

A SCREECH OWL ADVENTURE

At the suggestion of Mr. Charles K. Nichols, the following letter was sent to the Editor by Mrs. Ethel Woolfenden whose son, Glen Woolfenden, was, when the letter was received, a senior studying ornithology at Cornell University. The letter bears no date, so the exact dates of the various events are not available, but the action occurred in the summer of 1952. Extracts from her letter follow:

"Thirteen weeks ago, I was given a baby Screech Owl (gray phase) as The Trailside Museum had no facilities for more, so we've banded 'Hootie', and for the past $4\frac{1}{2}$ weeks now, he has been given freedom at night. I leave the screen door on our porch open, and he goes all over the neighborhood, returning at daybreak, coming in through the door and up into a little trap door in the roof over the porch ceiling where he sleeps all day.

Saturday evening, last, I heard a thud out there, and, always alert for his safety, I ran out. There sat two owls, my 'Hootie' and a gorgeous red phase owl. They were very friendly and slept all that night and next day up in the rafters. Well, I called Mr. Nichols as I was very much puzzled as to what I should do. I didn't want our owl driven away or hurt, although there were definitely no signs of hostility.

I secured a band from Ed Stearns in Plainfield, and banded the red owl. Tonight, I will release them both at dark, hoping they will continue to come in each morning. There are more Screech Owls nearby as my neighbors tell me they hear them before my birds are out.

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