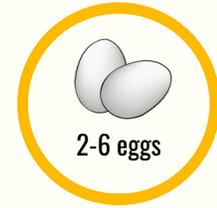
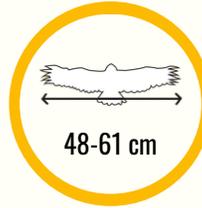




Eastern Screech-Owl

Petit-duc maculé, *Megascops asio*



IDENTIFICATION

Its plumage imitates tree bark very well. Its head bears large earlike tufts. There are three different colorations: gray, rufous and an intermediate form that can be various shades of brown (rare). Its wings are rounded. Its tail is short and square.



17-25 cm

ECOLOGY

Nutrition

This small owl is an opportunist, feeding on any prey present in abundance in its environment; rodents, insects, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish and even bats can be part of its diet. It is strictly nocturnal.

Breeding

It nests in tree cavities, woodpecker holes or nest boxes. The pair is faithful and forms for several years. The young leave the nest 5 weeks after hatching and fledge a few days later. They depend on their parents from 5 to 8 weeks after leaving the nest.

DISTRIBUTION

As a resident species, it does not migrate. It is present year-round in Canada, southern Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba. It nests mainly in the central and eastern United States and northeastern Mexico. It lives in thinned forests, parks, woodlands near cities and suburbs, and also in orchards.

STATUS AND POPULATION

The results of the Christmas Bird Census show that the population has increased since 1970 and has adapted well to urban environments. It is threatened by the destruction of its habitat and nesting trees. Unable to make its own nesting holes in trees, it is threatened by the cutting down of dead trees by human activity. The species is considered secure.¹

¹ Wild species of Canada report, 2015

