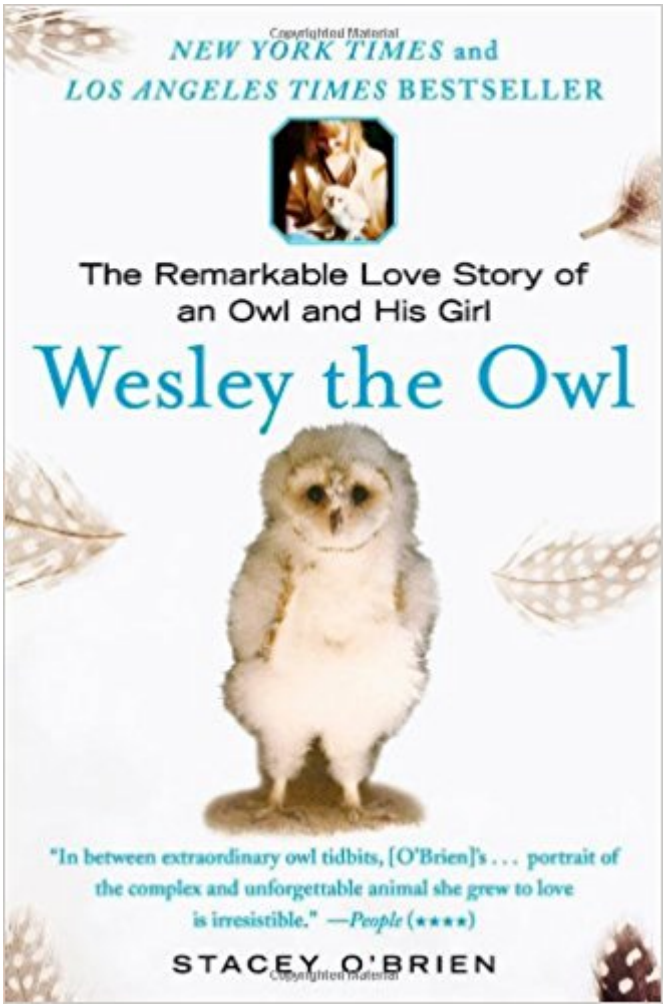
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Wesley The Owl: The Remarkable Love Story Of An Owl And His Girl



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Synopsis

On ValentineÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Day 1985, biologist Stacey OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Brien adopted Wesley, a baby barn owl with an injured wing who could not have survived in the wild. Over the next nineteen years, OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Brien studied WesleyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s strange habits with both a tender heart and a scientistÃ¢â ¬â„¢s eyeÃ¢â ¬â •and provided a mice-only diet that required her to buy the rodents in bulk (28,000 over the owlÃ¢â ¬â„¢s lifetime). She watched him turn from a helpless fluff ball into an avid comÃ Â- municator with whom she developed a language all their own. Eventually he became a gorgeous, gold-and-white macho adult with a heart-shaped face who preened in the mirÃ Â- ror and objected to visits by any other males to Ã¢â ¬Å“hisÃ¢â ¬Â• house. OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Brien also brings us inside CaltechÃ¢â ¬â„¢s prestigious research community, a kind of scientific Hogwarts where resident owls sometimes flew freely from office to office and eccentric, brilliant scientists were extraordinarily committed to studying and helping animals; all of them were changed by the animals they loved. As OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Brien gets close to Wesley, she makes astonishing discoveries about owl behavior, intelligence, and communication, coining the term Ã¢â ¬Å“The Way of the OwlÃ¢â ¬Â• to describe his noble behavior. When OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Brien develops her own life-threatening illÃ Â- ness, the biologist who saved the life of a helpless baby bird is herself rescued from death by the insistent love and courage of this wild animal. Enhanced by wonderful photographs, > is a thoroughly engaging, heartÃ Â- warming, often funny story of a complex, emotional, non-human being capable of reason, play, and, most important, love and loyalty. Translated into eight languages and named an > EditorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Choice, > is sure to be cherished by animal lovers everywhere.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Owls permeate literature and mythology, an ancient animal ("some 97 million years" old) that has fascinated for centuries; still, few people have had as intimate an encounter with the mysterious night birds as biologist O’Brien. As a student researcher at Caltech, she fell in love with an injured four-day-old barn owl and seized the opportunity to adopt him permanently. She named him Wesley, and for 19 years kept, cared for and studied him, forging a tremendous relationship with the still-wild animal, as well as a vast understanding of his abilities, instincts and habits: "He was my teacher, my companion, my child, my playmate, my reminder of God." Her heartwarming story is buttressed by lessons on owl folklore, temperament ("playful and inquisitive"), skills, and the brain structure that gives them some amazing abilities, like spotting a mouse "under three feet of snow by homing in on just the heartbeat." It also details her working life among fellow scientists, a serious personal health crisis, and the general ins and outs of working with animals. This memoir will captivate animal lovers and, though not necessarily for kids, should hold special appeal for Harry Potter fans who’ve always envied the boy wizard his Hedwig. Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"I love Wesley the Owl! Not since Konrad Lorenz have I read such an honest, vivid, and revealing account of the rich and complex life of an individual bird. Stacey O’Brien has captured the essence of the soul of an unforgettable owl. Affectionate, quirky, joyous, and wise, Wesley shows us the Way of the Owl -- the way to God and grace. This book is destined to become a classic, and will deepen importantly the way we understand birds." -- Sy Montgomery, author of The Good Good Pig"Wesley the Owl is beautiful, funny, transcendental, fascinating, and powerful. I loved this book!" -- Lynne Cox, author of Grayson and Swimming to Antarctica"This compelling story sheds a bright, shining light into the world of animal emotions and the powerful bonds forged between animals and humans. A heartfelt journey of life and love with one of nature’s wild creatures, Wesley the Owl is a must-read story of faith, compassion, and selfless devotion." -- Jay Kopelman, author of From Baghdad, With Love and From Baghdad to America"Most ’me and my bird’ stories are mildly entertaining at best, but Wesley the Owl is a different animal altogether. Stacey O’Brien got to know this owl with a unique combination of deep scientific understanding and rare emotional intensity, and the result is stunning, unforgettable. Read this book and you will never see owls, or humans, in the

same light again." -- Kenn Kaufman, author of Kingbird Highway and Flights Against the Sunset"This fun book reminded me of Marley & Me, but with wings. Warm, weird, and wonderful, Wesley the Owl is proof that man's best friend sometimes has feathers." -- Mark Obmascik, author of The Big Year"An inside look at the mind of an owl. If you are interested in animal intelligence, you should read this book." -- Temple Grandin, author of Animals in Translation"The best of love stories between two intelligent beings, told (by the human) with good humor and remarkable insights into the mind of an owl -- I couldn't put it down." -- Donald Kroodsma, Ph.D., professor emeritus at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and author of The Singing Life of Birds"[S]weet, quirky memoir....[T]his little guy's such a character." -- USA Today"Wesley will make you wonder if owls are not at least as wise as humans and as capable of compassion. Wesley the Owl will stretch your notions about the limits of interspecies communication and love. It will entertain, delight and, finally, cause you to weep. Guaranteed." -- Sam Keen, author of Sightings: Extraordinary Encounters With Ordinary Birds"Stacey O'Brien tells the intriguing story of how her life was changed and rearranged when she attempted to tame and raise Wesley -- a barn owl. She shows us how she was ultimately repaid with his love and devotion, and given glimpses into the mind of an animal that has an unexpected ability to understand human language and to communicate. Fascinating!" -- Stanley Coren, psychologist and author of How Dogs Think and Why Does My Dog Act That Way?

This is a wonderful and educational story of a woman who adopts an injured owl. It is moving, funny, and if you don't cry at the end, you are not human! It is well written and has great illustrations. I liked this book so much that I have a copy of my own and have also purchased 4 copies for gifts. The recipients of the gift books have also been very impressed by the story. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in animals and people.

Not quite finished with this charming book, but enjoying it very much. If you love owls this book is a must read. I am amazed at how challenging it was for the author to take on the task of rIsing an orphaned Barn Owl. As much as I fantisized about (somehow) owning an owl, this reveales the reality of such a challenge and how daunting the responsibility would be to take on such a task.Recommend this to anyone doing wildlife rehab or anyone who just loves wildlife. Facinating facts about owls and thier ecological place in the world.

With nearly eighty reviews at the time I write this, there probably isn't much more stellar insight that I can give, which hasn't already been given so much more eloquently. However, I will add my voice to

the growing collection in appreciation for the amazing story and for the brave author. This book, for me, was one of my "on a whim" buys. I was poking around for information about owls one night, and the book popped up in the particular search that I was doing. The cover appealed to me, the "Look Inside" feature captured my attention, and I was indeed interested in learning "The Way of the Owl" concept because I actually wondered if it could be compared / contrasted in any fashion to "The Way of the Tao" of Chinese philosophy, the embracing of harmony, allowing nature to take its course, the recognition, yet appreciation for opposites, Yin Yang, etc. I know that is a strange connection to have made! However, something in the preview material I read and the circle-shaped picture on the cover--with the lady and owl--inspired that line of thinking and questioning. Here was a vivid, modern story filled with opposites, all in the process of achieving harmony: male-female; human-bird; civilized-wild; diurnal -nocturnal; educated-uneducated; pain-pleasure; confusion-calm; discomfort-comfort; life-death; hopelessness-hope; weakness-strength; truth-lie; cowardice-courage; good-bad; safety-danger; protection-distruction; spare-kill; justice-mercy; natural-unnatural; predator-prey; fingers-talons; freedom-captivity --to name only a few! I wanted to experience the story for myself. Also...being something of Harry Potter fan, I am attracted to owl stories or clever owls as characters within stories. So, I ordered the book in the expectation that there would be some genuine connections and nuggets of wisdom, spirit, hope, compassion, humor within the pages.I actually read (perhaps the verb should be devoured) the book the same day it arrived in the mail! LOL :) And yes! I found a few intriguing connections in Wesley’s Way (his own owl nature) and with Taoism’s "letting nature have its course." "Wesley the Owl" is NOT a book on Taoism or really any particular religion, yet one cannot help but find some strong (inspiring) spiritual threads in this beautiful tapestry of love, devotion, and life. As the story unfolds, readers see that the unreleasible wild owl, of course, is a being of nature, still operating according to his own deep instincts and simple interpretations of the world, though he, for his survival, must adapt to live in human environments just as his human companion, Stacey O’Brien, must adapt to live with him as he is, feathers, mice, and all. He and his human mommy-mate work together to achieve a new harmony--a balance, where opposites beings are married to the same "greater than self" ideas: routines, rhythms, relationships, sacrifice, and trust. For me, the most stirring statements in the book that capture all my ramblings above are these:"To that which you tame, you owe your life" (Page 18). And O’Brien’s story proves this!"It seems to be universally understood among all sentient animals, even reptiles, that the eyes are the windows to the mind of the being within." (Page 53-54; HP fans will appreciate this passage.)"Owls do not tolerate lies" (Page 95)."I had chose to tame him and thereby made him vulnerable. I had taught him to trust me implicitly, no matter what. After so

many years this trust was perfect and unbroken.....the Way of the Owl. You commit for life, you finish what you start, you give unconditional love, and that is enough. I looked into the eyes of the owl, found the way of God there..." (Page 211).Lao Tzu, the Chinese philosopher, is credited with saying, "Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage" and "I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures." [quotes from [...] /l/lao_tzu.html] Wesley the Owl's story definitely exhibits the first quote. Stacey O'Brien, her family, her friends, and special barn owl created a powerful, life-preserving, life-enhancing circle of love that is refreshing in today's fast-paced, ego-driven, often selfish world. Both Wesley and Stacey were saved by love. // Through working with Wesley, the humans learned to appreciate the three most important lessons of living (treasures): simplicity --in a steady diet of one item, mice; patience--in sharing space with an intelligent, vocal non-human who had his own personality, needs, wishes, fears, expectations, and requests; compassion--in the daily, weekly, monthly, yearly care-giving to a wild animal that might have otherwise have died.So, in my opinion, this is a book worth reading. I enjoyed it from cover to cover because it opened my mind to new worlds and to new perspectives on ideas related to philosophy, science, and humanity. I would recommend it for those who are considering "wild pets," especially for HP fans who are thinking how cool it would be to have an owl! I would recommend it for newlywed and for new parents. I would recommend it for high school and college reading lists. However, due to some of detailed descriptions and events in the book, I think the readers should be at least 13 or 14 or better...with adult supervision for young teens, especially those who may have questions or concerns. PARENTS' NOTE: This is a book that openly discusses natural, personal, and often mature topics. Certain parts may create some serious concerns and / or strong categorical rejections for some readers, particularly those who hold certain political, economic, social, moral, or religious beliefs:1) Preparing / killing the mice for the owl to eat. These sections may disturb young readers if they are not taught about predator-prey relationships or about the care and feeding of unusual animal "pets;" they may disturb readers concerned about animals rights and the ethics of science and scientific research. (I confess to being disturbed by some of these passages myself though I understand that Wesley had to eat, and in his situation, he could not obtain the items himself, naturally from the wild as free barn owls would do. Forgive me, Ms. O'Brien, but I could not keep mice meat in my freezer / refrigerator or use my microwave to defrost it. If a bird lived with me, he would have to be able to stomach turkey, hamburger, and KFC! LOL :)2) Owl excretions...er... and Owl sex... [No further comment! :)]3) Career & life style choices, activities, and attitudes of some of the people within the story, including the author herself.In my opinion, this book is best enjoyed by those who honor

diversity and who keep an opened, inquisitive mind. It can be helpful for those who want to stretch their readerships by exploring people and activities outside of their regular patterns.

Wesley the Owl is a beautiful story of a wonderful barn owl and his human, and how they both grew up together. I had never heard of it before, and it is required reading for my Book Group up in the Lost Coast of California. In this crazy world we always need something inspiring and our wild friends always have a lot to teach and share with us. Include it in your book-reading also. Delivery service from and the seller arrived 2 days ahead of promised date.

I wish there were more stars to give this book! I was caught from the first page by this wonderful story. How I admire this young woman for her bravery, caring, kindness, intelligence, work ethics, and on and on! I fell in love with Wesley! And, as Stacey said would happen, I cried when he died. Oh, yes!! There is a heaven for our wonderful animal loves - and we will see them again. It's just the getting on without them that is hard. I still tear up over my beautiful Juanita, gone 2 years now. I recommend this book for anyone - not just animal lovers. Everyone will read about a true love between beings that is so life confirming. Bless you, Stacey, for sharing!

I can't say enough positive about this book. Super story and very well written. A tale I will carry in my heart forever. Ranks right up there with Merle's Door. The tale of a woman who adopts a non-releasable wild owlet and the life they share together after. Delightful book that made me really appreciate owls.

I happened across this book while I was listening to the author speak on NPR. I tried to find it, but could not. That was years ago. Fast forward a few years, and during a yoga meditation an owl visits me. I have always been a believer and a skeptic. Whatever the reason it had me wanting to find this book, and I did. It is amazing. I loved every word. It also made me realize how far we have come in communicating with other sentient beings. It was a message I needed to hear. Thank you for writing this book.

I like birds and have been amazed by their intelligence, so I was not surprised to learn about Wesley's ability to communicate. I was utterly enchanted by this story of a naturalist and the baby owl she adopts. The details of their bond and 19 years together are remarkable and well worth reading. This is a well-told tale. You will hardly be able to put the book down. I loved O'Brien's style

and her candor and hope she will write more books.

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