

Naturewise
Symbiosis
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The living together of two dissimilar organisms including plant, insects, birds and animals, when both benefit from the association is called symbiosis. An unfamiliar word, but it happens all around us. A neighbor of ours witnessed one of these acts last week. A doe with a fawn was grazing in her yard when a Phoebe [a flycatcher] flew to the back of the doe and started catching flies that were tormenting her. She turned her head to watch, which was an invitation to the bird to rid the doe of facial insects, which it did and all the while the doe stood motionless while the Phoebe fed. The doe got rid of her tormentors--the bird got a meal. The fawn, however, being unsophisticated in such behavior, was so startled when the bird approached it, jumped away and refused to cooperate.

In true symbiosis one organism plays host to the other, actually living together, each protecting the other. While the above instance may not be true symbiosis, it is a good example of the plan of nature which cannot be improved by man. When will we catch on?

Dr Ralph Phillips called to say he had a singing Yellow-breasted Chat, one of our most colorful warblers and named for its talkative type song, somewhat like a Mockingbird but not as musical.

A welcomed note from the Neil Shellhorn family from Kissimee, Fla., former summer residents of Pickett County, stating that they would "like to read more about nature than the misdeeds of humans." They continue to enjoy hearing about their friends here through the Pickett County Press.

The famous naturalist, Henry David Thoreau, once said, "In wildness is the preservation of the world." This was 136 years ago--it still holds true today. Shortly before he died in 1862 a pious relative asked him, "Have you made your peace with God?" He answered, "I am not aware we had quarreled."

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