

# ALASKAN OWLS

## Cool Facts

### Great Horned Owl

The Great Horned Owl is so adaptable that you may find it in many different climates and habitats. These versatile owls will also hunt a wide variety of prey from mice to snowshoe hares.

### Short-eared Owl

The Short-eared Owl nests on the ground in meadows and is crepuscular (What's that? hint: see your quiz!). Flying low over the ground helps them hide from predators and sneak up on prey.

### Snowy Owl

Harry Potter's owl Hedwig is a Snowy Owl but, in reality, owls can't deliver mail, or be kept as pets. This owl is perfectly adapted for life in the tundra with thick layers of feathers to keep them warm and dry.

### Northern Pygmy Owl

The Pygmy Owl uses old woodpecker nests rather than make its own and, though small, is a fierce predator. In Alaska, this owl is found only in the Southeast.

### Boreal Owl

The Boreal Owl gets its name from where it lives, boreal forests which are forests of mixed conifers and hardwoods that grows in cold and dry northern areas around the world, including Interior Alaska.

### Northern Saw-whet Owl

This small owl's eggs are about the size of ping-pong balls. The Saw-whet is often seen hunting early in the morning and early evening to avoid both daytime and nighttime predators.

### Great Gray Owl

Like other owls, Great Gray's have an incredible sense of hearing. Their facial disc acts to catch sound while asymmetrical ears help them pinpoint their prey even through snow.

### Barred Owl

The Barred Owl makes a very distinctive call that many think sounds like it is saying "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you aalllllll?"



## Did you know?

There are 10 different species of owl to be found in Alaska? Included in those are the largest owls in North America and one of the smallest owls in the world! But you might have known that already. Well, we're going to test your knowledge even further. Check out the quiz which includes some questions about Alaskan Owls and owls in general, test your fact-finding skills with the Alaskan Owls Word Search, then help a mom get to her owlet. Let's see how you do!

### Northern Hawk Owl

The Hawk Owl gets its name because it is out during the day and, while hunting, looks and acts much like a hawk. You can often see this owl perched high on a telephone pole or tree searching for prey.

### Western Screech Owl

This owl is well made to blend in. It even stretches itself out to look like a dead tree branch when startled. If you live in Southeast Alaska you may even see a Western Screech Owl in your yard.

## Alaskan Owls Quiz

1. What is the heaviest owl in Alaska (& North America)?
2. Which Alaskan owl is the only one that migrates every year?
3. What is the smallest Alaskan owl?
4. What adaptation allows owls to "sneak up" on their prey?
5. What is the tallest owl in Alaska (& North America)?
6. Owls spit up the undigested fur, bones & feathers of their prey. What is that cast off material called?
7. Name two of the three tools that make an owl a "bird of prey".

These are alot harder...

8. Not all owls are nocturnal. What are owls active in the day called?
9. What is a word for owls active mostly at dawn and dusk?
10. How many vertebrae are in an owl's neck?

Bonus Question: How many vertebrae does an owl have in its neck?

If you need help with these questions feel free to visit the Alaskan Owlmanac at <http://wildlife.alaska.gov/index.cfm?cfc=owls.main>

## Alaskan Owls Word Search

r d f d a v f e a g e o h o  
 t k i i e b o r e a l y a e  
 f a o u a s e l e h a w k u  
 d e n r o h t a e r g i h s  
 k b r n t o w s g e m t o o  
 s e l a n r u t c o n e a e  
 d a e l h t a t r h b l e a  
 k f w c r e p u s c u l a r  
 p e e w r a o c f n o e e t  
 y h o g h r r h o m o p a u  
 g n i m m e l e s w a w o f  
 m o u s e d t n r w r r y t  
 y l r c y r e w u m o o a r  
 p a h h l e u t o e t n f e  
 a t h g i l f t n e l i s d



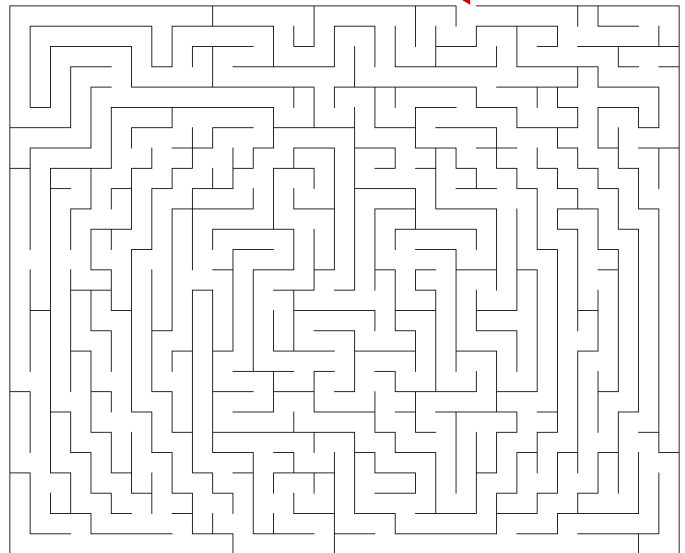
### Word search list

- Barred
- Beak
- Boreal
- Crepuscular
- Diurnal
- Ear Tuft
- Feather
- Great Gray
- Great Horned
- Hawk
- Lemming
- Mole
- Mouse
- Nocturnal
- Pellet
- Pygmy
- Saw-whet
- Screech
- Short-eared
- Silent Flight
- Snowshoe Hare
- Snowy
- Talon
- Vole



## Help the Great Horned Owl find her Nestling!

Start here



You did it!

Great Horned Owls are doting parents. This nestling spends as much as five months with its parents learning how to be an efficient hunter! If you're lucky, you might even find this owl in your backyard!

## Want to learn more?

Read Owl Moon by Jane Yolen then find a nature center giving an Owl Prowl near you and learn how to find owls on your own.

Read Owl Puke by Jane Hammerslough and dissect an owl pellet.

Take a hike with your parents and look for signs that owls have been around; discarded bones, fur & feathers, pellets, or pay attention to Ravens and smaller birds - they will often "mob" an owl they see as a threat!

Answers to owl quiz: 1. Snowy Owl 2. Short-eared Owl 3. Pygmy Owl 4. Silent Flight 5. Great Gray Owl 6. Pellet 7. Talons, sharp, hooked beak, excellent eyesight/hearing 8. Diurnal 9. Crepuscular 10. 12 Bonus: 14