

# I called him Abe... Abe Turkey

The field behind my house is one of those places I look every morning to take note of the world around me.

The field isn't too big— about seven acres in size— and all my life it's been called 'The Old Pasture Field' since it was used to pasture cattle, being in full view from the house.

It's been a good many years since any cattle pastured in it. It's now planted in white beans.

I always enjoy overlooking that field from the high vantage point of my kitchen window.

In the winter, on cold, crisp, full moon-lit February nights, I've seen small packs of wolves running across the field in pursuit of a rabbit, and quite often I've seen solitary coyotes foraging for mice in the deep snow.

Twice last week, four deer (two bucks and two does) were out there poking around the ground to find any corn left over from last year's crop.

But this week I had a totally different visitor to the Old Pasture Field— one I've never seen before. And like clockwork, he's been out there every morning and every night this week.

He's a wild turkey, and I watch for him as I eat breakfast, or clean up the dishes after supper.

He's a big 'un, probably close to three feet high, and when he fans his tail feathers (just like we used to see in those images of the first Thanksgiving with the Puritans) his tail must span a good three feet (one metre) as well.

The first time I saw him, he had a couple of hens in tow, and they poked and scratched the ground as he did, likely looking for corn or even the newly-planted white beans out there.

But the last few times, he's been on his own, which makes me think his lady friends are nesting somewhere in the bush close by.

Two of my daughters saw him this week, and thought he was pretty cool, not to mention BIG! I photographed him and e-mailed them pictures, and one daughter decided we should name him.

Traditionally, every turkey's called Tom. That

**Ted Brown**



stems from the fact a male turkey is called a 'tom'.

I figured that was a bit too ordinary.

You know, this isn't just any turkey out in the Old Pasture Field... he's MY turkey, out in the Old Pasture Field, so I decided he should have the proper unique designation.

The more people I tell about him, the more suggested names have come in.

'Timothy Turkey' was a start, and later (suggesting he might be a Christmas turkey), 'Tiny Tim Turkey' was the adaptation.

Keeping the alliteration going, I played with Telford Turkey, Taylor Turkey, Terrance Turkey, Trevor Turkey and even Tommy Turkey.

But they all just seemed too much like 'Tom.'

So to be unique, I've named him Abe.

I don't know any other Abe Turkey, it's easy to say, and 'Abe' has a backwoods sound (okay, it's an American backwoods sound, but Sir John A. Turkey was simply too awkward).

And trying 'Daniel Dinde' to appease the French Canadians would be lost on most people.

So Abe he is, and I'll greet him morning and night, so long as he finds the inclination to swing by the Old Pasture Field for a quick snack.

My only concern— I hope Abe keeps one eye open at all times. After all, I'd hate for him to encounter 'Freddie' when he's not looking.

In case you didn't know, 'Freddie' is the fox...

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