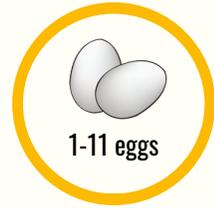
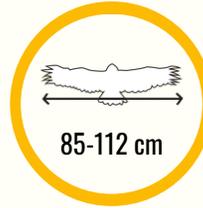




Short-eared Owl

Hibou des marais, *Asio flammeus*



IDENTIFICATION

It is characterized by its tiny, barely visible earlike tufts. Its plumage is shades of creamy white and buff, with stripes dotted throughout. Its facial disk is edged in white. The black circles around its yellow eyes resemble glasses. The underside of the wings is pale, with a dark patch on the wrist.

ECOLOGY

Nutrition

It feeds mainly on voles, but also on other rodents and occasionally on birds. Curiously, this owl hunts mainly during the day. It can be recognized in the field by its low, irregular flight, which resembles that of a butterfly. This particular flight helps it to spot its prey.

Breeding

The nest is a simple depression dug directly into the ground in an open area, such as a field or marsh. The young take flight for the first time when they are 4 weeks old and depend on their parents for several more weeks.

DISTRIBUTION

Its range is one of the most extensive of any owl in the world. It nests in open and/or damp environments and can even nest in the tundra. In the absence of wetlands (marshes, swamps, peat bogs), it uses grassy meadows and agricultural fields.

STATUS AND POPULATION

The number of mentions has dropped by more than half in 25 years.¹ The number of individuals admitted for rehabilitation at UQROP has also tended to decline over the years. Fortunately, several measures have been put in place to protect this species: conservation and restoration of its habitat, and awareness-raising among agricultural producers to help them adapt their practices. The species is considered secure.²

¹ Second atlas of breeding birds in southern Quebec (2019)

² Wild species of Canada report, 2015



34-42 cm

