



# Odd Pets



## Odd Mascot

Army mascots have been many and various, but one of the oddest dates back to the War of 1812.

It seems that General William Harrison's troops were enroute to join Shelby's army at Harrodsburg, and about a mile from that town they saw two pigs fighting. They all stopped to watch, but no sooner had they done this than the battle was over. However, the victorious pig decided to follow them. At nightfall the pig set up camp near that of the Kentuckians. He followed them all the way through Kentucky to Ohio; swam the river at Cincinnati and was there awaiting the soldiers when they got across. He travelled with the troops to Lake Erie, and there sailed with them to Bass Island. However, he refused to embark again for Canada and was left on the island to carry on by himself.

The troops of this group were defeated at Raisin River, but other soldiers from Kentucky helped to break the British hold on the Northwest Territory. When the troops returned to Bass Island, there was the pig waiting to take his place with them. He followed them back to Kentucky; he lived on Governor Shelby's farm for several years, and was the guest of honor at many company reunions.

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## A BAT FOR A PET

There are few stranger pets than a tame bat. Charles Derennes, an observant Frenchman and true friend of birds and animals wrote a fascinating book entitled: "The Life of the Bat," in which he told the story of Noctu, a bat which he taught to eat from his hand and enjoy his fondling.

### Human Expressions

Mr. Derennes considers the bat one of Nature's most interesting creatures, and he insists that his pet Noctu had "the most human expressions that I have ever observed in the face of an animal."

Many are those that would shun the bat as a weird creature and consider the keeper of such a pet as slightly on the peculiar side. It is true that the animal is far from handsome, but after studying it more closely most people will find it a tolerable creature.

### Sensitivity of Wings

The bat will tremble all over when you hold it in your hands. The reason for this lies in the fact that the bats' wings are perhaps the most sensitive sense-organs in the world. The touch of your palm grates on the wings like a rasping file.

### Wings "See"

The ears and large wings of the bat enable him to fly through the deepest darkness, the thickest forest without striking a single tree trunk or branch. It is the bats wings which "see" in the dark. They are made up of a close network of fine nerves which enable the animal to detect in advance any obstacle in its path.

Bats have been blindfolded by experimenters and then have been released in a large room where many ropes were suspended from the ceiling. The bats fitted with their usual speed without touching a single rope.

### Usefulness

Bat shelters and roosts are kept in certain parts of the South for the good the animals do in riding the section of huge quantities of flying moths and other harmful insects. Though the bird is odd, it is useful.

### DOTTED LINE?

Johnny, aged seven, had been taken to the zoo to see the animals.

He stood before the spotted leopard's cage for a few minutes, staring intensely. Then, turning to his mother, he asked, "Say, is that the Dotted Lion that everybody wants Dad to sign on?"

## Mouse Cleans its Fur By Chewing Tobacco

A wild mouse that chews tobacco for a serious purpose is a pet of Ernest P. Walker, assistant director of the National Zoological Park. The tobacco is not chewed "for fun," but apparently to provide an insecticide to keep his fur clear of pestering parasites.

The little animal, a grasshopper mouse, lives in a cage on the corner of Mr. Walker's desk in his home. His name is Ony—short for his full zoological title, *onychomys leucogaster*, which is rather too much name for so small a mouse. Every evening he gets several hours' liberty.

"Frequently I have noticed," reports Mr. Walker, after he had been running about the desk, that very small cigar stubs which I had left in the ash tray had been carried to his favorite location on the desk and completely demolished.

"My first thought was that he was merely amusing himself; but this explanation did not satisfy me. Recently I offered him one of my small cigar stubs after he had been without such material for a short time. He immediately took it, carried it to his favorite corner, held it in his hands and took a small bite from the end I had held in my mouth. He chewed the morsel briefly and then bent around, separated his fur with his hands and placed the chewed tobacco on his skin at the base of the fur. He took another bite, chewed it briefly and placed it similarly. He did the same thing at various parts of his back, thighs and under parts. This procedure has since been witnessed by both my wife and myself and by visitors on several occasions."

## SWAPPERS PAGE (Continued)

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