

Flammulated Owl

(*Otus flammeolus*)

FIELD MARKS: Tufts small but evident. Eyes dark brown, bill grayish/white. Two color phases: gray in the northern parts of its breeding range and red/brown in the southern. Facial disk present and corresponds to the color phase. Ventrally, heavily mottled gray. Dorsally, mottled gray with distinct rusty colored shoulder spots, creating a line from the shoulder down across the side of the wing. **SIZE:** five to six inches. **WEIGHT:** two to three ounces. **SIMILAR SPECIES:** Eastern and western screech-owls. However, both of these species have yellow eyes, lack the rusty shoulder patch, and are larger. **HABITAT:** Not yet known for

Montana, but suspected to be mature to old-growth ponderosa pine forest with Douglas-fir understory. **VOICE:** "Boop, boop, boop...", given softly and slowly at approximately two-second intervals. **NATURAL HISTORY:** Nesting probably begins in early June. Nests are located in woodpecker holes or natural cavities. Clutch size is two to four. Incubation is approximately 21 days. Young fledge in 20 to 25 days. Presumably migrates to Mexico in October, returning to Montana in mid-May. **FOOD HABITS:** Almost entirely insects, primarily moths, beetles, crickets. Very rarely, small mammals may be eaten. **STATUS:** This owl under consideration as a species of special concern by the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks. The first Montana nest record was found by a woodcutter in 1986.

