

# OWL EXPLORERS STEM TO-GO

## DRIVING QUESTION: WHO IS LIVING IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Owls are night hunting birds (nocturnal raptors) that eat animals like mice and rats, lizards, snakes, song birds, fish, and insects. At dawn and dusk, owls tend to “hoot” from their favorite perches. Sometimes owls call to find each other. Sometimes owls hoot to claim a hunting territory. Owls mate for life, and both parents work together to raise their babies called “owlets.” There are four different kinds of owls commonly found throughout North Carolina: the Barn Owl, the Barred Owl, the Great Horned Owl, and the Eastern Screech Owl. Each owl species has a different night song. How can you find out if you have owls for neighbors?

As the sun sets, sit in a quiet, outdoor place or near an open window and listen. Wait and listen for approximately thirty minutes until you see full dark, with no daylight left. How many owls can you hear? Are they all the same kind of owl? You can call back to your owl neighbors with these human “interpretations” of owl songs. Some owls, like Eastern Screech Owls and Barn Owls may respond if you play a recorded sound of their calls or if you call them first. To hear actual owl recordings, go to <https://www.audubon.org/news/learn-identify-five-owls-their-calls>. Remember, it is OK if you do not hear any owls. You should still fill out the form. Having no owls present is still important scientific data.

Name(s) of Field Observer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Day of the week \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Starting Time \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time \_\_\_\_\_

Moon Phase



New Moon



Crescent



Full Moon



Gibbous

### Check which weather conditions you experience while you are listening for owls

- Clear skies/no clouds
- Partly cloudy
- Cloudy
- No rain
- Raining now
- Snow
- Windy
- No wind

### Check what the temperature feels like

- I need a winter coat, hat, and gloves
- I need a jacket
- I need a sweater/hoodie
- I am comfortable without wearing a coat, but I’m wearing long pants and/or long sleeves
- I am wearing shorts and a T-shirt
- I am wearing shorts and a T-shirt and I am sweating.

Write the address of where you are listening (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the area where you are listening**

- Urban area: Close together buildings, sidewalks, parking lots, fewer than ten trees in sight, streetlights, paved roads
- Suburban area: Houses and yards with grassy open areas and trees, streetlights, paved roads, possibly sidewalks or no sidewalks
- Rural area: Houses with large spaces where you can't see into other people's windows, either farms or woods are visible, very little pavement or sidewalks, gravel or dirt roads or single lane paved roads, possibly no streetlights or outdoor lighting is the responsibility of the resident
- Wilderness area: There are few or no homes in the area, with no pavement, no streetlights, and no people live here.
- Not sure: (This is OK, too.)

**Record what you hear. Remember, some owls will reply to your call or to recordings of owls.**

Type of owl	Song/call	Number of times you hear this song in 30 minutes	Do you think the sound is coming from one owl in one spot?	Are two or more owls singing to each other? Yes or No	Did you call to the owl or play the sound of its voice? Yes or No	Did you see the owl(s)? Yes or No	Total number of owls that you hear
Barn Owl	KRRRRICK						
Barred Owl	Who cooks for YOOOUUU?						
Great Horned Owl	"Who who who? Whoooo Whooooo?"						
Eastern Screech Owl	"Woohooohoo hooo"						

**Analyze:** Count up the total number of each species of owl you heard. Make a bar graph.

Example of a Bar Graph

