

# OWLS OF BC'S SOUTH COAST

## Does the owl have...

- a large thick body
- yellow eyes *and*
- big long ear tufts?

### Great Horned Owl \*

*Bubo virginianus*

- Hoots a low but resounding "hoo-h'HOO-hoo-hoo.
- Found in forests and open farmland.
- Nests in stick nests and open snags.



Two young owlets on the right.

Photos: Sean McCann

NO

- brown and white striped plumage *and*
- can be heard calling in the daytime?

### Barred Owl \*

*Strix varia*

- A forest owl that can also nest in parks and urban areas.
- Not typically shy around humans.



Hoots "Who cooks for you."

Photo: Sean McCann

NO

### The endangered Northern Spotted Owl

is sometimes confused with the Barred Owl, but it has different markings on chest and face.

It lives in old growth forests. With the loss of its habitat, the population in BC is endangered, with less than 20 remaining in the wild.



Photo: Jared Hobbs

- a heart-shaped face *and*
- white and brown speckled body?

### Barn Owl \* +

*Tyto alba*

- Often found nesting or roosting in large wooden barns, riding arenas and old silos.
- Call is an atypical screech and high pitched tweets.



Heart-shaped face.



Long wings relative to body.

Photo: Sean McCann

NO

**Does the owl have...**

- a small streaked compact body with yellow eyes *and*
- small ear tufts?

**Western Screech-owl \* +**

*Megascops kennicottii*

- A rare forest owl often associated with mature mixed forests.
- Call sounds like an accelerating “bouncing ball”, with a series of 6-8 low whistles.



Photo: Anthony Bucci



Well camouflaged with small ear tufts.

Photo: Ann Nightingale

**NO**

- a medium-sized brown spotted body *and*
- pale face with black outlined eyes?

**Short-eared Owl + ∞**

*Asio flammeus*

- Open grassland bird, often seen hunting by flying low over marshland and fields.
- Can be seen hunting in the daytime.



Photo: OWL



Flaps with stiff beats, making their flight buoyant like a butterfly.

Photo: Sean McCann

**NO**

- a medium-long slender body *and*
- long ear-tufts with orange face?

**Long-eared Owl Δ**

*Asio otus*

- Similar colouring to the Short-eared Owl but has orange face and long ear-tufts.
- Hunts in open grassland and roost/nests in dense tall shrubs and riparian habitat.



Photo: Sean McCann



Orange face with long ear-tufts.

Photo: OWL

**NO**

## Does the owl have...

- a large white and speckled body *and*
- yellow eyes?

### Snowy Owl $\Delta$

*Bubo scandiacus*

- Irregular winter visitor in marsh and grassland habitat adjacent to shorelines.
- Typically perches close to the ground.
- Nests in the Arctic.



Immature male, or female.  
Male Snowy Owls become fully white with age.

Photos: Sean McCann

**NO**

- a tall silvery-gray body with a large head *and*
- yellow eyes?

### Great Grey Owl $\Delta$

*Strix nebulosa*

- Majestic boreal forest owl that is an occasional winter visitor.
- Shy owl who perches on the edge of grasslands or in forest openings.



Photo: OWL



Photo: Arne List

**NO**

- a small mottled brown body *and*
- large head with yellow big eyes?

### Northern Saw-whet Owl $\infty$

*Aegolius acadicus*

- Nocturnal forest owl.
- Roosts in dense evergreen trees near the trunk just above eye level.
- Call is a series of "whistled too-too-too".



Photo: OWL



Note the different plumage of the Juvenile Saw-whet Owls.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

**NO**

# OWLS OF BC'S SOUTH COAST - continued

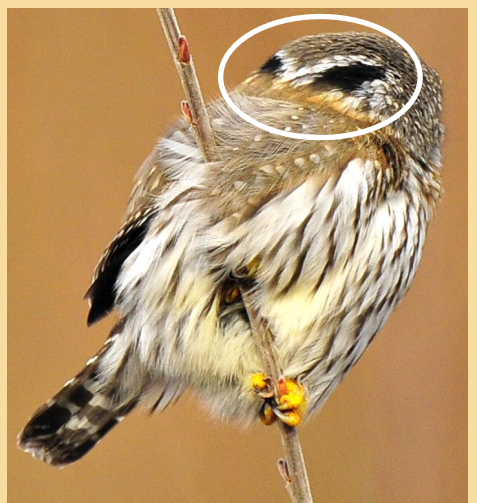
## Does the owl have...

- a brown and white small body
- long tail *and*
- yellow eyes?

### Northern Pygmy Owl ∞

*Glaucidium californicum*

- Mobbing songbirds can help you find them.
- Often seen perched at dusk on top of conifer trees.
- Can catch prey 2-3 times their size.



Has long tail. The only BC owl with fake eyes on back of head to confuse mobbing birds.

Photos: Gord Gadsden

**NO**

- a streamlined medium-sized brown and grey body with a long tail *and*
- a distinct grey hawk-like face outlined by a black border?

### Hawk Owl Δ

*Surnia ulula*

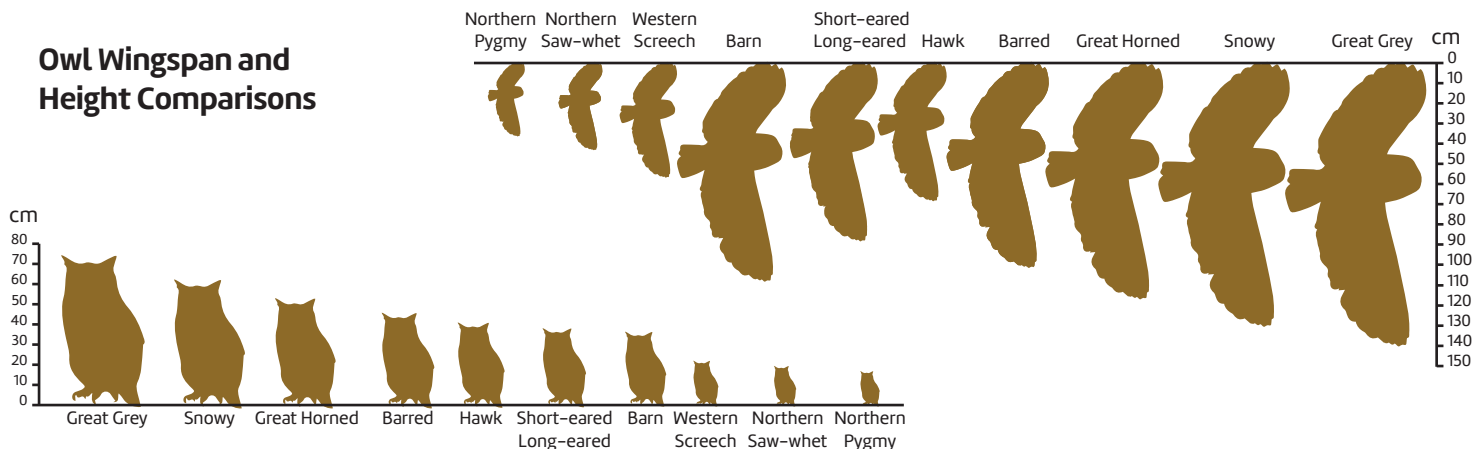
- Typically seen perched on top of trees and telephone poles.
- A rare visitor that shows up irregularly in the winter to hunt prey.



Photos: Ian Routley

+ Species at Risk   \* Found year-round   ∞ Usually found in the winter months   Δ Found between December and March

## Owl Wingspan and Height Comparisons



For more information, contact [outreach@fraservalleyconservancy.ca](mailto:outreach@fraservalleyconservancy.ca)

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