

**FLAMMULATED OWL**  
**(*OTUS FLAMMEOLUS*)**

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

**Distribution:** Breeding range includes most mountain ranges of western US, southern British Columbia, and Mexico. On Navajo Nation, known from Chuska Mountain Range, Defiance Plateau, and Black Mesa. Potential exists throughout forested areas of Navajo Nation.

**Habitat:** Nests in tree cavities in open conifer (usually ponderosa pine) or aspen forests, often with brushy understory of dense saplings or oak shrubs and clearings; areas with old-growth are preferred. Roosts within dense stands with large-diameter trees or regeneration. Nest and roost habitats need high abundance and diversity of nocturnal arthropods for prey. Winter in lower elevation habitats, especially riparian areas.

**Similar Species:** Flammulated Owl is the only small owl with dark eyes, rather than yellow; Western Screech-Owl is larger with grayish color; Northern Pygmy-Owl has long tail, two black nape spots, and no ear tufts; Northern Saw-whet Owl has reddish-streaked breast and no ear tufts; all can be distinguished by calls.

**Phenology:**

- l.APR-m.MAY: arrival to breeding area, pair formation
- m.MAY-l.JUN: egg laying, incubation (22 days)
- e.JUN-m.JUL: nestling period (22 days)
- l.JUN-m.AUG: fledging of young
- l.JUL-m.SEP: independence of young, dispersal (30-35 days)
- >m.SEP: migration, overwintering

**Survey Method:** ≥1 survey during 15 MAY-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 MAY-15 AUG; no habitat alteration year-round within 0.2 km of nest site (=12 ha or 30 acre).

**References:**

- Johnsgard, P.A. 1988. North American Owls. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.
- McCallum, D.A. 1994. Flammulated Owl (*Otus flammeolus*). In The Birds of North America, No.93 (A.Poole and F.Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, PA, and the American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C. (description p.2)