

TOO HOT TO HOOT

JEFF GRANT

Hastings, New Zealand

The classic palindrome in the title appears in a 'Palindromic Conversation Between Two Owls' in Howard Bergerson's *Palindromes and Anagrams* (Dover Publications, 1973).

"Too hot to hoot!"

"Too hot to woo!"

"Too wot?"

"Too hot to hoot!"

"To woo!"

"Too wot?"

"To hoot! Too hot to hoot!"

The palindrome has been used as the title of two books:

Too Hot To Hoot, The Palindrome Puzzle Book
by Raymond Stuart (David McKay Co, Inc, NY, 1977)

Too Hot To Hoot, Funny Palindrome Riddles
by Marvin Terban (Clarion Books, NY, 1985)

Here is a small collection of variants on the owl theme. Some have the slang or dialectic form 'ta' instead of 'to' (as in 'gotta' = got to), and a number use rather obscure terms. All words are taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd Ed., 1989, unless specified CDS (*Cassell's Dictionary of Slang*, Jonathon Green, 1998) or EDD (*English Dialect Dictionary*, Joseph Wright, 1970 ed.).

Too bats ta boot

Too crazy to kick up the backside. You should never do that to mad people anyway, because they might boot you back!

Too cat ta coot

Too rough and unpleasant to copulate, as applied to a pair of Irish tortoises on rocky ground.

'Cat' is Irish slang (CDS), and 'cooting' relates specifically to tortoises.

Too doty to doot

Too decayed to fear; of an old, rotten cane threatening a Scottish schoolboy.

'Doty' applies to wood, and 'doot' is Scots for 'doubt', in the sense 'to fear' (EDD).

Too fat ta foot

Obesity seriously hampers the ability to dance.

Too hot to hoot

Our old friends the overheated owls.

Too late ta loot

The tardy Viking misses out on the spoils.

Too maty ta moot

Too friendly to argue or dispute, referring to an affable Aussie perhaps.

Too pots to poot

Too eccentric to fart. A rare condition.
'Pots' and 'poot' are both listed in CDS.

Too rath ta root

Too early to establish oneself.
'Rath' is archaic.

Too sot to soot

Too stupid to manure (ground) with soot. What a waste!
'Sot' is West Indian slang (CDS), but was once used generally.

Too tote to toot

Of a Gloucester man, too fat to blow his horn.
'Tote' is a dialectic form of 'taut', fat and ready to burst. (EDD)

Too wot to woot

Too hot to bray. The donkeys are copying the owls.
'Wot' and 'woot' are both in EDD.