

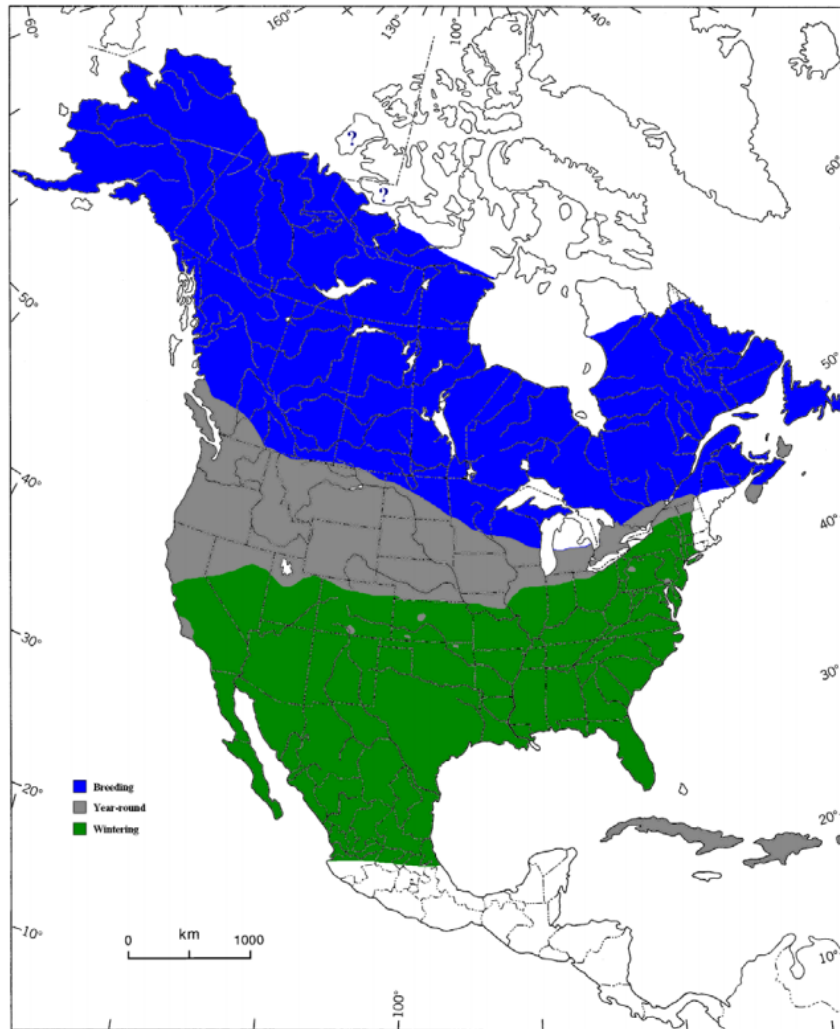


# Species at Risk Profile Series: Short-eared Owl



- Short-eared Owls are listed as Special Concern in Canada.
- Look for a medium-sized owl with long, rounded wings and two small feather tuft 'ears'.
- They are less nocturnal than many owls, and are most active in mornings and evenings.
- Avoiding forests, they prefer open areas including tundra, taiga, bogs, and prairie.
- Their primary food source is small mammals, but it may also include birds.
- They are nomadic, settling in areas with high prey concentrations.
- An average of 7 eggs are laid in a grass-lined scrape sometime between April and June.
- Incubation begins after the first egg is laid, which means chicks hatch at different times.
- Males provide food for the female and chicks, while females incubate and feed the young.
- About half of young owls survive to fledging.
- Predators include foxes, skunks, hawks, gulls, and other owls, as well as cats and dogs.





## Conservation

- Habitat loss and degradation is the greatest threat to Short-eared Owls.
- Mowing hayfields can result in the death of young owls.
- During incubation, human disturbance may cause nest abandonment.
- Adults can be killed with collisions with vehicles, fences, and power lines.

## Get involved

- Read the assessment and status report for Short-eared Owls [here](#).
- Low to moderate grazing rates will create the tall grass preferred by these owls.
- Allowing young owls to fledge before mowing hayfields will minimize owl mortalities.

Photo credit: PIPL family by James Villeneuve used with permission (front)

Range map credit: 2008. COSEWIC assessment and update status report on the Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vi + 24 pp. ([www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/status\\_e.cfm](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/status_e.cfm)).