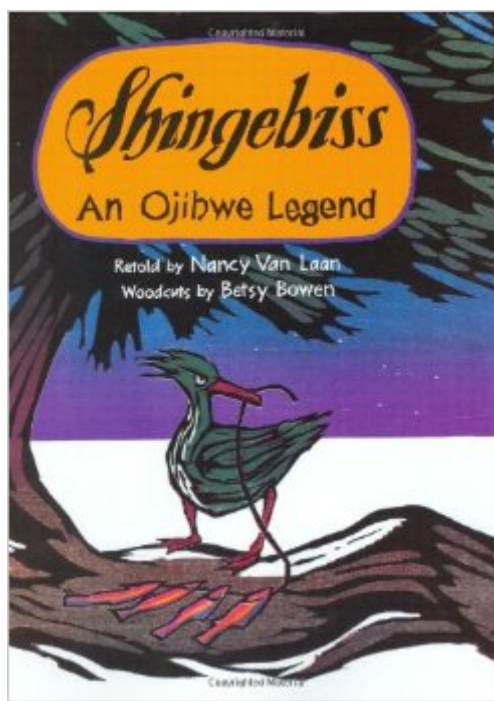


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# Shingebiss: An Ojibwe Legend



## Synopsis

Shingebiss, a little merganser duck, can always find plenty to eat. In all seasons, the Great Lake is full of fish. But one cold year the lake freezes over, and Shingebiss has to find a way to fish through the thick ice. To do that, he must face the fierce Winter Maker. Gracefully told and illustrated with vigorous woodcuts, this ancient Ojibwe story captures all the power of winter and all the courage of a small being who refuses to see winter as his enemy. This sacred story shows that those who follow the ways of Shingebiss will always have plenty to eat, no matter how hard the great wind of Winter Maker blows.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (September 9, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0395827450

ISBN-13: 978-0395827451

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.1 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #436,393 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 in [Books > Children's Books](#)

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

I was drawn to this book because I learned that the woodcuts were by Betsy Bowen, who has a fine arts shop and studio near Lake Superior's north shore. Her woodcuts in the marvelous Helen Hoover children's story *Great Wolf and the Good Woodsman* were so phenomenal, I wanted to see more. She is extremely gifted and knowledgeable in her craft. In fact, at the story's end, there is an illustrator's note in which Ms. Bowen explains the process of creating woodblock prints. Very interesting is the fact "the shape of the borders [of the prints] was inspired by the shape of the Ojibwe birchbark ricing baskets." This Ojibwe legend, as retold with carefulness, selectivity and skill by Nancy Van Laan (she has a knack for using just the right word) is deep, touching and beautiful. It

would be fascinating to any child. It also offers an education into the Ojibway vocabulary, incorporated in the text so naturally the one feels like one is living in the wood right alongside Shingebiss (pronounced ZHING-gih-biss), a very brave and plucky merganser duck, who manages to get the best of a formidable winter visitor - Kabibona'kan, Winter Maker himself, who tries with all his might (and it is plentiful) to do the duck in. But this special duck is not a quitter, and even his Winter Maker enemy finally concedes, since "he [Shingebiss] is a very singular being...I will let him alone." And even to this day, during Moon of the Freezing Over the Earth (November); Spirit Moon (December); Great Spirit Moon (January); Stingy Moon (February); and my favorite, Maple Sugar Moon (March), Kabibona'kan has kept his promise. "Year after year, even in the coldest of months, Shingebiss continues to live out the winter by breaking through the ice and diving for fish.

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