamazoo, where all the inhabitants are platypuses, and follows detectives Zengo and O'Malley as they investigate the sabotage at the Kalamazoo City Dome, a new amusement park aimed to bring in tourism dollars to the city. Zengo and O'Malley must solve the mystery so that the famous Chase Mercy can film his latest action movie at the amusement park, and things are going well until they find that nearly everyone is hiding something. They uncover a vengeful plot to destroy Kalamazoo City's reputation – with a surprising culprit.

The detectives on the Platypus Police Squad are armed with boomerangs, one aspect of the novel that makes it child-friendly. This book will expose elementary and middle school children to detective novels through the cartoon-like characters and fictional setting, leaving out the blood and gore of the more realistic crime novels.

The main character, Zengo, faces adversity as the newest member of the squad. He constantly feels like he needs to prove himself to his partner O'Malley and the rest of the Platypus Police, but finds it difficult to be taken seriously when he is referred to as "rookie." This book would be great for children who feel like an underdog, or who are new to a school, as a lesson in perseverance and hard work.