

OWLS

Of Southeastern Minnesota

Barred Owl

This large owl, around 21" tall, can easily pass silently and completely unnoticed through the woods because of specially modified flight feathers. If you hear a hooty call that sounds like "who cooks for you, who cooks for you all"... you're hearing one of our common Barred Owls.

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▶ If your eyes took up as much space in your head as an owl's, each eye would be nearly the size of a small grapefruit!

Great Horned Owl

Another big owl at 22" tall with a 55" wingspan, this owl is sometimes called a flying tiger! Nesting starts in mid-winter with owlets hatching in March. Their call is described as hoo-ho-hoo, hoo, hoo, but they also chitter, squawk, hiss and clack their bills – which means "back off!"

Photo © Don Anderson • see more of Don's photos at fineartamerica.com

These "ear" tufts are just feathers, not ears!

Great Horned Owls eat squirrels and skunks & are strong enough to pick up a small dog.



Northern Saw-whet

Our smallest owl is common but seldom seen. Just 7" tall, one fits easily in your hand. They live year-round in dense evergreen thickets and eat mice and other small creatures. Some (though not all) migrate south each October. This owl was banded east of Quarry Hill Nature Center in 2014.

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The biggest threat to owls is habitat loss. Most wild owls have rodenticides in their bodies. Use traps, not poison, to control rodents.

My call is an eerie whinny that descends in pitch.



Eastern Screech

Just 9" tall, Screech Owls come in two color morphs – gray and red (red morph shown). Their jaunty ear tufts can be upright or lay flat. They eat mice, amphibians, birds, and sometimes hunt large moths and other insects attracted by city lights.

Photo © Jerry Pruett

Owls can't move their eyes at all, but can rotate their heads up to 270 degrees!