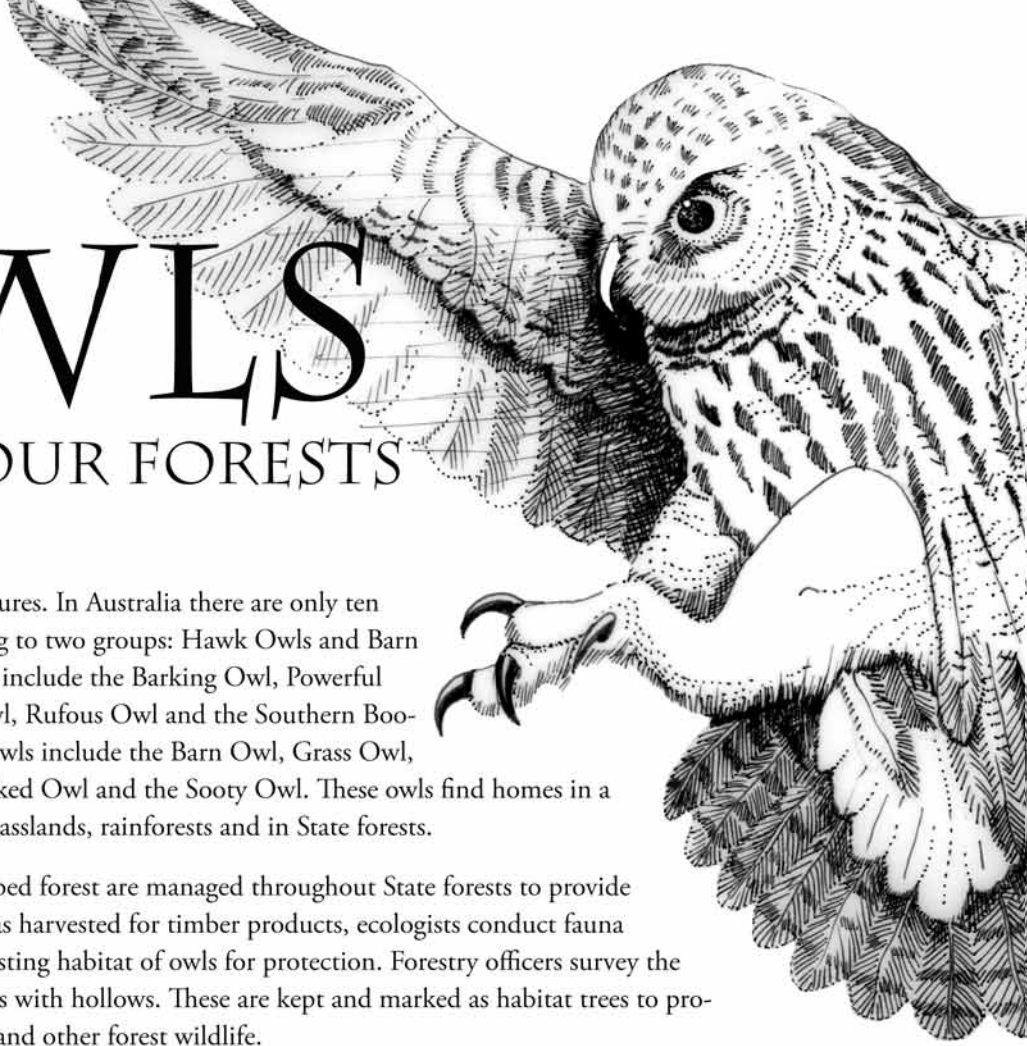


# OWLS

## IN OUR FORESTS



Owls are amazing creatures. In Australia there are only ten species of owl belonging to two groups: Hawk Owls and Barn Owls. The Hawk Owls include the Barking Owl, Powerful Owl, Brown-Hawk Owl, Rufous Owl and the Southern Boobook Owl. The Barn Owls include the Barn Owl, Grass Owl, Lesser Sooty Owl, Masked Owl and the Sooty Owl. These owls find homes in a variety of places, like grasslands, rainforests and in State forests.

Large areas of undisturbed forest are managed throughout State forests to provide habitat for owls. In areas harvested for timber products, ecologists conduct fauna surveys to locate the nesting habitat of owls for protection. Forestry officers survey the forest for any older trees with hollows. These are kept and marked as habitat trees to protect the homes of owls and other forest wildlife.

The more we know about these mystical birds the more we can do to protect them for the future.



The **Barking Owl** (*Ninox connivens*) likes to spend time in the State forests of the Pilliga in western NSW. They are a medium-sized owl, reaching about 45cm in height, are mostly brown with white streaks and have big yellow eyes. Like all owls, Barking Owls are nocturnal and feed from the evening through to morning. They are aggressive hunters and like to eat birds, rabbits, gliders and insects. Barking Owls get their name from their interesting call.

They sound like a dog and go 'wuf wuf'.

The **Powerful Owl** (*Ninox strenua*) is also seen in many State forests. They are a large owl, reaching up to 65cm in height. Their colouring is grey-brown to dark brown with whitish bars across the wings and chest. Powerful Owls have bright yellow eyes, big eyebrows and huge yellow feet with brown talons. Their favourite prey are possums and gliders, birds and occasionally insects. The Powerful owls' call is a slow 'woo hoo'.



### THE OWLS OF J.K ROWLING'S 'HARRY POTTER'

Harry Potter's female owl, Hedwig, is actually a male Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*). Male Snowy Owls are pure white and female Snowy Owls have dark bars across their wings and chest. Snowy Owls are native to cold grassland and tundras of North America, Europe and Asia.

Ron Weasley's owl, Pigwidgeon, is a Scops Owl (*Otus scops*). Scops owls are among the smallest owls in the world. Their brown/grey colouring gives them excellent camouflage in the wild. Scops owls like to live in parklands and inside old buildings and are native to Europe, Asia and Africa.

Draco Malfoy's owl is a Eurasian Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*). They are very regal looking owls and are brown with black bars and white spots. They live to about 20 years in the wild and up to 60 years in captivity. Eurasian Eagle Owls like to live in rocky outcrops in forests or deserts and are native to Europe, Africa and the Middle East.



**Did you know?**

*Owls have three eyelids:  
One for blinking, one for sleeping,  
and one for cleaning the eye. Also,  
owls' eyes do not move!*


























**OWL BINGO**

Bruce the Barking Owl and Penny the Powerful Owl are searching a State forest for their dinner:

Take turns tossing a 5 cent coin onto the grid. If it lands on Bruce, you must make the owl call 'wuf wuf', then write your initials in the square. If it lands on Penny you make the owl call 'woo hoo' and write your initials in the square. If you call the wrong owl, you lose a turn.

If your coin lands on a Sugar Glider; the owls get some dinner and you get another turn. If the coin lands on an icecream, you lose a turn because the owls don't like icecream! The first player to initial three owls in a row and shout BINGO is the winner!

Illustrations by Kathryn Laidlaw

*Legend*



*Penny the Powerful Owl*



*Bruce the Barking Owl*