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## Franciscan Fathers bless animals



Father Victor sprinkles holy water on a bird.



Fathers Victor and Callistus speak about St. Francis.

Fathers Callistus and Victor, who will be ministering to local Catholics in the future, are Franciscans.

In a Franciscan ceremony recalling St. Francis of Assisi's love for animals as part of God's creation, they officiated at a blessing of

the animals last Weds. at the Presentation and Assumption Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Marietta.

Many children from the parish brought their pets to be blessed. Turtles, cats, dogs, and even a goat shared in the celebration of

the Feast of St. Francis.

St. Francis was a unique person who found God as the source of all his joy and everyone—in the beauty of nature, in the birds of the air, the fishes of the water,

the creatures of the fields, in the sun and the moon, in fire and water, even in life and death themselves. Because he was part of this creation, everything and everyone became his brother and sister, and he deeply loved it all—in-

cluding the animals—just for what it was, as God created it.

Animals were attracted to him, and even the wildest of beasts listened to him and obeyed him.

## In World of Wildlife, It's Courting Males Who 'Dress' to Please, Says Nature Magazine

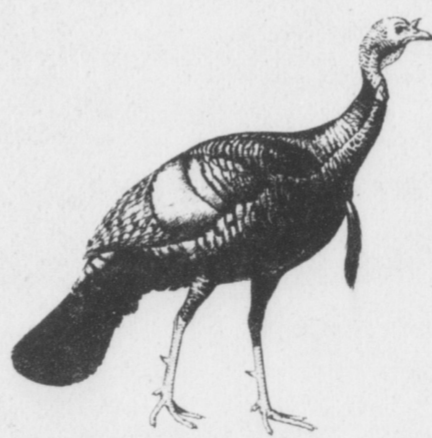
Among humans, it is the female who is noted for preening and preening to attract a mate.

But in the world of wildlife, the situation is often reversed, according to National Wildlife magazine. There, the current (October-November) issue of the magazine reports, it is usually the male who puts on a spectacular show during courtship.

The show may consist of anything from a display of feathers — which the peacock spreads to impress an admiring hen — to a loud noise or a change of body color. And it sometimes includes the use of weapons, such as spurs or antlers, to fight off other suitors, says the bimonthly publication of the National Wildlife Federation.

Along with the peacock, the male grouse and turkey use their feathers to catch the attention of prospective mates. The grouse raises a ruff of glossy feathers around his neck. The wild turkey, in addition to showing his feathers, sports a "beard" — a tuft of hair-like feathers that sprout from his chest.

The turkey gobbler and the male pheasant wear sharp spurs on their legs to fight off



**MALE ADORNMENTS:** Wild turkey displays spurs on shanks and "beard," or tuft of hairlike feathers, on chest; caribou bull grows new pair of antlers which drop off after mating season. Illustrations by Ned Smith.

rivals during their breeding seasons. Similarly, the bull moose, the bull elk, and buck deer grow antlers to fend off competition. When the mating season is over the antlers drop off.

Lizards and fish are among the creatures who change colors or even the configuration of their bodies to lure mates, says National Wildlife. Some male lizards inflate brightly colored "fans" at their throats. Some species of salmon acquire hooked jaws and humped backs as the spawning season approaches.



Many species resort to mating calls or other sounds, but among the strangest amorous noisemakers is the cricket, who produces his summer evening's "song" by rubbing parts of his wings together. Male woodcocks use special wing feathers to make twittering sounds, while prairie chickens and some grouse hoot loudly by suddenly releasing air from inflatable sacs on the sides of their necks.

A man might think that kind of noise is for the birds, but for those fowl it works better than man's so-called wolf whistle.

With many species, the magazine reports, mating occurs only after the male suitor instinctively performs a series of courtship rituals. Painted turtles stroke the female's cheeks with the elongated claws of their forefeet. The male fiddler crab waves an enlarged claw in the face of his chosen mate — not a subtle gesture among those crustaceans whose "fiddle" claw comprises nearly half of their body weight.

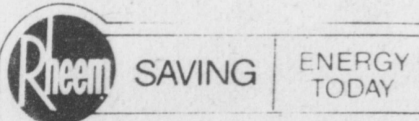
Some males must work faster than others. Since adult moths live only a few days, the male is equipped with a broad, feathery antenna that helps him zero-in on the "perfume" of a female, sometimes miles away.

Modern science has slowed the march of one destructive species, the gypsy moth, according to National Wildlife, by synthesizing the female's scent and releasing it where there are no females. This confuses the males and thwarts their efforts to mate — a mean trick on the moths but a boon to mankind.

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