

Experiences with a Captive Red-tailed Hawk  
by Paul H. Fluck, M. D.

Recently I had a wounded red-tailed hawk brought to me that has now completely recovered. With his diet confined to liver and little else, I am anxious to get rid of this star boarder. He was so weak the first night he arrived that I fed him milk, vitamins, and Ken-1-Ration from a spoon. Now he shakes the whole house while he tries to burst through the window. But he is afraid of my blue jay who sails into the hawk's cage and makes him huddle in the corner of the cage in fear. I haven't quite satisfied myself as to where to release him. Hawks are not popular in these parts.

I might relate how my red-tailed hawk eats a mouse. First he pins the mouse down with one of his enormous talons. Next with his hooked beak he reaches gently under the mouse's ear, and pulls the mouse right in half. Then he swallows that half--ears, nose, skull, front legs and everything. Next he reaches for the last half, and presto, in less than thirty seconds, the tail of the mouse vanishes down the hawk's throat. On the next day, the fur and bones of the mouse are found in a neat little ball somewhere in his cage.

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The First Woman to Band a Great Horned Owl  
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Mrs. Betty Carnes, whose interest in birds is so well known that the letter carrier unhesitatingly delivers to her home on Kenwood Road mail addressed simply to "The Bird Woman, Tenafly," established a record yesterday. She banded a great horned owl, at the cost of a nicked ear and gashed fingers, becoming the first woman to accomplish the feat. She already was the first woman to band a peregrine falcon and the first to band a bald eagle, of which she has banded seven.

"Bubo" was caught in a steel trap set on a pole near Short Hills, N.J., a few weeks ago. That method of catching owls is illegal in New Jersey and the New Jersey Audubon Society intervened and confiscated Bubo.

Judge Frederic R. Colie of the Superior Court, who is president of the society and familiar with Mrs. Carnes' interest in birds, asked her if she wouldn't like to band a great horned owl.

Mrs. Carnes said she'd be delighted and drove to Short Hills in the severe snowstorm before Christmas to get Bubo. She installed the owl in a wire cage in a patch of woods in the rear of her formal garden and tried to ingratiate herself with him. All her overtures were met with snapping beak and threatening talons.

When Mrs. Carnes decided to band the owl, she entered his cage and, as she turned to shut the door, felt rather than heard the soft winged swoop Bubo was making at her. Mrs. Carnes did not even pause to look around. She flung herself flat on the snow. Despite her quickness, Bubo's talons tore a piece out of her left ear. Before the bird could collect himself to pounce again, Mrs. Carnes was up and had him in the grasp of her heavy gloves. She took him to the kitchen where she laid him on the table. Holding the bird with her left hand, Mrs. Carnes snapped the band around Bubo's leg with her right hand. In the instant that only one hand was holding him, the owl gashed Mrs. Carnes hand with his talons.