

THREE INSTANCES OF UNUSUAL HUNTING BEHAVIOR IN OWLS

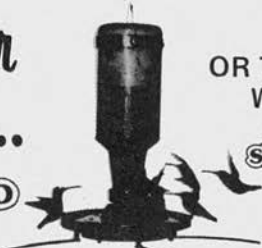
by Joseph C. Broyles, Groton

1. This was reported to the writer by Ms. Jan Delaney, at whose house the events occurred in mid-January. The family has a parakeet in a cage very close to a kitchen window. About 5 P.M. or so, a series of thumps against the window was heard and the parakeet became very agitated. Upon investigation outdoors, Ms. Delaney found a red phase Screech Owl perched in a tree by the window, and it was inferred that the owl had been trying to reach the parakeet repeatedly and collided instead with the window. The same thumping sounds and parakeet agitation occurred the next morning at about 6 A.M. and a check outdoors again revealed the owl perched in the tree.
2. On January 19, about 3:30 P.M., after cross-country skiing out of a small stand of pines and spruce by the Nashua River in Groton, the writer noticed several small feathers on the trail. A quick scan of the open area revealed a trail of feathers and a trail of drag marks with intermittent primary feather tracks in the snow. These led to a Saw-whet Owl perched on the fresh but headless remains of an American Robin about 3 meters from the ski trail. The marks in the snow reveal that the owl had traveled at least twice this distance on the snow, apparently trying to fly and possibly having difficulty in subduing the prey. Although it was in open, sunlit woods, the owl's pupils were very large, suggesting fear when confronted at such close range by three noisy, gesturing skiers. Nonetheless, the owl stood its ground while we watched for five minutes or so. We then departed, leaving the owl still clinging resolutely to its unusual and hard-won meal.
3. About February 9th at about 6 P.M. at the Groton School, Groton, Massachusetts, a bird-watching student and several others saw a Screech Owl trying to fly up into and behind some decorative wooden blocks where the school buildings' brock walls meet wood just below the roof. These blocks are simulated end-beams with several inches of space between them and also between them and the wall. House Sparrows nest behind the blocks. The owl is somewhat large for the spaces and in attempting to gain entry was forced to cling, nearly upside down, to the woodwork. The owl apparently never did get in.

It is possible that the owl was seeking shelter, but this owl, or another one just like it, has been observed on much colder days perched in much more exposed locations on and around our school buildings, quite oblivious to the comings and goings of hundreds of people all day long just 15 feet below its perch. Thus, one is tempted to believe that the owl was, on this occasion, trying to obtain some House Sparrows for supper.

Enjoy your  
very own..

**HUMMINGBIRD  
CIRCUS  
FEEDER**



OR THE ALL NEW  
WILD BIRD

**CIRCUS  
SEED FEEDER**



Giant quart size hummingbird feeder with 8 feeding stations, 4 perches, and tough bottle refillable without removing from durable base. Best available -- designed and manufactured by BURD for experienced observers & happy hummers. FREE quart supply of HUMMINGBIRD CIRCUS NECTAR SUPPLEMENT with each feeder. Help the little comedians get their vitamins! Get enough HUMMINGBIRD CIRCUS SUPPLEMENT for 10 gallons of surgarade... Used by aviaries and zoos.

HUMMINGBIRD CIRCUS \$9.95 PREPAID  
5 oz. jar SUPPLEMENT .. 5.95 PREPAID  
COMBINATION ..... 15.00 PREPAID

And now a NEW unique seed feeder that serves as a "truck-stop" for all those winter-hungry birds! A 10-inch transparent green globe meters over 12 lbs. of seed into clean white tray designed for minimum of waste. Circling equator is special removable black plastic bath which resists but is not damaged by freezing. A bird-feeder FIRST and an exotic decoration for any yard! Mount on ½-inch pipe or our special cat/squirrel-proof black pole furnished as accessory.

CIRCUS seed feeder ... \$39.95 PREPAID  
Cat/squirrel-proof pole .. 12.95 PREPAID  
Combination of Both ... 49.95 PREPAID

ALL BURD PRODUCTS UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED!

**BURD** PRODUCTS • P.O. Box 506 H • Grand Junction, Col. 81501 • 803/245-1616