



## NatureMapping Animal Fact Sheet for Grades K-6

**What they look like:** If you saw a Great Horned Owl, it would be easy for you to tell what it is, because it looks like it has horns! These owls don't really have horns, but they have tufts of feathers on their ears that look like they have horns.



Some people say that it looks like these birds have cat ears. That's why some people call them Cat

Owls. Great Horned Owls are about the size of a grown-up cat - they are 22 inches tall.

They have brown feathers that are more lightly colored inside their wings. They also have white feathers on their

throats.

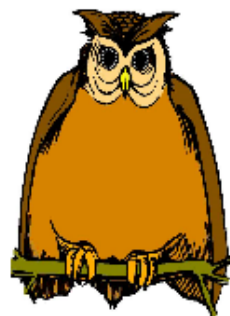
**Where they live:** There are lots of Great Horned Owls in America, and they live in lots of different kinds of places. These owls like to live on the sides of cliffs, in deserts, in forests, and in other areas with lots of trees and bushes.

Great Horned Owls usually make nests inside of hollow trees. Sometimes they use nests made by hawks and crows, or they may take over a squirrel's home in a tree hole. They also build nests in caves, stumps, or barns.



**Nesting:** Great Horned Owl mothers lay 2 or 3 eggs in these nests and sit on them for about 30 days. After the eggs hatch, the mother and the father will feed the baby owls for another 30 days - and those babies need a lot of food!

The young birds learn to fly well when they are about nine weeks old. They will live about 28 years. How old are you? If you were a Great Horned Owl, would you be pretty old?



Great Horned Owls that live in cold areas fly south to warmer areas during the winter to avoid cold weather.



**What they eat:** Great Horned Owls spend most of their time hunting. They hunt in the day and in the night, but they can see better at night - not like people!

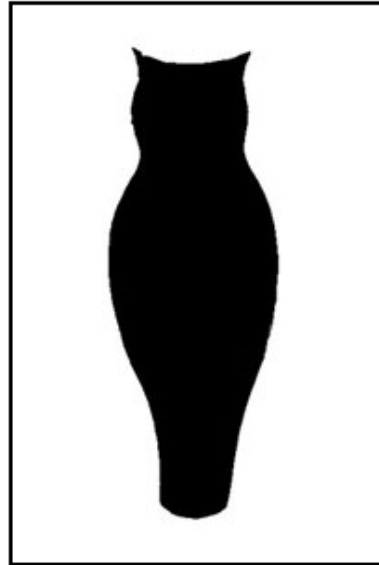
Great Horned Owls sit on branches and wait for food to come by, and then they fly down very quietly to catch it. They like to eat small animals like mice, rats, rabbits, squirrels, woodchucks, and even skunks. They will also feed on other birds including hawks or



crows.



*Great Horned Owl Tracks*  
by J. Wernet, age 12



*Great Horned Owl Silhouette*



*Great Horned Owl Photo*