fluttering around. Although I never heard this owl call back, the eastern screech owl has perched about ten feet away from me in the state of Maryland, and has begun to call.

Whether or not the birds are defending their territory from an intruder, or merely responding to their mating call, I am not sure, for I have never been divebombed by these birds.

**OBSERVATIONS IN CAPTIVITY**

The tropical screech owl has fascinated me in the period of time that I have kept him. Having been hit by a car, his wing is broken, and has mended in the wrong way, making him an unreleasable subject. Although he can fly for some distance when I release him in a large room, he is not capable of a sustained flight or hunting on his own.

The plumage of owls is incredibly suited for night life, since they are endowed with specialized barbs on their flight feathers, making their flight noiseless. I have noticed this adaptation when releasing the owl for exercise. The plumage is also very soft, and one characteristic that I have noted is that the eyelids are independently maneuvered, being able to open one eye to view its surroundings, while keeping the other one closed. Another interesting aspect about the eyelids is that they are feathered, a very unique feature.

Since owls have binocular vision, like humans, they are able to move their heads in any direction. Much to the surprise of many people, owls can see just as well during the day as during the night.

In one instance, when I had placed the food inside the owl's enclosure, I noticed how similar he appeared to the burrowing owl, *Speotyto cunicularia*, of the drier areas of the United States. With legs extended and ear tufts suppressed, he was most reminiscent of this northern bird.

I find owls to be extremely interesting avicultural subjects, and much can be learned about their behavior in the wild by studying them and their habits in captivity. Since breeding most owls in a captive environment is relatively simple, increased effort should be placed in rearing these most fascinating creatures of the night.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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