

species spotlight

Northern Saw-whet Owl

Aegolius acadicus

by Alyson Kristie, Raptors! Outreach Specialist



Northern Saw-whet Owl

Status:

One of the most common owls in northern United States and southern Canada

Range:

Southern Alaska, southern Canada, and United States excluding southeastern portion, through central Mexico

Habitat:

Coniferous and deciduous forests

Diet:

Mainly small mammals such as deer mice, shrews, and voles; also birds, frogs, and insects



THE NATIONAL AVIARY

The Saw-whet Owl is one of the tiniest birds of prey, having a length of approximately 8 inches and weighing in at a mere 2.5 – 4 ounces. However, don't let its small stature fool you. This raptor is indeed a fierce hunter, using its sharp talons and strong feet to capture rodents, insects, and frogs. It is even able to capture prey as large as a pigeon. Like all owls, the Saw-whet has the ability to locate prey with just its sense of hearing, using its asymmetric ears to pinpoint the exact location of the potential meal.

Saw-whets will nest in old woodpecker cavities or hollows of dead trees. They are strictly a nocturnal animal, and spend their days roosting under the cover of dense foliage, usually close to the ground. Their unusual name comes from their repetitive call, which sounds like a saw being sharpened (or "whetted") with a file. These birds can be found in Pennsylvania, and their image is regularly seen on many license plates in the area.

Wings & Wildlife

This year's 22nd Annual Wings & Wildlife Art Show was a great success, bringing in over 2,000 visitors for the weekend of November 5-7. The Featured Artist, children's book illustrator Robin Brickman, demonstrated how she makes her cut-paper creations, and artists like Don Jones amazed audiences with his eclectic steel bird sculptures.

Special thanks to the 2004 event's sponsors: California University of Pennsylvania, postgazette.com, WQED-FM, Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Spaghetti Warehouse, Rock Bottom Brewery, Pepsi Bottling Company, and the Aviary's fall and winter season sponsor, Sky Bank.

Events 2005

Dates are subject to change.

Saturday, February 5

Breakfast with the Birds

Saturday, April 2

Breakfast with the Birds

Saturday & Sunday, April 23 & 24

Think GREEN Spring Festival

Friday & Saturday, May 6 & 7

International Migratory Bird Days

Saturday, June 4

Breakfast with the Birds

Saturday & Sunday, June 18 & 19

Festival of Flight

Monday, July 11

World Population Day

Saturday, August 6

Breakfast with the Birds

Saturday in August (TBD)

Night in the Tropics

Saturday, October 1

Breakfast with the Birds

Saturday and Sunday,

October 22 & 23

Hootin' Owlween

Saturday, December 3

Breakfast with the Birds

Saturday thru Sunday,

December 10 - 18

Snowbird Festival

