

A RED-SHOULDERED HAWK IN CAPTIVITY.

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One day in October, 1901, I went out for some sport with my gun. I had not gone far when I noticed a hawk sitting on a dead branch of an elm tree. It was a good distance, but I thought I would try a shot. The first barrel only startled it; but, before it had gone far, the second shot dropped it. My dog ran to the hawk, which threw itself on its back and showed fight. I threw my coat over it, slipped a strong cord around its neck and carried it to the barn, where I placed it in a large box with a slat front. The only wound was on the left wing, and the bone had not been broken.

I placed a perch in the box for the hawk to sit on and soon it jumped up. The first thing I got for it to eat, was an English sparrow. When I threw the bird into the box, the hawk seemed frightened and did not offer to touch it till I stepped away from the box. Then it jumped down from the perch, and, having seized the sparrow with its talons and spread its wings, it marched around carrying the bird in its claws. Before commencing to eat the sparrow, it picked out the wing feathers and most of the small feathers of the body. After each mouthful of feathers, it would glance sharply around to see if anything was going to interfere. It first ate the head and then proceeded to devour the remainder. I fed it mostly on sparrows during the winter, but occasionally found a mouse, which it seemed to relish better than sparrows. My hawk soon became so tame that it would start to eat its food without waiting for one to retire. After seizing a mouse in its claws, it would pick it up with its bill, then catch it again with its claws before eating it. It always ate the head of a mouse first, and usually swallowed or tried to swallow the hind quarters along with the tail. Sometimes I have seen it stick at this last operation, when it had to pull its mouthful out again with its claws. Then it took a few bites before the tail disappeared.

After the snow went away last spring, it was an easy matter to turn over old logs or stumps near the woods and get mice for