

British Nature Guide

Owls



Owls are mainly nocturnal birds, which means that they are most active at night. You might see an owl perching in a tree or on a post during the day, but normally they will be high in a tree out of sight.

Some owls hunt during the day. This is usually in the winter or when they have young to feed. Owls are predatory birds they feed on mice, voles, other small rodents and birds.

Owls have good eyesight and very good hearing which helps them when they are hunting in the dark.



Owls have very flexible necks and they can swivel their heads to look in all directions without moving their bodies.

During the day most owls roost on the branches of trees. Short-eared Owls nest on the ground, Barn Owls nest in barns or old buildings and Little Owls nest in holes in Oak trees. Long-eared Owls roost in thick bushes, often quite low to the ground. When you are walking in woods look out for big nest boxes in trees. These will be for owls to use.

There are five species of owls in Britain. The Little Owl, the Tawny Owl, the Long-eared Owl, the Short-eared Owl and the Barn Owl.