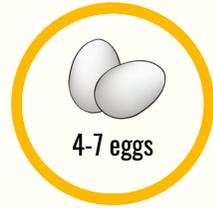
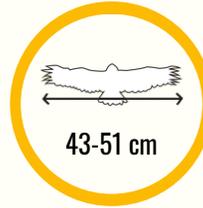




Northern Saw-whet Owl

Petite nyctale, *Aegolius acadicus*

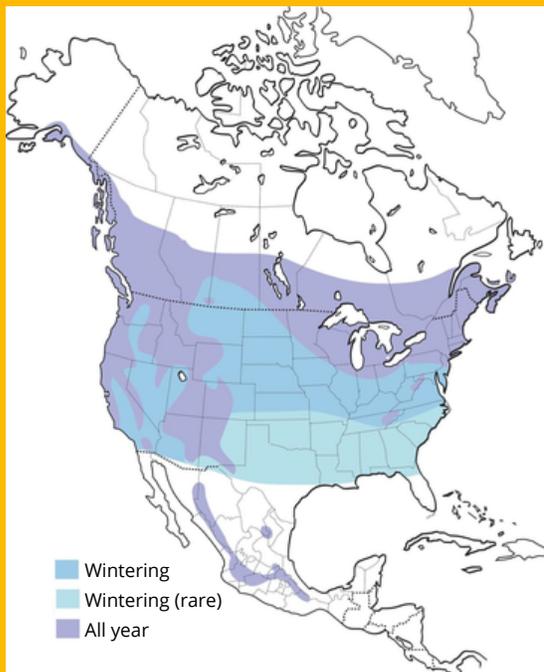


IDENTIFICATION

This is the smallest owl in Quebec. Its plumage is brown mottled with white, and its white breast is dotted with brown stripes. Its head is round and its face is crossed by a white "X" in the center and its facial disk is edged with brown. Its dark beak distinguishes it from the Boreal Owl.



18-21 cm 



ECOLOGY

Nutrition

It feeds on small rodents and sometimes insects and birds. It may approach houses to hunt small rodents attracted by seeds falling from bird feeders. It is then at risk of colliding with a window. This is a common cause of admission at UQROP for this species .

Breeding

The nest is built in old woodpecker holes or tree cavities. It sometimes uses man-made nest boxes. The female incubates her eggs for 4 weeks. The young fledge when they are 4 to 5 weeks old.

DISTRIBUTION

It is found in much of the USA, southern Canada and as far south as central Mexico. It nests in dense mature forests, generally with moist or masy soil. It is the subject of many scientific studies, as it makes a major migration twice a year. Since 1994, to monitor its population status, it has been targeted by one of North America's largest monitoring and banding networks.

STATUS AND POPULATION

The species is considered secure!¹ Intensive logging operations threatens its population by destroying its natural habitat. What's more, in winters where there is heavy snow accumulation, it is not always able to sink deep enough into the snow to capture the preys that burrow in to hide. Its mortality rate is then very high.

¹ Wild species of Canada report, 2015