



A lot of years ago, Alan Ladd broke my heart in *Shane*. Another Shane is doing it now. It all started when I began to be annoyed by bird poop showing up on my deck in a line along the edge of the house. Above this line is a wide roof overhang—not a perch in sight for a bird. Yet every morning, a little more poop joined the line. One January night, I happened to go out on the deck and look up. Stuffed into a 2" -diameter ventilation hole under my soffit, was a bird. Or rather, a tail and a bit of brown velvety fluff.

I love birds. I feed them, which puts me into constant battle with cats and rats. I love some birds more than others, which puts me into battle with starlings and crows. I love flowers, too, which puts me into battle with weeds. If some little plant sprouts up that I've never seen before, I know it's a weed. By definition, a weed is a plant you don't want but get, whereas a flower is a plant you want but don't get—easily. Therefore, if a bird decides to sleep in my house, it's a bird I don't want. I pictured an attic full of chirping sparrows, shredded insulation, mountains of poop. What to do, what to do.

My first step was to get a can of something appropriately called Poop-Off. My next step was to ask a bird-expert friend to come identify the bird. After a few nights, he did. He took one look at the tail (he also took the photo shown here) and declared the bird a wren. Not a sparrow! A bird I want!

Happy to offer hospitality to a wren, I cleaned up his poop and learned his habits. He liked variety of accommodation, choosing a different hole every night. His daily routine, though, was unvaried: he arrived at the same time every evening according to the degree of darkness—a minute or so later each day. I looked him up online to hear his song (seanet.com/~billr/birds/bewickswren) and soon I could hear him singing during the day. I bought him a high-end, handmade, redwood house with its own little deck and green shingled roof and I placed it in a choice location with a full view of Penn Cove.

Then one night, he didn't come. I think I know where he might be. What bothers me is that I'm sure if he brought her to see his view property, she'd want to live here, too. So I've named him Shane and he's probably about as likely as the first Shane to break my heart. It's a wonderful aspect of weaving that there are only good weaves and good fibers and good colors and you can almost always get them back.

Madelyn



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January/February 2008: *Weft-faced Weaves (rugs, runners, wall-hangings, and more)*

March/April 2008: *Fabrics for Interiors (coordinated textiles to decorate a room: living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom, or bathroom.)*

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