

Nocturnal Owl Survey: Quick-Reference Protocol Summary

The Protocol Summary is intended as a quick reference when you are in the field. Please use this summary once you have read and are familiar with the complete survey protocol.

Survey: Listen quietly for a period of 7.5 mins per point while broadcasting the owl survey soundtrack.

Route: Each route consists of 10 survey stops spaced at least 2 km apart and numbered consecutively.

Date: Survey once between April 1st and May 15th. Do not survey when wind speed is greater than Beaufort Scale 3, or there is sustained precipitation.

Time: Begin at 30 minutes after sunset and finish no later than midnight. The total time for all stops ranges from 2.5 - 4.5 hours.

Data collection – Weather Conditions: At the beginning and end of the route, record the temperature, level of wind, cloud cover, and precipitation.

Data collection – Stop Conditions: At each stop location, record the odometer value, the time your survey began, the number of cars that pass, and the background noise level.

Data collection – Owl Detections: Each line of the data sheet represents an individual bird's detection history.

- If you did not detect owls at a given stop, you do not need to fill out a row for that stop.
- The survey period is broken into 6 time intervals on the data sheet (1st minute, 2nd minute, After 1st BOOW, After 2nd BOOW, After 1st NSWOW, After 2nd NSWOW).
- For each individual owl detected in each time interval, record the code for the highest detection type(s) you observed:
 1. X (individual heard)
 2. S (individual seen)
 3. XS (individual heard and seen)
- Use Repeat box to record whether you think you are reporting a bird recorded at a previous stop.
- Record the distance (<200 m, 200-500 m, 500-1000 m, 1000 m+) and direction to your first detection of: Boreal Owl, Great Horned Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Northern Hawk Owl, Short-eared Owl.
- Optional: record the number of individuals of American Woodcock, Wilson's Snipe, and Ruffed Grouse if you are familiar with their songs.

Data collection – Zoom Recorder Use (Optional): Be sure to use the tripod, record the ENTIRE stop duration, and clearly state your name, the date, time, and stop number at each stop.

Essential Equipment Checklist:

- Owl survey permit
- Speaker (tested prior to beginning route)
- Data sheets/NatureCounts app and phone charger
- Survey protocol
- Route map/location of stops/GPS
- Stopwatch/timer
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Pens/pencils