

SHORT-EARED OWL

ASIO FLAMMEUS

Rodent eater

Main benefits for agriculture

The short-eared owl helps regulate populations of small mammal pests such as **voles and mice**.

In general, a short-eared owl can eat one to three voles a day. That means an adult short-eared owl is capable of eating **several hundred rodents per year**.

By regulating the population of small mammals and maintaining a **predator-prey balance** in agricultural ecosystems, the short-eared owl contributes to the health of the ecosystem as a whole.



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Habitats

- Fallow fields, grasslands, and pastureland
- Wetlands
- Nests on the ground

Did you know?

During breeding season, a pair of short-eared owls can catch **more than 10 rodents a day** to feed their brood.

What you can do to help the short-eared owl

Preserving habitat

Maintain grasslands for at least four to five years before cultivating again to ensure high-quality breeding sites over long periods.

Rotate lands so that grasslands put back into cropland sit next to new or old grasslands.

Preserve and restore **natural grasslands and wetlands** located on farmland to provide an ideal habitat. **Set up wooden posts or perches** in fields and grasslands to act as vantage points for short-eared owls.

Install a **flushing bar** on the front of the machinery to scare away any birds nesting on the ground.

The short-eared owl nests on the ground! To help prevent their nests from being trampled, maintain pastures with **limited livestock density**.

Reducing mortality

If you spot a nest or owls:

- **Maintain a protective buffer around it** (100 m or so) and avoid approaching the nest before July 15.
- **Delay the first haying** until July 15 to avoid destroying nests (this date may vary from region to region).
- **When cutting hay**, work from the inside of the field outward so that birds can fly away and avoid getting trapped.

References :

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