

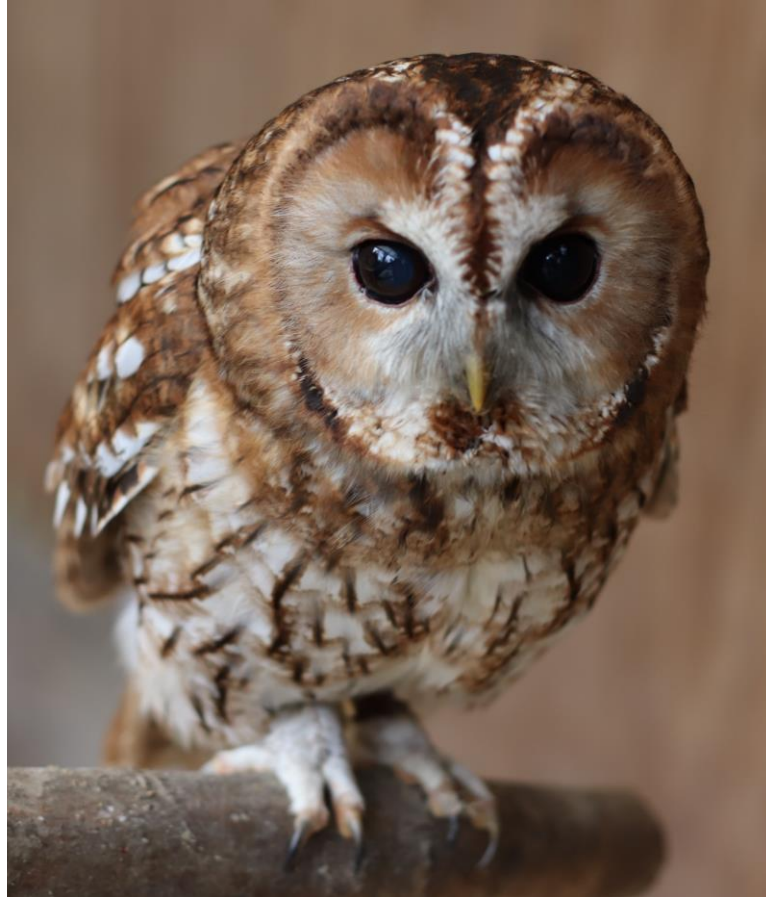
British Birds of Prey

TAWNY OWL

#2

The tawny owl is the species of owl you are most likely to encounter in the UK, with about 50,000 breeding pairs estimated.

They are well known for their 'twit-twoo' call. They are the only owl species to make this noise, and is actually made by two tawny owls communicating with each other. The male produces a 'hoo-hoo-hoo' contact call, with any nearby tawny responding with a 'kewick' sound.



▲ Sorrel, our male tawny owl

SCIENTIFIC NAME	<i>Strix aluco</i>
DISTRIBUTION	UK, Europe, western Asia
WILD POPULATION	50,000 UK pairs estimated
WINGSPAN	Approx. 80 to 90cm
SIZE & WEIGHT	Approx. 35 to 45cm long, 400 to 500g
LIFESPAN	Usually 4 years in the wild, 25 to 30 in captivity
MAIN DIET	Small rodents, small birds, amphibians

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FILL IN THE BLANKS

Use the words
below to complete
these amazing owl facts!

SILENTLY

NEST

NOCTURNAL

OILS

HUNTER

EARS

FEATHERS

BLACK

SATELLITE DISC

Tawny owls have very dark _____ eyes, which help them to see at night,
as they are _____ hunters.

Their head is shaped like a _____, which channels sound into their _____.

They don't have many _____ in their _____, so they can fly almost _____.

Like most birds of prey, the female is larger than the male. The female has
more bulk to protect the _____, whilst the male is a more agile _____.

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Tawny owls are part of the *Strix* genus, known as the earless owls (referring to ear tufts rather than actual ears), which also contains wood owls and great grey owls. They prefer mature broad-leaf trees, such as oaks, as nesting sites, but they can also be found in urban areas. As they are very territorial, it is very rare to find other owls where tawnys roost, and they may take over the nests of barn owls.

WORDSEARCH

- TAWNY
- BARN
- LITTLE
- LONG EARED
- SHORT EARED
- SNOWY
- SCREECH
- EAGLE OWL
- GREAT GREY
- PYGMY

P	B	U	A	I	C	U	A	W	D	G	D
T	S	N	O	W	Y	D	L	I	S	F	E
O	S	H	I	E	E	M	Y	S	G	I	R
N	L	W	O	E	L	G	A	E	R	N	A
R	G	Y	H	R	I	O	D	C	E	T	E
S	T	E	Y	T	T	A	C	O	A	A	G
C	O	S	R	A	T	E	K	Y	T	F	N
R	M	C	I	J	L	Y	A	S	G	A	O
E	A	B	H	D	E	L	I	R	R	H	L
E	T	A	W	N	Y	U	F	R	E	S	D
C	E	R	O	U	L	O	A	H	Y	D	L
H	Y	N	M	Y	M	G	Y	P	N	G	W

We have two tawny owls at Huxley's, but many more different owls! Can you find any more owl species in the wordsearch?

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They can live for 20 years in the wild, though the average lifespan is closer to 4 years. Tawny owls are one of many owl species to have each ear pointing in a different direction; the left ear opening faces downwards to hear sounds from below.

ANAGRAMS

Tawny owls are known to prey on over 400 different species! Unscramble these words to find out what some of them are.

▼ Rolo, our female tawny owl



E M I C

— — — —

S L O V E

— — — — —

D R I B S

— — — — —

G R O F S

— — — — —

S A B T

— — — —

M O W R S

— — — — —

D R A S I L Z

— — — — —