

# Eurasian Eagle-owl



Classification  
**Kingdom:** Animalia  
**Phylum:** Chordata  
**Class:** Aves  
**Order:** Strigiformes  
**Family:** Strigidae  
**Genus:** *Bubo*  
**Species:** *bubo*



## Range, Habitat, Conservation Status

- **Range:** Palearctic ecoregion, which includes Europe, northern Africa, Asia north of the Himalayan foothills, and the north central portions of the Arabian Peninsula. They may be found as far north as Siberia and as far south as the Ethiopian region.
- **Habitat:** Wide range from forests to rocky canyons, but generally not abundant anywhere. Found in woodlands, mountains, riverbeds, open grasslands, and deserts. They have also been documented in city parks and seem to be able to live just about anywhere as long as there is available prey and nesting sites.
- **Conservation Status:** Least Concern

## Physical Characteristics

- **Body Length:** 2 to 2.5 feet (0.6-0.7 m)
- **Wingspan:** 5 to 6 feet (1.5-1.8 m)
- **Weight:** 3 to 9 pounds (1.2-4.0 kg)
- **Lifespan:** Around 20 years in the wild and 60 years in human care.
- **Identifying Traits:** Large with deep orange eyes and noticeable plumicorns, which are tufts of feathers on the top of the head. The facial disk has black, gray, and white markings. Tawny mottled brown color with streaked pale, buffy underparts. Black streaks on upper part of the body and wings.

## Behaviors

- **Feeding:** Small mammals, such as rats, mice, voles, and rabbits. May also hunt other birds, such as herons, woodpeckers, and other raptors. Have been observed preying on amphibians, reptiles, fish, and insects.



- **Breeding:** Begins around 1 to 3 years of age. Courtship starts in the late fall.
- **Nesting:** Utilize shallow depressions in rocky landscapes for nesting sites, such as rocky crevices, cave entrances, and sheltered cliff ledges. Nesting occurs in January and February each year. Lay 1 to 4 whitish eggs. In seven weeks or less, the young reach close to adult size and start short flights. The young remain in the same area as their parents for 3 to 4 months before leaving to find their own territory.
- **Migration:** Not Migratory
- **Call:** The males call is a deep, resounding hoot while the female makes a hoarser and higher pitched in sound.

## Resident Bird(s)

**Name:** Bart

- **Age:** Hatched in 2010
- **Sex:** Male
- **Background:** Hatched in the United States at another educational facility. See this bird at a Meet a Raptor or private program as well as on the Raptor Trail.
- **Unique Individual Traits:** Has one white feather on his head.

## Fun Facts!

- One of the world's largest owls.
- Use a combination of fast, powerful flights with shallow wing beats and long glides. They are also able to soar on updrafts.
- Like other owls, Eurasian Eagle-owls have a facial disk that helps direct sound to their ears. If you cup your hands behind your ears and listen, things will sound louder and clearer, which is similar to how this group of feathers around their heads helps them hear. By raising these feathers slightly while hunting, they are able to hear the rustle of a mouse in the grass, the slithering of a snake, or the flapping of feathers.
- Each individual has a distinctive vocalization, which can help in the identification of each owl.

## Importance

- They are top predators that play an important role in nature by controlling prey populations and maintaining a balanced ecosystem.



## Sources

- <https://ebird.org/species/eueowl1>
- <https://denverzoo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Eurasian-Eagle-Owl.pdf>
- <https://www.peregrinefund.org/explore-raptors-species/owls/eurasian-eagle-owl>
- <https://www.aviary.org/birds-habitats/our-birds/?search=eurasian%20eagle%20owl>