

Eastern Screech-Owl

Scientific Name: Megascops asio

Size: The Screech Owl is one of the smallest owls, measuring 8 to 9 inches in length.

Habitat: The eastern screech owl ranges throughout the entire eastern half of the United States. The owls prefer woodlands with conifers. The owls are very adaptable and often lived in suburban areas if suitable nesting sites are available.

Identification: The Screech Owl is a small nocturnal owl with piercing yellow eyes and prominent ear tufts. It comes in two color morphs, a more common gray phase and a rich reddish phase.



Red and Gray Morph



Gray Morph



Red Morph

Fascinating Facts:

- The CES Barn has Screech Owls with both color morphs. The reddish owls are more common in the southern states, while the gray phase prevails in the north.
- The Screech Owl gets its name from their call. They have two calls. One call is a mournful wailing sound and the other a plaintive, tremulous whistle.
- The small size and distinct ear tufts lead many people to believe that the screech owl is actually a baby Great Horned Owl.
- Screech Owls make their nests in tree cavities, either naturally occurring ones or abandoned woodpecker holes.
- A Screech Owl's diet includes mice, insects, snakes, lizards, crawfish, salamanders, and even other birds.
- The Eastern Screech Owl flies fairly rapidly with a steady wing beat of about 5 strokes/second!