

**NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL**  
*(GLAUCIDIUM GNOMA)*

**Navajo/Federal Statuses:** NESL G4 / MBTA; not listed under the ESA.

**Distribution:** Breeding range includes most of western North America from southeast AK and British Columbia, south through central parts of the Four-Corner states, and through central Mexico to northern Central America. On Navajo Nation, known from Chuska Mountain Range and Tsegi Canyon. Potential throughout forested areas and canyonlands on Navajo Nation.

**Habitat:** Nests in tree cavities, often near openings (e.g. meadows, lakes and ponds), in a variety of montane forest habitats, and possibly wooded canyons. Montane habitats include coniferous (spruce, fir and ponderosa pine), mixed conifer-hardwood with oak and aspen, hardwood bottomlands, and occasionally aspen stands. May migrate to lower elevations and use woodlands or prairie foothills as wintering habitat.

**Similar Species:** Flammulated Owl has dark eyes, small ear tufts, and shorter tail; Western Screech-owl has conspicuous ear tufts and shorter tail; Northern Saw-whet Owl has softly streaked breast, shorter tail, and large facial disc; all can be distinguished by calls.

**Phenology:**

- e.MAR-l.APR: arrival to breeding area, pair formation
- m.APR-m.JUN: egg laying, incubation (28 days)
- l.APR-m.JUL: nestling period (23-28 days)
- m.JUN-m.AUG: fledging of young
- m.JUL-m.SEP: independence of young, dispersal
- m.OCT-e.MAR: migration, overwintering

**Survey Method:** ≥1 survey during 1 APR-15 JUL at an effort sufficient to have high likelihood of detecting the species; if protocol surveys for the Mexican Spotted Owl are necessary for project, they are typically sufficient to detect this species as well.

**Avoidance:** No activity within 0.2 km (1/8 mi) of nest site during 1 APR-15 AUG; no habitat alteration year-round within 0.2 km of nest site (=12 ha or 30 acre).

**References:**

- Holt, D.W. and J.L. Petersen. 2000. Northern Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*). In The Birds of North America, No.494 (A.Poole and F.Gill, Eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA. (description p.2)
- Johnsgard, P.A. 1988. North American Owls. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.