

Species at Risk

BURROWING OWL



What does it look like?

Small owl with large yellow eyes and long skinny legs.

Often distinguishable from other owls due to its preference for the ground.

Where can it be found?

Burrowing owls prefer relatively flat prairie and open pasture.

They do not make their own burrows—instead they use abandoned burrows created by burrowing mammals.

In fall, they migrate to the southern United States and Mexico.

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Threats

- Habitat loss due to farmland development, urban areas and roads.
- Less burrows for owls to use due to fewer populations of burrowing mammals like ground squirrels and prairie dogs.
- Use of pesticides has resulted in less available insect food sources.

What can you do to recover this species?

In Manitoba, burrowing owl populations have decreased to near zero in recent decades but are slowly coming back thanks to recovery programs.

Landowners can help by preserving burrows created by burrowing mammals.

If you spot a burrowing owl, contact the MMF for more tips on how to support the survival of this rare species!

