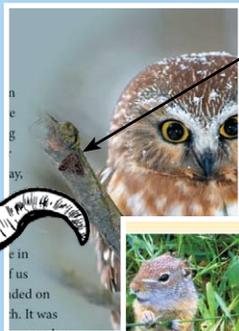




SCAVENGER HUNT

In this issue are hidden a robin and a worm. You can see here what they look like; however, where they are hidden they may be any size and any color. So get your binoculars (or magnifying glass) and start searching. See if you can help the robin find the worm.

I See It! from February



page 2
cattaill moth

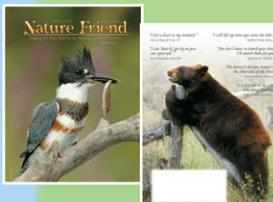


page 10
cattaill

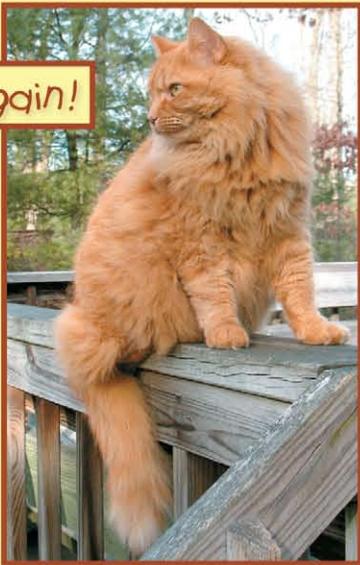
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FRONT COVER:
Belted Kingfisher with a minnow she "belted."
Story on page 4.



Clean again!



Why do stories about skunks always turn out so "textbook" nice, as you will read on page 12? It was with less humor, and more odor, that we prepared that story for printing and searched for the photographs to illustrate it. You see, there was a permeating, overwhelming, lingering, background (foreground), pungent odor throughout the house.

It started a couple of nights previously. We can only smell what happened, but, like in the story on page 12, we have a cat food dish right outside our back door. We had seen a skunk eating from the dish a week or two ago, but never mind that sighting—we KNEW he had been back. It reeked!

In the morning, it was easy to smell that Puffball, our long-haired cat, was the target of the spray. Not only was he hit, but yellow musk clung to the door, the house, the cat food dishes, the deck, and more.

Now it was midnight. The article was edited and the skunk photos were selected. It was past time to call it quits, but the odor remained and I had my fill of it. Bethany pulled a skunk deodorizing recipe from the file where it had been placed 15 or 20 years ago for just such a time as this, and I set out to use it—a quart of hydrogen peroxide, a quarter cup of baking soda, and a squirt of liquid soap. (Follow with a clear-water rinse.)

The cat dish and doorknob were first to get scrubbed. No more did I want skunk odor on my hands because of doing something routine. Next it was time to go for the cat. A squirt or two from an atomizer bottle, and he was set to run. Bethany soon had him and talked softly to him while I changed my tactic. After spraying a towel (instead of him), I washed him by rubbing down the long, odiferous hair until it was wet with the solution. Soon purrs rumbled from the cat, as he sensed help was finally on the way. He had grown weary of the lack of attention for several days and, quite likely, was also tired of the smell.

We knew we had washed enough when the odor was gone from the cat and us. It really is amazing how well this solution works to neutralize skunk smell—but we hope you never have to try it!

Next time I'm not waiting several days! Did I say next time? I sure hope there isn't!

Kevin Shank

BACK COVER:
Cinnamon (black) bear



The Mailbox

...continued from page 7

My Red-Tailed Visitor

One day as I was riding my bike to Grandpa's, I saw a big snake slithering across the road. I didn't want to drive over it, so I stopped.

While I sat there watching the snake, I heard a scream. I looked up and saw a red-tailed hawk sitting in the tree. I watched the hawk to see what it would do about the snake, and all at once he flew right down and perched on my handle bar. He looked back at me, then just sat there watching the snake. I reached out to touch him. He still just sat there. Finally, he hopped back onto my leg. I picked him up, totally forgetting about the snake. Here sat a hawk on my leg playing with my buttons. I also noticed he had a band on his foot. That's when I thought to myself that this bird was probably tame. I held him for a little bit, then set him back on the handle bar. He kept sitting there, but his focus was on the snake, not me. Suddenly he flew down, grabbed the snake, and flew away.

I was so excited, I took off for Grandpa's as fast as my bike would carry me. I could hardly wait to tell the rest of my family about my red-tailed visitor.

Eric Mast, 11
Dundee, OH

Do you have a nature experience you want to share, a question you'd like to ask, or a thought you want to share about something in *Nature Friend*? We want to hear from you! Write to: The Mailbox, 4253 Woodcock Lane, Dayton, VA 22821, or e-mail mailbox@naturefriendmagazine.com.

Skunk Spray Go Away

Dear Nature Friend,

Thanks for the skunk deodorizing recipe! We used it just two days after receiving the March magazine. We were coming home from town and saw a skunk near our driveway.

When we got to the house, Wayne got to the built-on entrance first and came back with the unwelcome news that there was a skunk in the entrance. Our dog food bag was ripped, and there was a pile of food on the floor.

Mommy had to go away in the evening. When leaving, she checked to make sure the skunk was gone. She couldn't see it, so we started cleaning up. Mommy said we should put the dog food in the basement so no more skunks would be attracted to it. Wayne turned the feed bag upside down so the hole would be on top. He tore the bag open a little more and dumped some of the spilt feed back into the bag. He and Melinda were bringing the feed bag in when Melinda saw a feather in the bag. All of a sudden the feather got bigger and she realized it was the skunk!! When it came out of the bag it jumped into the outside entrance where it had been. Wayne had nailed up a board to keep the skunk out of the entrance. The skunk somehow managed to get in between the board and the outside of the house. Then it sprayed!! We were so startled that we banged the door shut and just stood around not knowing what to do. It was quite late, so we waited until morning to put on the skunk deodorizer. It worked quite well, though the plywood still carries some odor. Thanks again.

Sincerely,

The Dueck Children
Arborg, MB

Dear Friends,

For those that missed the recipe and wish for it just in case, it is 1 quart of hydrogen peroxide, ¼ cup of baking

soda, and a squirt of liquid soap. Follow this with a clear-water rinse.

—Nature Friend

Sparrow Spat

Dear Nature Friend,

In our front bushes, we have a nesting pair of sparrows. We park our cars beside these bushes. The sparrows are attacking the mirrors and windows of our van. Mama says the male is trying to defend his mate, nest, and territory. Will this sparrow stop fighting himself in the mirror, or continue his odd fight?

The Oliver Children
Brocton, NY

Dear Friends,

We suspect the sparrow will stop fighting himself at the end of the nesting season. Some people put bags over their car's mirrors while the vehicle is parked for extended periods.

—Nature Friend

Peregrine Falcons

Dear Nature Friend,

I have an interest in peregrine falcons. I hope you do more "You Can Draws" on peregrine falcons. I have a little knowledge, but I want to learn more.

Richard Cameron DeJong

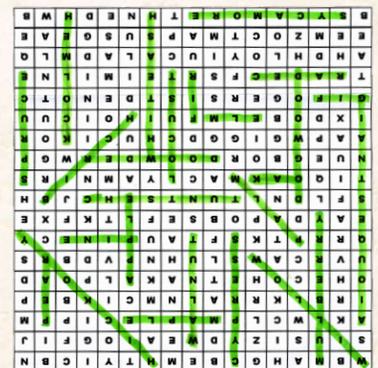
Dear Richard,

We picked the "Wondernose" article about peregrine falcons and then read your letter. You should find "Wondernose" interesting.

—Nature Friend

ANSWERS

Answers to Who Am I? on page 10: Common Wombat



Answers to Find the Trees on page 7:

1. lion; 2. antelope; 3. gazelle; 4. leopard; 5. cheetah; 6. hyena

Answers to Wild Animals Puzzle on page 6: