

HANDLING FERRETS.

HOW PROFESSIONAL RAT CATCHERS USE THE ANIMALS.

These Fluffy Eyed, Razor Toothed Little Beasts Are Effective Where Traps and Poison Fail—They Are Generally Worked With a Muzzle.

"Weasels and ferrets," said a professional rat catcher, "are about the same thing. The imported ferrets trained to the business are larger than the weasel, that is all. After I am through with rat catching I use my ferrets to hunt rabbits out of brush piles, hay and straw stacks, which is a profitable business when rabbits are plenty. What you call rabbits over here we in England call hares.

"When a man once starts in as a professional rat catcher and gets to understand training and working ferrets, there is such an attraction in the trade that he never willingly gives it up. It's a profitable business without too much competition."

"Do the ferrets ever bite you?" "It's a very careless and awkward man that gets bitten by a trained ferret. When one is bitten by an enraged ferret, the bite is of a very severe character, extremely painful and slow to heal."

As the rat catcher talked a 6-month-old ferret, his fiery little eyes gleaming like living gems, was crawling over his lap and trying to get in under his coat. "This fellow," said the rat catcher, "is as gentle as a kitten and likes to have his back rubbed and to be caressed as well as any cat you ever saw. When the ferret bites a rat's neck, he knows exactly what he is doing, and his front teeth, cutting like razors, go right through the jugular.

"Of course we generally muzzle them when we send them in after rats, and we always muzzle them when we send them in after rabbits. If their teeth were in liberty, they would kill the first rat or rabbit they met and would remain in the hole sucking its blood.

When we put a ferret into a house after rats, we stop up all the holes at the outside of the house except one or two. Over these we place bags, and the ferrets, driving the game before them, run the rats into the bags. We keep the ferret without his ordinary meals before using him, and this makes him keener in his chase.

"It's mighty easy to spoil a ferret. After a young ferret has been badly bitten by a rat, as sometimes happens, you can't get him to go into a hole muzzled. But when a ferret is full grown and has the skill and courage that he should have he is a holy terror to rats and is a valuable animal. I would not sell a well trained ferret for \$50, the price of a good horse. Such a ferret I should be willing to put in a pit with 50 rats, and he could in a short time kill every one of them. Rats are great fighters when they are cornered, but no other animal of the same size has as much courage as a ferret or weasel.

"In England the largest ferrets are called polecat ferrets and are a cross of the two animals, which are much alike. In this country the word polecat is applied to the skunk, an entirely different animal. The word polecat is supposed to be an abbreviation of Polish cat, and the animal abounds all over Europe. The mink is much like the weasel, except that it is larger, and many depredations that are attributed to the weasel are committed by the mink. All these animals prowl by night, and they frequently go many miles in search of food, even coming into towns and the suburbs of cities."

Audubon, who was a close student of nature, was delighted with the weasel, or American ferret. Its long, flexible body, its extraordinary length of neck, the closeness of its fur, its keenness of scent, its wonderful agility and quickness of movement, all excited his admiration.

An American writer says: "The common weasel has sometimes been caught and carried off by large hawks and owls. Sorry was the experience of the captor in such cases. He has caught a Tartar. The captive will bite into the sides of the enemy, so that both will fall to the ground, the bird mortally wounded and the weasel usually comparatively unharmed."

The weasel's courage in defending itself when attacked by birds of prey is universally admitted, nor is it deficient in fierce opposition to dogs and even men when its nest is invaded by either. It usually kills for food, biting through the head into the brain with such expertness that its victim can scarcely utter a cry of pain. It usually eats the brain first; then the rest of the body follows. In pursuing mice, rats and moles it uses its teeth into their runs or holes. A weasel's proximity to a poultry yard is not to be desired. But in barns, hayricks and grain stacks it is decidedly advantageous, as it will surely exterminate or drive away rats and mice."

The weasel's characteristics are noted in two American sayings, "Catch a weasel asleep" and "Sooner trust a weasel with eggs." Stories are told that a weasel will watch a hen on the nest for an hour, waiting for a freshly laid egg.—Indianapolis News.

A Freak of the Lightning. A curious case of lightning destruction took place at Gatchina, an imperial summer residence not far from St. Petersburg, where stood a stone column 50 feet high, held together by iron angles. When rain fell, more or less water penetrated the stones in the interior of the monument. One day it was struck by lightning, and instantly the whole column disappeared from view, killing a lone sentry on guard. The only explanation is that the heat of the lightning instantly generated steam on coming in contact with some of the water, and the terrific explosion followed.

A STREET CAR COMEDY.

The Girl and Her Purse and Five Smart Young Men.

As soon as the good looking girl entered the car the five young men on the opposite seat began surveying her with critical eye, and she hadn't yet made out whether the baldheaded man with the medical magazine was to be included in the lot when the conductor came in for his fare. The girl opened her portemonnaie and began to take out latchkeys, samples of ribbon and little memoranda in the usual way and the five young men smiled, each after his own particular style. Bald headed was out of it. The girl didn't see any of the smiles, but she caught on just the same. There was a nickel all ready for her fingers, but when one pale faced young man added a giggle to his smile the nickel was thrust aside for a \$2 bill. She didn't hand it over to the conductor as she fished it out; but, leaning forward with a winning smile on her face, she began at the head of the line and asked:

"Will you please be so kind as to change this bill for me?"

It was impossible. A young man with only a dime in his pocket has no show to bust a bill. The next one had a quarter, but he had to decline, and so it went to No. 5. His hand sought his pocket as his turn came, but it didn't bring up any change. The smiles had been replaced by sheepish looks, and they rubbed elbows and trod on each other's feet in trying to look out of the windows. There was a long minute of painful suspense, and then the good looking girl handed the bill to the conductor. She hadn't a word to say to the five young men who had started out in life so gayly, but old baldheaded had. When all was over, he turned half around and growled out:

"If I were you fellows, I wouldn't try to be so blamed smart next time."—Philadelphia Press.

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BUFFALO, ROCHESTER & PITTSBURGH RAILWAY. TIME TABLE. On and after January 1st, 1899, passenger trains will arrive and depart from Reynoldsville station, daily, except Sunday, as follows:

DEPART. 2:30 p. m. Week days only. For Falls Creek, DuBois, Curwensville, Clearfield, Piquette, Newburg, Butler, Brookwayville, Ridgway, Johnsonburg, Mt. Jewett and Bradford.

ARRIVE. 1:30 p. m. Week days only. From Clearfield, Curwensville, Falls Creek, DuBois, Pittsburg, Butler and Piquette.

TRAINS LEAVE FALLS CREEK SOUTH BOUND. 7:05 a. m. Week days only. For Big Run, Piquette, Butler, Pittsburg and intermediate points.

7:35 a. m. and 7:45 p. m. Week days only. For DuBois, Stanley, Sykes, Big Run and Piquette.

2:45 p. m. Daily. Vestibuled Limited. For Piquette, Dayton, Butler and Pittsburg.

NORTH BOUND. 7:28 a. m. and 3:01 p. m. Week days only. For Brookwayville, Clearfield, Johnsonburg, Mt. Jewett and Bradford.

12:57 p. m. Daily. Vestibuled Limited. For Ridgway, Johnsonburg, Bradford, Buffalo and Rochester.

1:00 p. m. Week days only. Accommodation for Reynoldsville. Trains for Curwensville, Clearfield and intermediate stations leave Falls Creek at 7:28 a. m., 2:40 and 8:10 p. m.

Thousand mile tickets good for passage over any portion of the R. & P. and Beech Creek railroads are on sale at two (2) cents per mile.

For tickets, time tables and full information apply to E. C. DAVIS, Agent, Reynoldsville, Pa. E. C. LARBY, Gen. Pass. Agent, Rochester, N. Y.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD.

Philadelphia & Erie Railroad Division. In effect Nov. 19, 1899. Trains leave Driftwood as follows:

EASTWARD. 9:00 a. m.—Train 8, weekdays, for Sunbury, Wilkesbarre, Hazleton, Portville, Scranton, Harrisburg and the intermediate stations, arriving at Philadelphia 6:23 p. m., New York, 9:30 p. m.; Baltimore, 6:00 p. m.; Washington, 7:15 p. m.; Pullman Parlor car from Williamsport to Philadelphia and passenger coaches from Kane to Philadelphia and Williamsport to Baltimore and Washington.

3:58 p. m.—Train 6, weekdays, for Harrisburg and intermediate stations, arriving at Philadelphia 1:25 a. m.; New York, 7:13 a. m.; Baltimore, 2:30 a. m.; Washington, 4:05 a. m.; Pullman Sleeping cars from Harrisburg to Philadelphia and New York. Philadelphia passengers can remain in sleeper undisturbed until 7:30 a. m.

10:12 p. m.—Train 4, daily for Sunbury, Harrisburg and intermediate stations, arriving at Philadelphia 8:25 a. m.; New York, 5:23 a. m.; Baltimore, 6:35 a. m.; Washington, 7:45 a. m.; Pullman sleeping cars from Williamsport to Philadelphia and Williamsport to Washington. Passengers in sleeper for Baltimore and Washington will be transferred into Washington sleeper at Williamsport. Passenger coaches from Erie to Philadelphia and Williamsport to Baltimore.

WESTWARD. 4:38 a. m.—Train 9, weekdays for Erie, Ridgway, DuBois, Clearfield and principal intermediate stations. 9:44 a. m.—Train 3, daily for Erie and intermediate stations. 5:45 p. m.—Train 15, weekdays for Kane and intermediate stations.

THROUGH TRAINS FOR DRIFTWOOD FROM THE EAST. N. Y. & P. TRAIN 2 leaves New York 8:55 p. m.; Philadelphia 8:50 p. m.; Washington 7:20 p. m.; Baltimore 8:40 p. m., arriving at Driftwood 4:58 a. m., weekdays, with Pullman sleepers and passenger coaches from Philadelphia to Erie and Washington and Baltimore to Williamsport.

TRAIN 3 leaves New York at 7:55 p. m.; Philadelphia, 11:20 p. m.; Washington, 10:40 p. m.; Baltimore, 11:55 p. m.; daily arriving at Driftwood at 9:44 a. m. Pullman sleeping cars from Phila. to Williamsport, and through passenger coaches from Philadelphia to Erie and Washington and Baltimore to Williamsport.

TRAIN 15 leaves Philadelphia 8:40 a. m.; Washington, 7:55 a. m.; Baltimore, 8:52 a. m.; Wilkesbarre, 10:55 a. m.; weekdays, arriving at Driftwood at 5:45 p. m. with Pullman sleeping cars from Philadelphia to Williamsport and passenger coach to Kane.

Connections via Johnsonburg R. R. and Ridgway & Clearfield R. R.

H. H. WEEKDAYS. P. M. 10:45 at Clearfield 11:05 ... 10:38 Woodvale ... 11:02 ... 10:31 Smith's Run ... 11:08 ... 10:25 Instanter ... 11:14 ... 10:20 Stratsburg ... 11:27 ... 10:10 Glen Hazel ... 11:37 ... 10:05 Bendigo ... 11:42 ... 9:55 Hildway ... 11:43 ... 9:49 Ridgway ... 11:44

P. M. P. M. P. M. 7:30 2:15 9:35 at Ridgway 7:00 12:19 4:42 7:13 2:08 9:28 Island Run 7:07 12:17 4:32 7:08 2:03 9:23 Carmo's Ferry 7:12 12:12 4:37 6:59 1:54 9:15 Croysland 7:21 12:10 5:05 6:46 1:51 9:11 Short's Mills 7:23 12:30 5:12 6:52 1:47 9:08 Blue Rock 7:28 12:30 5:12 6:48 1:43 9:02 ... 7:43 12:30 5:12 6:48 1:43 9:02 Brockwayville 7:43 12:30 5:12 6:43 1:28 8:47 Lanes Mills 7:47 12:54 5:30 ... 8:43 1:28 8:43 ... 8:43 1:19 8:30 Harveys Run 7:54 1:03 8:28 6:30 1:15 8:35 Le Falls Creek 8:10 1:10 8:45 6:35 1:09 8:35 Le DuBois ar 8:10 ... 8:15 1:08 8:25 ... 8:12 1:08 8:33 Reynoldsville 8:13 1:50 8:25 5:38 1:12 8:15 Brookville 8:13 1:50 8:25 4:49 1:08 New Bethel m 9:50 2:32 4:40 1:11 8:11 ... 1:40 9:00 at Pittsburg 12:40 5:00 p. m. a. m. p. m.

Through Pullman Parlor Car to Pittsburg, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, returning on train leaving Pittsburg at 1:40 p. m. J. B. HUTCHINSON, J. R. WOOD, Gen. Manager. Gen. Pass. Ag't.

ALLEGHENY VALLEY RAILWAY

In effect Sunday, Nov. 19, 1899, Low Grade Division.

EASTWARD. STATIONS. No. 9. No. 13. No. 1. No. 3. No. 7. No. 11. No. 15. No. 19. No. 23. No. 27. No. 31. No. 35. No. 39. No. 43. No. 47. No. 51. No. 55. No. 59. No. 63. No. 67. No. 71. No. 75. No. 79. No. 83. No. 87. No. 91. No. 95. No. 99. No. 103. No. 107. No. 111. No. 115. No. 119. No. 123. No. 127. No. 131. No. 135. No. 139. No. 143. No. 147. No. 151. No. 155. No. 159. No. 163. No. 167. No. 171. No. 175. No. 179. No. 183. No. 187. No. 191. No. 195. No. 199. No. 203. No. 207. No. 211. No. 215. No. 219. No. 223. No. 227. No. 231. No. 235. No. 239. No. 243. No. 247. No. 251. No. 255. No. 259. No. 263. No. 267. No. 271. No. 275. No. 279. No. 283. No. 287. No. 291. No. 295. No. 299. No. 303. No. 307. No. 311. No. 315. No. 319. No. 323. No. 327. No. 331. No. 335. No. 339. No. 343. No. 347. No. 351. No. 355. No. 359. No. 363. No. 367. No. 371. No. 375. No. 379. No. 383. No. 387. No. 391. No. 395. No. 399. No. 403. No. 407. No. 411. No. 415. No. 419. No. 423. No. 427. No. 431. No. 435. No. 439. No. 443. No. 447. No. 451. No. 455. No. 459. No. 463. No. 467. No. 471. No. 475. No. 479. No. 483. No. 487. No. 491. No. 495. No. 499. No. 503. No. 507. No. 511. No. 515. No. 519. No. 523. No. 527. No. 531. No. 535. No. 539. No. 543. No. 547. No. 551. No. 555. No. 559. No. 563. No. 567. No. 571. No. 575. No. 579. No. 583. No. 587. No. 591. No. 595. No. 599. No. 603. No. 607. No. 611. No. 615. No. 619. No. 623. No. 627. No. 631. No. 635. No. 639. No. 643. No. 647. No. 651. No. 655.