

enemy sheltering in a hollow tree or perhaps beneath the top of a lawyer. Instantly the alarm will be given. Most of the small birds in the vicinity will take up the cry, flock together, and mob the unfortunate morepork, which puffs out its feathers and glares helpless defiance at its dimly seen attackers. No attempt seems to be made to peck it, but soon it will seek safety in flight to a more gloomy part of the forest.

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## THE HAWK'S PLACE IN NATURE.

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### A Friend of Farmers.

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A very interesting book "The Hawks of North America" (by John Richard May), has just been published by the National Association of Audubon Societies, one of the world's leading organisations for a proper conservation of wild life.

"Do you realise," the preface states, "that most hawks, in spite of the widespread prejudice against the members of this group of birds, should be classed among the best friends of the farmer because of their destruction of injurious rodents and other pests, and that very few hawks ever molest poultry! This volume has been prepared in the hope that by presenting the facts it may arouse a more friendly interest in these generally unappreciated and maligned birds through a better knowledge of their real habits and their place in the economy of nature.

"Just what do we mean when we call a bird a 'hawk?' To the average uninformed farmer a hawk is a robber of poultry yards; to the gunner, sportsman and game-breeder, a hawk is 'vermin' to be ruthlessly destroyed; to the ammunition manufacturer and sporting-goods dealer a hawk is an unprotected bird and therefore another target; to the biologist a hawk is a wonderful example of adaptation for life in a certain definite niche, a check upon harmful rodents, a control against the over-production of normally useful creatures and an invaluable instrument in preserving the 'balance of nature'; to the vast and rapidly increasing number of nature lovers and amateur bird students a hawk is one of the finest and most interesting forms of bird life, worthy of protection at all times . . . . .

"It is evident that hawks must play an important role in nature or they would not be found in such large numbers of species and so widely distributed, but until a comparatively few years ago man had very little conception of what that part might be . . . . .