

# EASTERN SCREECH-OWL

## Petit-duc maculé

*Otus asio*



### Breeding Range of Eastern Screech Owl in Ontario



### ALTERNATE NAMES

Gray Owl; Little Cat Owl; Little Dukelet; Little Gray Owl; Little Horned Owl; Mottled Owl; Red Owl; Scritch Owl; Shivering Owl; Squinch Owl; Whickering Owl; Whinnering Owl.

### IDENTIFICATION

Small owl with red, gray, and intermediate colour phases independent of age, sex, or season. Eyes are yellow and bill has a pale tip and yellow-green base. Prominent ear tufts when raised. Underparts are marked by vertical streaks crossed by dark barring.

### VOCALIZATION

Call is a rising and falling soft, melodious whistle. The call is not a screech at all, but a tremulous, mournful whinny.

### BEHAVIOUR

This non-migratory species is a permanent resident in southern Ontario. Is exclusively nocturnal, waiting until long after sunset to become active. Roosts in tree cavities during the day.

### HABITAT

Is found in open woodlands, orchards, and shade trees within urban areas and along streams. Mature deciduous growth is preferred.

### NESTING HABITS

Nests in tree cavities, especially old woodpecker holes, but will use nest boxes.