



The Screech Owl is not aptly named; its wailing, sad call is far from a screech. Like all Owls, it hunts by night and sleeps during the day. It remains in a cavity in a tree, where it nests, or perches on a branch. A Screech Owl, perched close to a tree trunk, is hard to see. Its coloring and feathers look like the bark. Some Screech Owls are reddish, some gray, as shown in the picture. There is no other difference between the birds, which are the only small Owls with tufted ears.

The female Screech Owl lays three to five white eggs in a hole in a tree, a Woodpecker's hole, or even a bird house. The Screech Owl has good eyesight, but its hearing is even keener. It feeds on beetles, moths, birds, frogs, fish, and mice. As it hunts it must be alert for its enemies-the Hawks and larger Owls. Even the young Screech Owls usually swallow their prey whole. Hair and bones are later ejected from their mouths in the form of pellets.

