

British Birds of Prey

SHORT-EARED OWL

#17

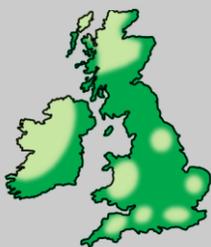
Short-eared owls (*Asio flammeus*) are medium-sized owls, and hunt during the day rather than at night. They belong to the *Asio* genus of 'eared' owls, although their very short tufts are rarely visible.

There is a resident British population all year round in northern England and Scotland, whilst southern populations are typically winter migrants from northern Europe.

Relatively rare in the UK, they are found elsewhere on every continent except Antarctica and Australasia.



British Population



Between 600 and 2,200 breeding pairs estimated

Numbers are decreasing

 Found here

Size & Weight



Head to tail - 34 to 42 cm

Wingspan - 90 to 105 cm

Weight -
250 to 450g

Lifespan



4 years
Wild average



15 years
In captivity

Main Diet



Small mammals
(voles, lemmings, mice)



Small
birds



Insects



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They hunt over grassland and marsh areas, flying low to the ground in search of mammals like voles. Unlike many owl species, they prefer treeless areas, and will nest on the ground in the protection of tall grasses.

Owls are usually opportunistic hunters, meaning they will hunt almost anything smaller than themselves. However, short-eared owls tend to rely entirely on voles, mice and other small mammals. If these run low, they will move to a new area, rather than find a different species to prey on. Also unusually for owls, they may form communal roosts with other short-eared owls during the winter months, although they will always hunt alone.

Colouring Page

Their Latin name *flammeus* means 'flame-coloured', derived from their golden plumage. Use the picture below as a guide to colour in your own short-eared owl!



Paint the world
SUPER
COLORING



Huxley's Birds of Prey Centre, Horsham

Fill in the Blanks

Use the words below to complete the facts!
Each word is used only once.



WATER

NESTERS

GROUND

PREDATORS

DISTANCES

MIGRATING

FOOD

PAIRS

DEFENDING

When forming breeding _____, males offer _____ to females. This stops the females from considering the male as food.

As _____, the _____ usually leave the nest very early, sometimes as young as two weeks old.

They have a reputation for ferociously _____ their nest and young, attacking _____, dogs and even human observers.

Short-eared owls can travel long _____ over large expanses of water, and often do so whilst _____.



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Crack the Code

Use the code to decipher the sentences below, and find out some more facts about short-eared owls! The first one has been started for you.

A = ○	E = ∪	I = ⊙	M = ⊙	Q = ●	U = ∇	Y = ⊖
B = ◻	F = ∇	J = ∇	N = ◻	R = ◻	V = ◀▶	Z = ◊
C = ▲	G = ◻	K = ⋈	O = ★	S = ⊙	W = ◻	
D = ⊕	H = ◊	L = ∪	P = ▲	T = ◆	X = ∇	

◀▶★∪∪◻ ⊙⊙⊖ ∇★◻⊙ ∇▲ ◆★ ◻⊙◻∪◆⊖
 V O L E S M A Y F O R M

▲∪◻▲∪◻◆ ★∇ ◆◆∪◻◻ ⊕◻∪◆

◻◻◻◻∪◻ ◻◻∪ ◻◻⊕∪▲∪◻⊕∪◻◆ ∇∇◻◆ ★◻∪

◆★ ◆◻★ ◻∪∪⋈◻ ◻∇◆∪◻ ∇∪∪⊕◻◻◻

◆◆∪⊖ ◻◻∪ ◆◆∪ ★◻∪⊖ ◻◻◻◆◻◻◆ ★◻∪

◻▲∪▲◻∪◻ ◆★ ◻∇◻∪⊕ ◆◆∪◻◻ ★◻◻ ◻∪◻◆◻

