

Beautiful

BARN OWLS



Have you ever seen a barn owl? The best time for some barn owl spotting is at dusk. but they do hunt during the day too, so you may have been lucky enough to see one perched on the lookout or even in full flight! Let's learn some more about this beautiful bird of prey.

What do barn owls look like?

Well for starters, they really are one of the most stunning birds you can see! They have white, heart-shaped faces, a white chest and belly, and mottled grey and golden backs and wings.

Barn owls have super soft feathers too, helping them to fly silently. This is very handy when hunting, as with a silent flight, the tiny mammals they prey on don't hear them coming!

What do they eat?

Barn owls are birds of prey and they mostly eat small mammals. Field voles tend to be their favourite, but they'll also eat mice, shrews and rats. They can be seen 'quartering' over farmland and grassland - quartering is a term for a low, slow hunting flight.

As we already know, barn owls are silent flyers, so it's impossible for their prey to hear them. They also have the most amazing hearing - and this is actually thanks to their heart-shaped face! The heart shape is also known as a 'facial disc', and it collects and directs sound to their inner ears. How cool is that?! They also have special low-light vision, so they can spot anything that moves instantly - even in near darkness. These two special senses means that they're able to find small mammals scurrying about down below in even the longest grass.



Where do they live?

Barn owls live in open countryside and farmland. They can be found all over Great Britain and Ireland.

FUN FACT!

Not all owls hoot! If you hear an owl hooting, it's more likely to be a tawny owl. Barn owls don't make this noise at all - they screech and hiss!

FUN FACT!

Barn owls have lopsided ears! One ear is higher than the other, so they can pinpoint exactly where the tiniest of sounds are coming from.



DID YOU KNOW?

Barn owls can rotate their head 180 degrees in each direction! Perfect for keeping a beady eye on everything going on around them.

DID YOU KNOW?

Barn owls have gone by some weird & wonderful nicknames in the past.

Sometimes they've been called 'demon owls' because of the shrieks and screeches they make, and sometimes also 'ghost owl', because of how quiet and ghostly they are when they fly!