

# Northern Hawk-Owl

(*Surnia ulula*)

**FIELD MARKS:** Round-headed, although head somewhat rectangular, eyes and bill yellow, eyebrows white, and forehead spotted. Facial disk white bordered on sides by thick black trim. Ventrally, heavily marked with dark brown horizontal barring, from the neck to the undertail. Dorsally, dark brown with white spotting throughout. Very long tapered tail. **SIZE:** 14 to 18 inches. **WEIGHT:** 10 to 12 ounces. **SIMILAR SPECIES:** None. Looks more like small falcon. **HABITAT:** Northern coniferous forests to the tundra

edge. **VOICE:** "Ululululululu...", a whistlelike call lasting approximately 10 seconds per turn. **NATURAL HISTORY:** Begins nesting in April or May. Nests on broken-topped snags or in woodpecker holes. Clutch size three to nine. Incubation approximately 27 days. Young fledge at 25 to 35 days. Migratory, although some of the population remains on the breeding range throughout winter. **FOOD HABITS:** Predominantly small mammals. **STATUS:** A rare winter visitor to Montana, with fewer than 20 records in the state. Given its range, it may occur more often, but is simply overlooked.

