

Not really a Scuttle Butt but perhaps a little fun anyway



Whooo are you

photo Rod Palm

Our neighbor, Elizabeth Henstridge, here on Strawberry Island came over this morning big eyed and somewhat ruffled saying that it was a miserable day so she went to light her wood stove. When she opened the stove's door, 2 big yellow eyes were staring at her. Yikes, There is an owl in her stove and it's not even Halloween yet!. A short walk along the boardwalk, through the Salmon Berry tunnel and, "Yep that sure does look like an owl in that thar stove all right". Having had considerable experience handling wild bird and with ever the urge to share skills with younger folks, I told them that they need a towel to cover the bird so that he will not move then feel around until you have one hand on each side of the him before lifting. "Ok Eric McIvor (Elizabeth's partner), you can't hesitate, in one quick movement you need to reach in and cover the bird". A couple of hesitant lunges and the owl is on to the towel and easily evades it; Eric admits to feeling, (to put it politely) uncomfortable with the procedure. Elizabeth is up next; she is more confident but..."fail". Now, the owl is out of the stove and onto the top shelf in the small cluttered pantry. Ok, this is all too stressful for the little bird so the old guy will have to do it. Clear the boxes off the deep freezer heft up my creaky bones, clear more boxes off adjacent shelves in order to have a clear swoop and - the bird is safely in the towel. Ok, now's the getting down part with no free hand for support. "Alright I need a stool to step down to". Squat on the freezer and step down to the stool. Well that wasn't too bad except that my joints are locked and I'm stuck with both hands on the toweled bird, one foot on the stool and one on the freezer. "Elizabeth, you have to carefully slide my foot off the freezer... thank you." Out the door and onto the porch rail, slowly peel off the towel and he's off to a nearby Cedar branch. With his head turned around in true Exorcist fashion he calmly stares back at us as if to wisely say, "Well that was interesting but get a chimney cap dolt."

Northern Saw-Whet owls are only about 8" tall and range from Mexico to Alaska preferring coniferous forests where there are lots of mice, voles, screws and other such delectable's...Rod