



A NEST OF A FLAMMULATED OWL

Definition

A nest and its supporting structure that either (1) is currently occupied by a flammulated owl to hold its eggs or offspring, or (2) is habitually occupied and still capable of holding eggs or offspring of a flammulated owl.

Location

- Usually in mature, open stands of ponderosa pine or Douglas fir with a multilayered canopy
- In soft snags >30 cm dbh, wildlife tree class 4-6, sometimes 7
- Usually 1.5-14 m above the ground
- Often located within or near small forest openings (<1 ha) that are adjacent to thickets of regenerating conifers and shrubs or large trees with heavy branching

Features

- Use natural cavities and abandoned woodpecker (primarily pileated woodpecker and northern flicker) cavities for nesting and roosting
- Size:
 - Entrance diameter: usually about 7 cm, close to their body size
 - Depth: 25-60 cm

Notes

- Migrate south during the winter (October-April)
- Designated as a Species at Risk under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*; Blue-listed in British Columbia.
- Designated as a species of Special Concern by COSEWIC.



Photos left to right: Michael Woodruff, Michael Woodruff, Jared Hobbs

Sensitive Timing

| Courtship | Eggs Present | Young Present |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Apr 1 – Apr 30 | Apr 30 – Jul 31 | May 31 – Aug 31 |

Similar features to a Flammulated Owl Nest

Woodpecker nest - how to distinguish:

- The presence of pellets and prey remains at the base of the tree will indicate an owl species
- Woodpeckers leave white fecal sacs that are much smaller than pellets and do not have prey remnants. They may have insect exoskeletons.

Western screech owl nest - how to distinguish:

- Western screech owls almost always nest near riparian areas unlike flammulated owls, but visual or auditory detection of the owl is required to identify the nest

| Habitat | BEC | Variant |
|--------------------------|-----|----------------------------|
| Ponderosa Pine | PP | dh1, dh2 |
| Interior Douglas-fir | IDF | dk5, dm1, dm2, xk |
| Interior Cedar – Hemlock | ICH | dm, dw1, mk5, mw2, mw4, xw |
| Montane Spruce | MS | dk1, dk2 |

Information to Consider

- **Sensitive Timing: April 1 – August 31**
- Establish a windfirm forested retention area centered around the nest tree.
- Maintain forest connectivity between the retention patch and adjacent forested habitat.
- Ensure this corridor is as wide as possible to minimize edge effects and to provide additional security cover, perching, and hunting opportunities.
- Retain large-diameter, decayed ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir (especially with existing woodpecker cavities) that are near thick cover
- During breeding season, consider adding a “quiet” buffer of an extra 100 m to the no disturbance buffer in which no unusual or sudden loud activities will occur (e.g., blasting, tree felling, chain saws, trucking, etc.).

Recommended disturbance buffers around a Flammulated Owl's nest, depending on existing disturbance and disturbance level of the proposed activity.

| | | Existing Exposure to Disturbance | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | NIL Isolated site, little or no prior access | LOW Undeveloped area with occasional human use | MODERATE Near secondary logging road or minor recreation site | HIGH Near primary road, major recreation site or human development |
| Disturbance Level of Proposed Activity | LOW Activities on foot. Small group, visual screening present. Livestock attractants. Examples: layout, cruising reconnaissance. | 100-200m | 1.5 x tree length | 1.5 x tree length | 1.5 x tree length |
| | MODERATE Light mechanized activities. Larger group/duration, no visual screening. Examples: spacing, planting, fence construction. | 200-500m | 100-200m | 100-200m | 1.5 x tree length |
| | HIGH Mechanized activities Examples: road construction, falling and yarding, landing sites. | 200-500m | 200-500m | 200-500m | 100-200m |
| | VERY HIGH Blasting, helicopter logging. | 1000m + | 1000m + | 1000m + | 1000m + |