

Northern Saw-Whet Owl

(*Aegolius acadicus*)

FIELD MARKS: Round-headed, eyes yellow, bill black. Facial disk reddish/brown; forehead has short white vertical streaks. Ventrally, reddish/brown streaking extends from neck to belly. Dorsally, brown with white spots. Juvenile has dark reddish/brown facial disk and white forehead. Upper chest is reddish/brown grading into dark rust belly and flanks. Juveniles molt into adultlike plumage by early winter. **SIZE:** seven to eight inches. **WEIGHT:** three to four ounces. **SIMILAR SPECIES:** Boreal owls are slightly larger, have a yellow/white bill, rectangular head, whitish facial disk, and are darker brown overall with no reddish tinge.

HABITAT: Most common in coniferous forests; however, they can be found in deciduous trees along watercourses. **VOICE:** A monotonous, "Toot, toot, toot..." given rapidly and persistently throughout the night. Similar to one of the northern pygmy-owl's calls. **NATURAL HISTORY:** Begins nesting in April. Nests in woodpecker holes and possibly natural cavities. Clutch size four to six. Incubation approximately 26 days. Young fledge at approximately 30 days. Migratory, although some birds may remain throughout winter. **FOOD HABITS:** Predominantly small mice, although small birds and insects are probably also eaten. **STATUS:** Listed as a species of special concern by the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

