

# OWLS

So you think you want to keep  
an owl?

Or maybe you've just rescued  
or found an owl?

To share your life with an owl is very likely to be a lifetime commitment and not one to be taken lightly. This Owl Advice Sheet has been prepared to provide some information on the care of kept owls.

Print this Owl Awareness Sheet out and place a tick ✓ in each box you answer 'YES'.

- 1) **WHY** do you want one? There are many reasons why people want to keep owls—first you need to identify your reason for wanting one—because they are in the latest books and films is not a valid reason for keeping an owl. When you feel you have identified a reason that demonstrates love and respect for owls—then check off this list to see whether you still wish to proceed and remember—owls can live for 50 years!
- 2) Is it legal in your part of the world?
- 3) Have you researched how much space your chosen owl species will occupy, including mews and flying area and do you have that space available?
- 4) An owl needs to be flown daily to keep healthy and fit—weekends or just once a week is not sufficient, do you have the time to fly the owl every day?
- 5) Very few veterinarians specialise in raptors. Time is of the essence in raptor care—you cannot have a situation where your bird needs urgent attention. Do you have a local vet specialising in raptors?
- 6) Owls themselves are unfortunately not very expensive and too easy to obtain. The costs rise when you start getting all the equipment in, (i.e. material for aviary, separate freezer for food, falconry equipment etc) this can add up to £1000 and rising. Can you afford the costs?
- 7) A sensible person who wishes to take on an owl should go on a course to learn the basics of owlkeeping. Although there are a few around—can **you** commit the time and costs to attend one?
- 8) Do you have someone who will care for your owl if you are ill or on holidays?
- 9) Will you be able to prepare the owls food—owls eat things like rats, mice, rabbits and day old chicks—can you handle chopping those up for your owl?

If you couldn't place a tick in each of these boxes —and if you **really** love and respect owls—you will know that this is not the right time for you to begin owlkeeping.