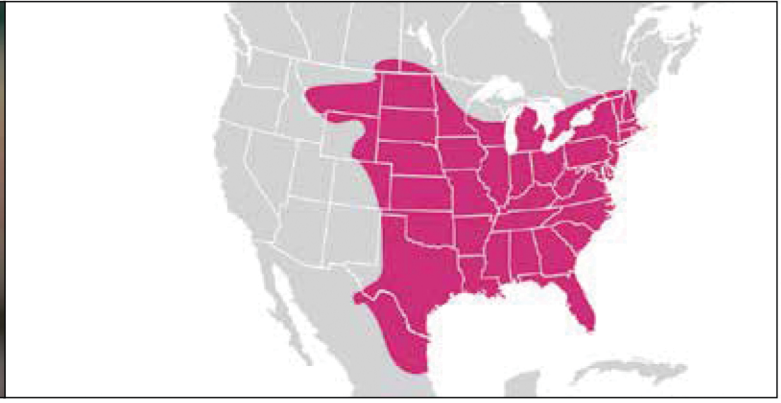


EASTERN SCREECH-OWL

updated March 2017



Range	Found throughout much of eastern North America, from the Rocky Mountains in the west to the Atlantic coast and from Florida and southern Texas in the south as far north as southern Canada
Habitat	Have the broadest ecological niche of any North American owl. They are found in virtually all kinds of habitats below about 5,000 feet (1,500 meters) elevation, from urbanized surroundings to boreal forests. Generally found in wooded areas, they do well in urban and suburban areas and acclimatize readily to human presence, often using bird boxes for nesting.
Diet (wild)	Insects, like moths and katydids; crayfish, earthworms, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals like mice and bats, and small birds
Diet (captivity)	Bird of prey diet, dead mice
Description	Length: 8–10 inches; wingspan: 20–22 inches; weight: 4–9 ounces. Small mottled owl with prominent ear tufts; yellow eyes. Can be either mostly gray or mostly reddish-brown (rufous). Females are larger than males.
Lifespan	6–10 years
Reproduction	Usually 3–4 eggs are laid in a large nest cavity and incubated for 26–34 days. The female lays the eggs over a period of days and only begins incubation when the last egg is laid. As a result, eggs laid first also develop and hatch first. The young develop flight and hunting skills slowly; they depends on their parents for 8–10 weeks after fledging. Average age of sexual maturity is one year. Most Eastern screech-owls form pair bonds for life with individuals of the same age. Both males and females crouch and trill when their mate approaches.
Behavior	Eastern screech-owls are not migratory and a breeding pair will often keep the same nest in winter and summer. Like most owls, Eastern screech-owls are solitary except during the mating season and during winters when mates share a nest. Males defend territories in which they maintain nesting site.
Our animals	1 female, 1 male. Born: 2004 (female); 2000 (male)
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite their name, Eastern screech-owls have a tremulous, descending trill. • Eastern screech-owls deliberately bring live animals, such as blind snakes, into their nests. These animals feed on the ants, flies, and other insects that infest the nest cavity. Acrobat ants may inhabit the nest cavity of these owls and will repel intruders by spraying irritating secretions and biting. • Eastern screech-owls cache prey in their nests for later consumption by adults or nestlings. • Eastern screech-owls are fearless in their defense of their nests and will often strike unsuspecting humans on the head as they pass nearby at night, During the day, they will freeze in an upright position, relying on cryptic coloration to escape detection. • Eastern screech-owls are known to eat a variety of songbirds, including European starlings. Despite this fact, starlings regularly displace owls from nesting sites.

Phylum
ChordataClass
AvesOrder
StrigiformesFamily
StrigidaeGenus
Otusspecies
O. asio