

Wildlife on Mount Baldo

Nocturnal Birds

(*Strigidae* or Owls)

Order *Strigiformes*
Family *Strigidae*



Owls have forward facing eyes with two facial discs divided by a central “V” that separates the yellow-orange eyeballs. On Mount Baldo the species that is most common is the tawny-owl (*Strix aluco* L.). Boreal owls (*Aegolius funereus* L.) and pygmy owls (*Glaucidium passerinum* L.) live in mature mixed conifer-deciduous forests interspersed with large clearings, often on the edge of meadows and pastures. Long-eared owls (*Asio otus* L.) have a merely local distribution.

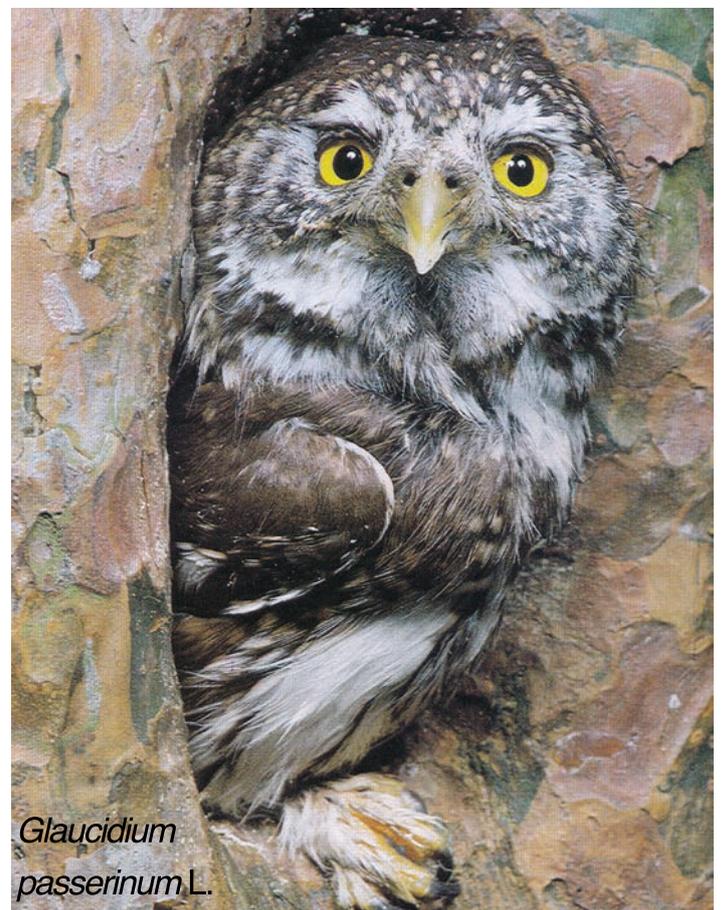
The **Boreal Owl** is 25 cm long and its wingspan can reach 55-62 cm. It is squat and sturdy; its plumage is unmistakable, particularly on the head, which is disproportionately large and bordered by a ring of brown feathers, thickly dotted with white spots. The underparts are also characterized by different shades of white and gray, while the upperparts are reddish with white spots.

The **Pygmy Owl** is - as the name implies - the smallest species of owl: only 16 cm long, 50-80 grams in weight and a wing length that does not exceed 11 cm. Its basic color is gray-brown with white flecks.

The **Tawny Owl** is relatively large - between 37 and 43 cm. Its plumage is characterized by tawny hues, on which brown spots stand out. It has a large rounded head that can rotate 270°, its eyes are large and round, surrounded by cream-colored discs.

The **Long-eared Owl** has two distinctive well developed ear-tufts above the eyes; the head, neck and upper parts of the wings have a tawny-brownish coloring with darker speckles that provide perfect camouflage. The underparts and the sides have shades that go from yellow ochre to light brown with blackish streaks and bands and contrast considerably with the back where they are darker. It has a wingspan of up to 95 cm, is 34 cm long and weighs over 250 grams.

Aegolius funereus L.



*Glaucidium
passerinum* L.