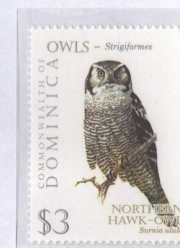


## Owls

The IOC (International Ornithological Committee) recognises 254 species of owl (of which 5 are extinct), split into two families – there are 234 owls in the Strigidae (typical or true owls) family and 20 in the Tytonidae (barn owl) family. This presentation shows 11 examples. Owls are mostly solitary and nocturnal birds of prey – but there are some exceptions, including the diurnal northern hawk-owl, and the burrowing owl. They feed on small mammals, insects, other birds, and some feed on fish. They are found in all regions of the Earth except the two poles, and certain remote islands. A collection of owls is known as a 'parliament'.



The owls on this cover are all found in the United Kingdom. The cover was produced in 2018 and has an Owlets Hall Close, Hornchurch cachet. The other stamps come from Sierra Leone, Guyana, the Commonwealth of Dominica, and the Federated States of Micronesia.



Northern Hawk-Owl



Burrowing Owl

The **Northern Hawk-Owl** (*Surnia ulula*) is a medium-sized true owl found in northern areas. It is non-migratory, usually staying within its breeding area. It is one of the few owls that is active only during the day.

The **Burrowing Owl** (*Athene cunicularia*), also called the Shoco, is a small, long-legged owl found in open landscapes of North and South America. They nest and in burrows, such as those excavated by prairie dogs and are mostly active during the day, but hunt at dusk and dawn. Because it lives in open grasslands or deserts, rather than forests, the burrowing owl has evolved longer legs that allow it to sprint as well as fly when hunting.

The **Brown Fish Owl** (*Ketupa zeylonensis*) is a true owl which is native to Turkey and found in south and south-east Asia. It inhabits forests, and wooded wetlands, and is the most widely distributed of the 4 living species of fish owl. It occupies a range of over 4,300 miles.



Brown Fish Owl



Indian Eagle Owl

The **Indian Eagle-Owl** (*Bubo bengalensis*), also called the Rock Eagle-Owl or Bengal Eagle-Owl, is a large horned owl species native to hilly and rocky scrub forests in the Indian subcontinent. It is usually seen in pairs and has a deep resonant booming call that is heard at dawn and dusk.



Tropical Screech Owl

The **Tropical Screech Owl** (*Megascops choliba*) is a small species of true owl and is found in Costa Rica, Panama, Trinidad, and every mainland South American country. It inhabits a wide variety of landscapes, such as secondary forest, open woodland, coffee plantations, residential areas, and the periphery of forests.



Pearl-Spotted-Owl

The **Pearl-Spotted Owl** (*Glaucidium perlatum*) is a small owl found in sub-Saharan Africa. They belong to the genus of pygmy owls, often referred to as 'owlets' due to their small size. They are heavily spotted and have 2 distinct black false 'eyes' at the back of the head.