

Henry david thoreau

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

How is the Merlin Hawk a symbol of Thoreau himself? of Institute> This paper aims to identify how a Merlin Hawk symbolizes the behavior and to some extent the person Henry David Thoreau himself. To write this paper, Henry David Thoreau's expeditions were read in detail. Henry David Thoreau spent two years near Walden Pond living a life of solitude. His observations as explained in this book mention about various birds and particularly about his close encounter with the Merlin Hawk (also known as the Pigeon Hawk as its appearance is similar to that of a pigeon). This paper discusses the similarities observed in the bird as well as Thoreau when he goes on to elaborate what he likes about the bird. Keywords: Thoreau, Merlin Hawk, Walden Pond. After reading the chapter " Spring", it can be seen that Henry David Thoreau was living near Walden Pond for couple of years. During the time he lived near the pond, one particular day, on April 29, 1846, he went fishing on the banks of the river near the Nine-Acre-Corner Bridge. During fishing, he hears a rattling sound, which leads him to encounter the Merlin Hawk, which is bird of the pigeon family. Going by the explanation Thoreau provides about the bird's behavior, it can be said that while Thoreau's words described the hawk, it also marked similarities between the bird and Thoreau himself. In other words, it can be said that the Merlin Hawk symbolizes Thoreau himself. The merlin hawk symbolizes Henry David Thoreau because there are many similarities between the hawk and Thoreau. Merlin Hawk is a bird that typically migrates alone. This very nature symbolizes Thoreau's nature of setting out alone on different expeditions. The flight of the bird, as described by Thoreau is ethereal; proud flight, with repetitive mounting and falling and again recovering from each fall like it has never set foot on the earth below at all. Thoreau also sets out from the civilization he lives in and <https://assignbuster.com/henry-david-thoreau-essay-samples/>

lives a free life in the woods where he can rise and fall in his thoughts and can admire nature at length and at his will. It is said that the hawk was sporting all alone, with no companion in the universe. Thoreau is also living near the Walden Pond all alone, with no companion at all. The hawk needs no one, only the morning so that it can rise and fly. Similarly, Thoreau needs no one, just the nature around him in order to live the life he wishes. Even though the hawk is alone, it is not lonely. Instead, it seems like the hawk makes the whole earth below, feel lonely. Thoreau feels that the earth and its people are clinging to their earthly possessions and are therefore, not able to soar up in the sky and fly leaving everything far, far behind. Similarly, Thoreau has detached himself to everything he possessed in the materialistic world and has soared up to live on his own. In the text, Thoreau expresses that the hawk is oblivious about its family or others to whom it once belonged. The hawk is happily ignorant about its parents who helped him become a beautiful falcon out of a tiny egg. The absence of others of its kind do not seem to bother the hawk at all. It enjoys its solitude where the air is its only companion helping him fly and explore the world. This behavior of the hawk symbolizes Thoreau as he himself does not seem bothered by the fact that he does not have any human being with him in his expedition nor does he seem to long for the time when he would be with his family and friends back in the world they all lived together. Also, Thoreau is enjoying in a place where nature is the only companion helping him live the life he always wanted and he enjoys the solitude and even the uncanny silence of the place helps him unwind without being burdened by worldly affairs. The Merlin Hawk feels the exhilaration of having no burden of belonging to anyone or anything at all. Similarly, Thoreau has happily left behind his

<https://assignbuster.com/henry-david-thoreau-essay-samples/>

family, friends and all civilization that helped him, grow, learn and be what he is today. The hawk's flight seems to mock the people below living on the earth that they are too weighted down by responsibilities and are therefore unable to get off the ground. Similarly, Thoreau seems to mock the mortals in the world for having stuck in the worldly mess and not been able to learn to fly yet to discover a life where thoughts can wander freely. As Thoreau describes, the hawk's nest could very well be in some cliffy cloud unlike those entangled in the concrete mess below. Similarly, Thoreau's temporary abode might well be in between the woods made up of timber and wood far away and far peaceful than the concrete mess of the outside world. Thus it can be said that every behavioral aspect of the Merlin Hawk symbolizes Thoreau himself. When he refers to the bird's " eyry now some cliffy cloud", he actually reflects on his own liking of a solitary abode far from the madness of noise and crowd. He seems to enjoy the way the bird takes a confident flight up above the sky without looking below towards the ground. Thoreau seems to identify himself with the bird as he too has separated himself from society and justifies his act by understanding the bird's actions. Thoreau who has chosen this life of solitude seems to find the bird's flight ethereal. It shows Thoreau's own longing of how he wishes that he could also take a leap out of the world and escape the confines of offices and homes to experience the real world for himself. References Nina Baym, Robert S. Levine, Wayne Franklin, et al, The Norton Anthology American Literature Shorter Eighth Edition Volume 1, Spring, 916