

Owls are silent, night-time hunters. They are nocturnal, which means they come out at night and do their hunting then. They rest and sleep (known as roosting) throughout the day. Owls are birds of prey or raptors.

Just like other birds of prey they eat meat, which means they are *carnivores*. The main difference between owls and other birds of prey is that they hunt at night, whereas birds like Peregrine Falcon, Buzzard, Merlin, Hobby, Kestrel and Eagle all hunt during the day. These birds have excellent eyesight which they use to spot their prey, whereas owls are quite different. Look at the pictures of the owls below and study the shape of their faces.

Owls faces are very round, or disk shaped. Their eyes are very large, but they cannot move them like a human can. They have a special flexible neck which they can rotate almost all the way round. You can't see their ears, but if you could, you would notice that they are at different heights on the sides of their faces; they are asymmetrical. The soft feathers around the face send sound waves to the ears to help the owl hear where their prey is. It is said an owl can hear a mouse up to 75 feet away! Their soft feathers also mean they fly silently so can sneak up on their prey without being heard. Owls beaks are very low on their faces and this helps them be able to see their prey much more easily.

Owls eat a variety of different small mammals, including mice, rats, voles and sometimes rabbits. They eat their prey whole, but cannot digest things like bones, teeth and fur. To get rid of these the owls' spit or regurgitate them out in what is called a pellet.

Here in the Isle of Man we have three different types of owl: Barn Owl (below left), Short-eared Owl (middle) and Long-eared Owl (right).



Owl questions

1. Which sentence best describes how an owl hunts its prey?

- Owls are silent, night time hunters
- Owls hunt in the day
- Owls wait in a tree and dive onto their prey
- Owls work in pairs to catch their prey

2. What type of prey do owls eat?

3. What is an owl pellet?

- Part of an owl's body
- Part of the prey's body
- The prey's bones, teeth and fur that could not be digested so is regurgitated
- The noise the owl makes

4. What does 'nocturnal' mean?

5. The ears are at different heights on the side of the face. They are....?

6. What are the three types of owl found in the Isle of Man?

7. Birds of prey eat meat. They are called what?

Herbivores Carnivores Omnivores

8. What do owls do during the day?

Can you find all the words in the grid?

Words are forwards, backwards, upwards, downwards and diagonal.

S	I	L	E	N	T	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	A	L	A	L	Q	Q
H	W	E	P	R	E	D	A	T	O	R	U	B	A	R	N	O	W	L
O	P	I	Y	R	L	C	V	N	M	Q	G	N	T	R	W	N	O	S
R	V	G	H	J	L	K	L	Q	W	E	R	T	A	U	I	G	O	P
T	A	S	D	F	E	G	H	J	K	U	L	Z	S	P	X	E	B	N
E	M	N	B	V	P	C	X	Z	T	L	K	J	Y	J	G	A	D	F
A	T	R	E	W	Q	G	F	C	F	J	I	L	M	W	C	R	B	E
R	D	V	E	T	A	L	O	N	S	B	A	L	M	T	E	E	E	A
E	H	T	Y	Z	V	N	M	C	X	Z	I	T	E	F	J	D	A	T
D	E	E	G	G	T	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	T	A	S	O	K	H
O	Q	W	E	R	T	B	I	R	D	O	F	P	R	E	Y	W	G	E
W	P	O	Y	U	S	E	D	C	N	A	L	P	I	E	T	L		R
L	A	V	N	R	E	R	O	V	I	N	R	A	C	K	O	T	G	B
E	A	E	A	R	H	I	M	N	B	V	G	H	A	R	T	Y	U	I
E	Y	E	S	I	G	H	T	E	D	R	O	N	L	W	Z	X	T	Y
U	I	E	T	B	G	L	Z	V	G	N	I	R	A	E	T	S	Q	N

Silent	Feather	Short eared owl	Eyesight
Ears	Tearing	Nocturnal	Bird of prey
Barn Owl	Asymmetrical	Talons	Pellet
Predator	Long eared owl	Carnivore	Egg

Special adaptations

Owls have special adaptations. Can you match them?

Sharp talons

To reach and catch prey

Very soft feathers

To pinpoint prey

Asymmetrical ears

To grab, hold and carry prey

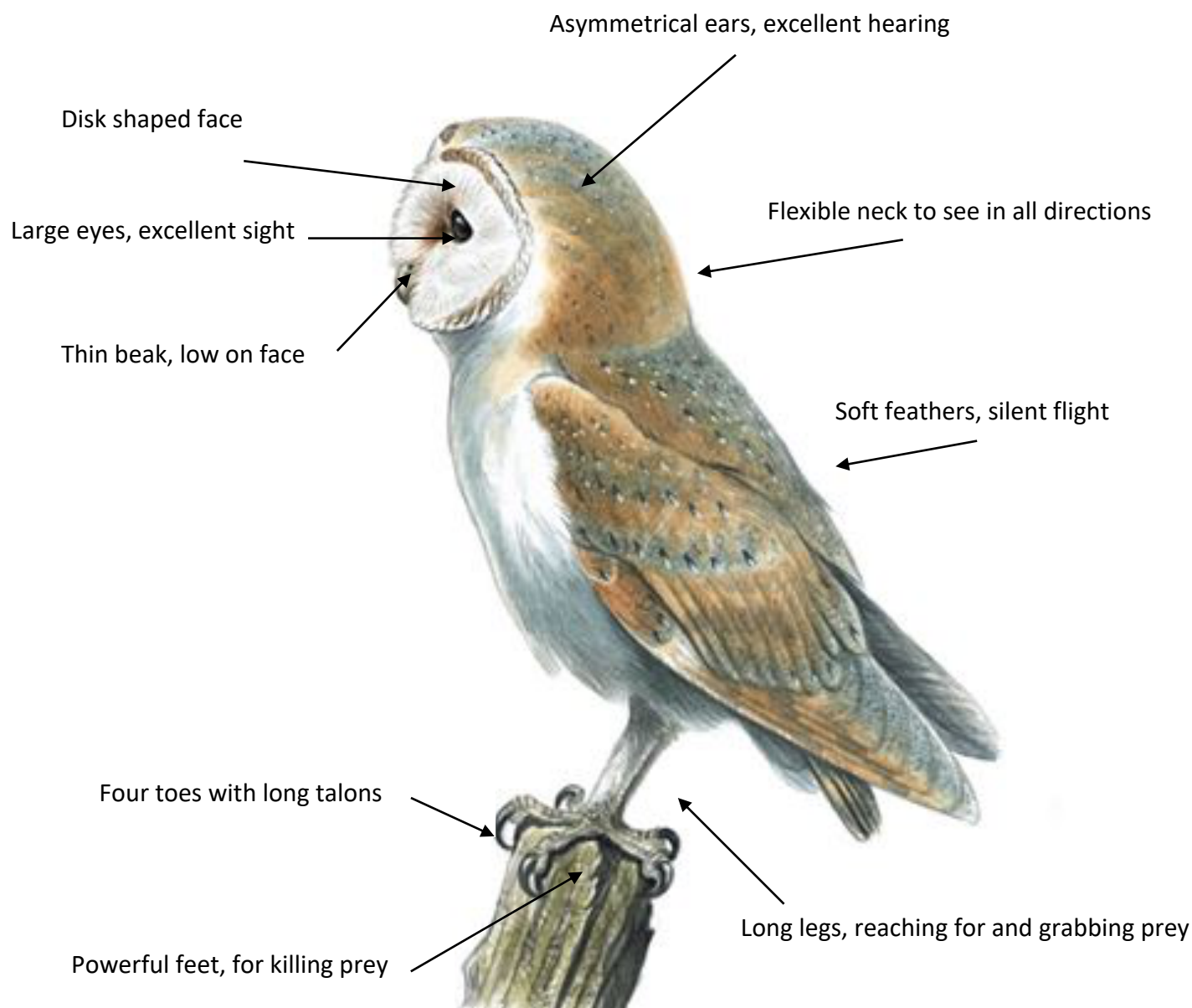
Long legs

For silent flight

Eyes that can see in the dark

To see prey at night





Owls study task



Choose one owl to study. It can be one that lives here in the Isle of Man, or one of your own choice. Complete the information about your owl.

1. What species of owl is it? (Barn, Short-eared, Long-eared, etc)

2. How big is it?

3. How much does it weigh?

4. Where in the world does it live?

5. What does the owl eat?

6. List 3 interesting facts about your owl:

1.

2.

3.

7. Draw and label your owl, using the 'Special features' worksheet.

Owls creative writing task

On one side of A4 paper:



Little Owl

Write a story about an owl.

Give your story a name.

Think about who is in your story and why.

Think about whether there are any other creatures in your story.

Think about what the owl is doing in your story.

Can your owl or any other creatures speak? If they can what are they saying?

Are you in your story?

Make sure your story has an ending.

Keep your reader interested, make sure your story uses exciting vocabulary, it describes the setting and the story flows. Your story needs an introduction, a middle and an end.

Be descriptive. Use lots of detail.

Add character descriptions – what does your owl look like, what does your owl sound like...?



Long-eared Owl



Short-eared Owl



Barn Owl



Tawny Owl

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

Answers:

Owl questions

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3. What is an owl pellet?

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- Part of the prey's body
- **The prey's bones, teeth and fur that could not be digested so is regurgitated ✓**
- The noise the owl makes

4. What does 'nocturnal' mean?

Owls come out at night and do their hunting then ✓

5. The ears are at different heights on the side of the face. They are....?

Asymmetrical ✓

6. What are the three types of owls found on the Isle of Man?

Barn Owl, Long eared Owl, Short eared Owl ✓

7. Birds of prey eat meat. They are called what?

Carnivores ✓

8. What do owls do during the day?

Rest and sleep (known as roosting) ✓

Answers:

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H			P	R	E	D	A	T	O	R		B	A	R	N	O	W	L
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Owls



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