



One Man's Owl: Abridged Edition

Bernd Heinrich , Alice Calaprice (Designed by)

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This engaging chronicle of how the author and the great horned owl "Bubo" came to know one another over three summers spent in the Maine woods--and of how Bubo eventually grew into an independent hunter--is now available in an edition that has been abridged and revised so as to be more accessible to the general reader.

One Man's Owl: Abridged Edition Details

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Author : Bernd Heinrich , Alice Calaprice (Designed by)

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From Reader Review One Man's Owl: Abridged Edition for online ebook

Katharine says

I loved this account of Heinrich's raising of a great horned owl, Bubo, who had tumbled from his nest during a snowstorm. Heinrich is a naturalist, who truly lives by his convictions. He spends part of the year living in a small, rustic cabin, called Kerflunk, in the Maine woods. It is where he seems to feel most at home. Bubo and Heinrich establish a very close bond. So close that Bubo shortened some guests' visits, by dive-bombing them whenever they ventured outside Kerflunk. The text is accompanied by some delightful photographs of Bubo as a fluffy owlet, of Bubo taking baths in a pond, and of Bubo, fully grown and looking quite competent and fierce after Heinrich painstakingly teaches him how to hunt. This book will be enjoyed by all age groups.

Leo says

Not as good as his raven books, but charming and mildly informative nonetheless.

Sara Johnson says

Fairly short read but not my favorite of Heinrichs work. It was written diary style and was mostly anti-climatic. Otherwise a nice naturalist read on raising an owl and the surprising struggles associated and of re-releasing into the wild

Matthew Karns says

Wonderful story of the author's 2 1/2 years spent with an owl he rescued one winter's morning after it had fallen from a nest into a snow bank. As a biologist, the author used this opportunity to study the owl's behaviors and interactions with other birds and animals, and the telling of what he learned makes for a wonderful read. Bubo is a true character with a great deal of personality, and his tale is told with loving respect and wonder. Recommended reading for anyone with an interest in nature and definitely a must read for owl lovers.

Bonny says

One Man's Owl is a highly readable account of the author's experiences raising a rescued great horned owl chick. The book is an excellent combination of scientific information, observations, and details along with the personal, anecdotal, and even philosophical.

There may be a slight bit of digression into wordiness, but if you ever wanted to know almost anything about owls, Heinrich has written it here.

Book Bingo 2016 - With an animal as a key character

Monica says

‘Mi Búho’ es una cándida pero rigurosa y bien documentada historia personal, narrada en forma de diario con fecha y acompañada de unas preciosas ilustraciones propias, de un hombre que recoge y acoge a una cría de búho de tan sólo unas pocas semanas de una muerte segura a manos de unos graznos (enemigos mortales de esta especie de alados).

A parte de describirnos la anatomía, comportamientos y día a día con Búho, que permaneció junto a él durante nada menos que tres años, el autor, gran amante de la naturaleza y todo su entorno animal, va reflexionando acerca del ser humano y su poco respeto hacía todo lo alieno a éste, la ecología, el eterno debate entre las educación y el conveniente desarrollo conductual de las especies salvajes, la propia conducta de las familias, la naturaleza, el significado del cariño y quién nos lo aporta, la inteligencia de unas especies en detrimento de otras, jactadas de superiores, y acerca de la soledad y los lazos indelebles, entre otros temas.

Conforme va adquiriendo Cáliz temporal su relación con ésta curioso e importante espécimen: el búho cuernudo, los sentimientos de afecto, familiaridad, admiración y respeto crecen entre ambos. El escritor de éste personalísimo diario de enseñará a cazar en la naturaleza, a distinguir sus alimentos preferidos, a convivir con otras especies animales como el gato doméstico de su mujer, al cual no le hace nada por aprender a cohabitar y tratar socialmente, e incluso con un par de Graznos, en cautiverio para ser juego de la caza con Búho, pero que al final convivirán con éste y él con ellos cómo hermanos, con sus tira y afloja. Curiosamente, búho no se escapa cuando su cuidador / padre “adoptivo” humano (comen, cazan, se dan arrumacos e incluso cantan juntos, hasta en su etapa adulta, como cuando era un buhillo) lo deja ir por primera vez en libertad. Él está bien en su compañía y la del entorno salvaje de las montañas en el que pasan el verano. Así que seremos testigos de las diferentes etapas a nivel evolutivo biológico de búho cría a adulto, sus dotes y habilidades respecto a otras especies para su sustento y día a día.

Llega un momento crítico, cuando se lo llevan las autoridades durante un tiempo, en parte para rehabilitarlo. Búho se torna irascible, salvaje. Entonces, armado de paciencia y mediante el trato gentil y cariñoso del escritor, búho retornará a su antiguo yo, su manifestación salvaje, pero amable y respetuosa. **TODAS LAS ESPECIES NECESITAN UN EJEMPLO EN EL CUAL APOYARSE Y APRENDER, ALGUIEN A QUIEN RESPETAR Y QUERRER. QUEDA MUY CLARO CON LA VIVENCIA DE ÉSTE LIBRO!** Pero siempre hay un final en todo, por más doloroso que sea debe ocurrir, es parte de la vida y de las relaciones. **DICEN QUE SI QUIERES A ALGUIEN DEBES DEJARLE MARCHAR, SÍ, EL AUTOR, AÚN SABIENDO QUE NO ESTARÍA ETERNAMENTE CON BÚHO, YA LO NECESITABA EN SU DÍA, ERA PARTE DE SU FAMILIA.** Al pasar las estaciones, y conforme las ausencias de búho eran más notables y prolongadas, y al permanecer en las mismas montañas de verano pero en un refugio natural construido para él, llega un momento en el cual predomina la libertad sobre el cariño, cómo cuando marchamos del hogar para aprender por nosotros mismos.

El final del diario es simplemente demoledor y delicado, haciendo buen uso de la metáfora del final del último estío con Búho y el comienzo de un nuevo camino para los dos, además de verdad, pues el autor refleja y reflexiona acerca su circunstancia personal coincidente a tres bandas. Todo pasa por algo, y todo viene junto, lo bueno y lo malo.

ASÍ PUES, UNA NARRACIÓN PERSONALÍSIMA A MODO DE DIARIO, ENCANTADORA, DELICADA PERO REALISTA, ADEMÁS DE UN CUADERNO DE ESTUDIO DETALLADO DE LA ACTIVIDAD DE UN BÚHO, BIEN ARGUMENTADO Y DOCUMENTADO SOBRE SU CRIANZA, EVOLUCIÓN Y DESTETE HUMANO.

UN LIBRO QUE CREO BIEN PUEDE GUSTAR A CASI TODO EL MUNDO, POR SU PARTICULARIDAD Y ENCANTO PERSONALIZADO.

dari says

The ultimate question of this book is why would corvids mob owls instead of simply hiding or whatever takes to attract less attention to them? To test his hypotheses, he hand raises 2 crows that eventually end up interacting with the owl and reveal the answer.

The writing is, as always for Heinrich, excellent. Plenty of descriptions of isolated details of how it is to live with an owl, what kind of cuisine it prefers, what kind of nonsensical behavior it displays at times...

The book feels somehow incomplete, quite possibly because personal drama creeps in (separation from his then-wife). But I like this journal like aspect of his writing.

Genine Franklin-Clark says

I started this several days ago, neglected to put it on my currently reading list until now, when I went to list it as finished. I enjoy most books about animals and this was no exception. The great horned owl was rescued after he fell from the nest (where his siblings remained.) I didn't see him as being kept as a pet, although he was kept inside initially and slowly weaned to the outside and to hunting and living on his own.

I look forward to reading more by this author.

Jake says

Bernd Heinrich is like a modern day Thoreau, with an added degree of difficulty to his endeavors. No, it's not enough for my man Bernd to disappear into the woods for months at a time. He likes to tame and study wild animals while Grizzly Adamsing it. In One Man's Owl, duh, he rescues and rehabilitates a great horned owl. But no! Living in a tiny primitive cabin with a crazy, overprotective owl isn't nearly enough for Bernd. He also raises and trains a pair of crows, just to see what would happen during a crow/owl showdown. Warriors! Come out and plaaaayyyyyyy! And he tends to casually mention how he's in training for something called an ultra-marathon. Oh Bernd. You overachieving bag of nuts.

Seriously. This book is effing riveting. While living with Bubo the Owl, Heinrich kept a detailed, daily journal, and that's essentially One Man's Owl. His writing is direct and without any sort of whimsy, but he clearly loves what he's doing and his surroundings and the simple joy of discovery, so the whole saga is almost whimsical by default.

Now excuse me while I go watch four hours of TV while the real Bernd is probably making peace in the Middle East because of some shit he learned while watching a single anthill for seven weeks.

I have wasted my life.

Mark says

The author, a naturalist and biology professor, spends a few months a year in his rustic cabin in Maine. Early one summer he finds an owlet, blown out of its nest by a storm and takes the bird back to his cabin. This is our introduction to Bubo, a Great Horned Owl, that the author raises for the next 3 summers. He feeds the bird mainly road-kill and slowly tries to adapt the raptor to fend for himself.

This is a wonderful book, for bird & nature lovers and Heinrich is an excellent writer, with a profound love of nature. The star of the book is Bubo though. A fierce, quirky and playful bird, that can exude menace one moment and nibble your fingers affectionately the next. I am not sure I could spend such close proximity with this bird for such a long period but I sure loved reading about the experience.

Stephen says

At the time, I was helping care for a very injured great horned owl at the nature center where I now work. It was an incredibly strong bird with an intense stare and a grip like the proverbial vice. (I say this, even though I've never put my hand in a vice, but I have been gripped by a scared great horned owl, so my comparison is purely hypothetical.)

When I discovered Bernd Heinrich's "One Man's Owl," I had to read it. The book details the author's rescue of an orphan great horned owlet knocked from its nest in a snowstorm. He then was forced to raise it to adulthood—mostly by feeding it roadkill—and train it to be wild. Not an easy task, because once a wild animal has been fed by humans, they can quickly abandon their hunting skills. Growing up naturally, young great horned owls are taught to hunt by their parents. In this case, Heinrich had to be the teacher. But where do you begin?

Heinrich is a professor of biology at the University of Vermont. This is a wonderful book, written by one of the best scientist writers working today.

Petra X says

This, like all Heinrich's books, is a really fantastic read. The owl, Bubo, is observed both as pet-companion and scientifically. Here he is living in a small wooden cabin in the woods with a very large, 2' tall, 4-5' wingspan crazy, possessive owl that he raised from fluffy owlet mostly on road kill. The owl is extremely possessive and does not see why Heinrich seeks other company and so is given to dive-bombing visitors to shorten their stay. Heinrich who is always thinking up new ways of testing his theories on animals, adopts a pair of crows and tames them in order to engineer a confrontation between them and the big owl.

Heinrich is a very talented writer with a gift for describing the absolutely minute details of nature in his woods in a way that makes it seem as huge and important as it is for the animal itself. Especially with ravens, always Heinrich's favourites, but now with the owl, the animals become as rounded and complete as people, not one dimensional creatures that are nice to have around.

This isn't my favourite Bernd Heinrich book, although all are 5 star. I think my favourite has to be Mind of the Raven: Investigations and Adventures with Wolf-Birds in which I learned just how easy it is for anyone to climb an 80' tree, if you know the right technique. (And I do now, but I can't see that I will ever need to

put it into practice. Still you never know...)

Read 30 August 2011, reviewed 30 May 2016

Trish Graboske says

Frustratingly, Goodreads does not list the version I read, which is the original, complete 1987 edition from Princeton University Press. It is extremely interesting to see how Mr Heinrich studies nature, by close observation of everything that an animal does. He also writes very well, but I knew that from years of reading his columns in Natural History magazine.

Mark Carey says

Heinrich's account of his time spent with Bubo is a cross between a journal and a scientific paper. His observations are acute and his understanding grows over time. The antics of Bubo and two crows that join the family are educational and amusing. A great read for the naturalists among us.

Janet Mahlum says

I collect owls, not live ones, of course, but owls on towels and sheets, owl mugs, owl cookie jar, owl chalk board, owl etc. Also, my youngest brother had a South American Savannah hawk for a number of years so I understand the logistics of keeping a predator bird. I have dozens of amazing stories about Savannah. A friend and co-volunteer at the library donated books section had this book come across her desk and passed it on to me to read and return. Some of the book I liked very, very much, some not so much. I found it informative and interesting. Another plus factor in my enjoyment is that Maine is one of the few states I haven't been to yet and it is on my bucket list. I really enjoyed reading about being in the Maine woods. I fell in love with Bubo and found he reminded me a lot of dogs and cats that have been in my life.
