



*RUFFED GROUSE drumming.
Photo by Edward R. Abbott*



*MALE BLUEBIRD bringing food to young.
Photo by Bernard Hehl*

PHOTOGRAPHING WILDLIFE

by Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci

This spring two new men joined our wildlife refuge team. Edward Abbott and Bernard Hehl are both skilled photographers. They have state-of-the-art equipment and some wildlife experience. Neither, however, had ever seen a ruffed grouse or a wood duck close up.

Early in March I found droppings on the grouse's drumming log, where last year I had watched him perform his mating ritual. I set up a blind. On March 20, Ed Abbott entered the blind before daylight. That morning was chilly and overcast. It didn't look good for photographs.

Two hours after dawn, Ed came in, a grin on his face. Not only had he seen his first grouse, but he had watched him drum and had taken pictures. "The light wasn't good, but I may have something," he said. As it turned out, he got

great action shots of the upright stance and whirring wings of the drumming bird.

The ruffed grouse, who looks like a bobwhite quail with long tail and neck, beats his wings in a whirlwind of activity, making a thumping sound, faster and faster, until it resembles a distant motor revving up. The photos show a blur at times, and at other times stop the wings to reveal that the spread primaries extend from below the grouse's body to above his head.

Throughout the rest of March, and during April and May, Ed and Bernie took many photos of the drumming grouse, who appeared regularly, before dawn or shortly after, in all kinds of weather. Even a late snow did not deter his performance.

Meanwhile, Ed and Bernie took numerous shots of the wood

ducks who frequent the stream at Otter Dam. Here a permanent blind extends over water, where I throw kernels of corn each morning, except when the stream is frozen. Wood ducks come every day that the water is open. Although extremely wary, they appear to be unaware of people inside the blind, providing those people make no sound or movement. Easier than the grouse to photograph, they remain until there is good light. Often they step onto half-submerged logs to rest and preen in bright sunlight.

It is wood ducks who nest in hollow trees or outsize birdhouses with 4½-inch-diameter entrance hole. They prefer old trees leaning over the stream, where the new-hatched young can drop into the water. However, they will nest away from water if necessary,

(continued on next page)

Photographing Wildlife

where the mother will call her young from the nest and lead them over land to the nearest stream.

Before the middle of May, young bluebirds hatched in a bird-house at Squirrel Haven. This is the area along the road to the woods. The photographers were able to park not far from the nest and, using window mounts, take pictures from inside their cars. Many a morning they were on hand to photograph the parents feeding their young. After two weeks the young flew from the box.

For about two weeks they were guarded and taught by their parents. Then you might call them young adults. They were adult size, but still had speckled breasts and gray speckled backs. On June 20, the parent birds began to build a second nest in the same box, ready for a new brood. The female brought dry grass and pine needles while the male alighted on a dead branch nearby, where he fluttered his wings as though applauding his wife's homebuilding. He did none of the work himself, but he stood guard. The young appeared, but were not

allowed to interfere. Later, they would cooperate by helping to feed their younger siblings.

Ed and Bernie ventured by night to Muddy Bog, where the gray tree frog and the endangered Pine Barrens tree frog call during May and June. One particular Pine Barrens frog cooperated by remaining seated on a blueberry bush while numerous flash pictures caught his pale green and lavender color and dark throat patch, which he extended like a balloon while uttering his loud *Quank!*

Ed and Bernie got photos of several other elusive wild subjects, and vow to take more from season to season. □ □

VOICES

'SPEAKING OF ANIMALS' CELEBRATES ITS FIFTH YEAR

"Speaking of Animals..." (formerly "Animal Rights Forum"), a weekly cable television program produced and distributed by Animal Rights Information Service, Inc. (ARIS), celebrates its fifth year of providing educational television programming concerning animal rights issues.

ARIS, a grassroots organization based in New York City, is unique in the animal protection community. ARIS produces numerous animal issue documentaries and actively distributes them for broadcast.

"Speaking of Animals..." which is currently broadcast in dozens of cities in the US and Canada, presents hard-hitting provocative documentaries and interview programs. ARIS's programs such as "Fur Crimes," "Ivory: Digging the Elephants' Graveyard," "From Mice to Men? (The Use of Animals in Experimental Psychology)," "Animals Used as 'Entertainment'," and "Teach Your Children Well" provide viewers with comprehensive information.

ARIS also produces fast-paced, thought-provoking interview programs such as "A Conversation with Bob Barker" and "Probing the Mind of the Vivisector"—and more.

If you would like to help put "Speaking of Animals..." on television in your community, or make a tax deductible contribution to ARIS to help cover production and distribution costs, contact ARIS at P.O. Box 20672, Columbus Circle Station, New York, N.Y. 10023.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY 'GRANNY GAZETTE'!

Faith Senior, editor, publisher and founder of the *Pet Gazette*, celebrated her 84th birthday in July. To mark the event, The AA-VS made a donation to the magazine, which was used to buy a new—and much-needed—typewriter.

Despite a heart attack and confinement to a wheel chair, Mrs. Senior single-handedly turns out the *Pet Gazette*, which is replete with pictures, stories and poems about animals. She is quick to

give credit to the successes of various animal groups, often inserting literature about their campaigns in her magazine.

The *Pet Gazette* has been publishing for five years. Subscriptions to the quarterly magazine are available for \$10/year. Write to: the *Pet Gazette*, 1309 N. Halifax, Daytona Beach, FL 32118.

*The monkey screams
in pain,
As another electrode
bores deep into its brain.
No one hears
the rabbit's cries,
As those chemicals
eat away its eyes.
Hard at work
the researchers toil,
To drown those mice
in cooking oil.
One more cut
and one more jab,
Cruel, cold laughter
throughout this lab.
The workday is over
and the night is still,
Tomorrow—another day
to maim and kill.*

Diane L. Deleasa
(AA-VS member)