

Species Sheets: Flammulated Owl



photo by Judy Hoy ©

Common name: Flammulated Owl

Latin Name: *Otus flammeolus*

Field Marks: Length 6 3/4 inches
Wing span 16 inches



Tiny owl that is rarely seen. Gray-brown plumage above and lighter below with fine dark streaks. Small ear tufts on flattish head with dark brown eyes and gray-brown beak.

Habitat:

Open coniferous forest in mountains, ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, sometimes with associated aspen groves. May hunt in selective logging areas.

Behavior:

Feeds almost entirely on insects and other invertebrates that are caught in the air or plucked from leaves. Moths, crickets, grasshoppers, and spiders. Strictly nocturnal, and crepuscular especially in breeding season. Flies out from perches in hunting area. May catch insects on ground.

Voice:

Perhaps the easiest way to locate "Flams". A deep short "hoop" repeated every 2-3 seconds or maybe "hoo-hoop" when excited.

Nest and eggs:

Cavity nesters taking advantage of woodpecker holes usually 15-40 feet above ground. Eggs number 2-4, sometimes 5. Incubation short, only 21-24 days, entirely by female.

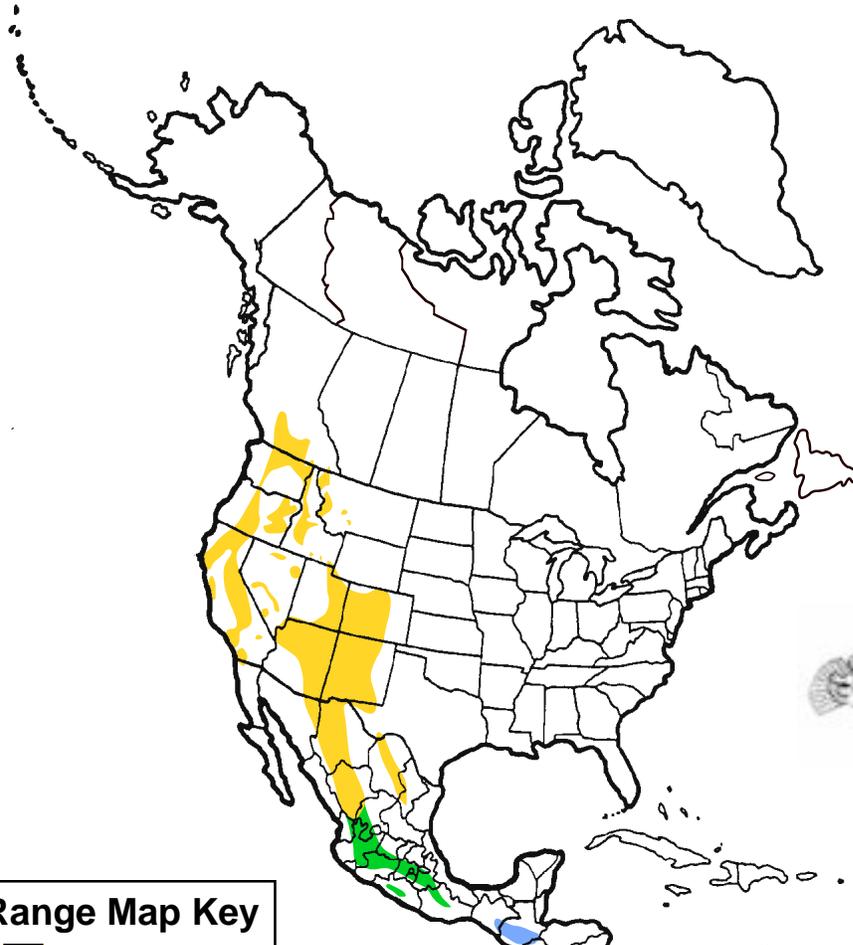
Movement:

May be the most migratory of North American Owls, because food supply of insects disappears in winter. Northern birds move to Mexico and Central America in fall, and return at lower elevations in spring to feed on insects on the way.

Interesting Fact:

Flammulated Owls were once considered quite rare. Their feathers are colored exactly like the bark of a tree. We call this cryptic coloration, so they blend in exactly with their surroundings. Plus they have soft voices and are active only in low light. They may be more common than we think.

Range Map: Flammulated Owl



Flammulated Owl. Copyright © Judy Hoy



These maps are designed to show the general limits of occurrence. Within those limits, each species will likely be found only in appropriate habitat.

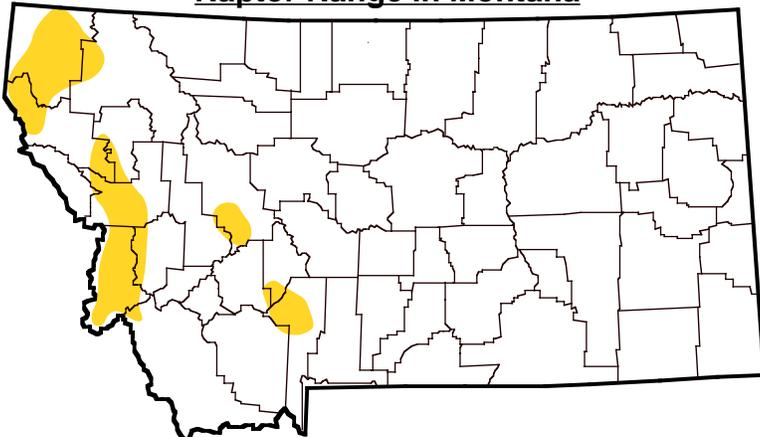
Range Map Key

- Summer
- Year-round
- Winter

scale: 1 inch = 1,000 miles



Raptor Range in Montana



Montana range maps are based on the Montana Bird Distribution data.