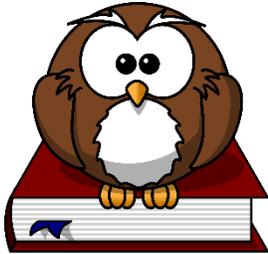




Owl

Fun Facts



**Try completing the puzzles
before reading the article.**



How can you find an owl?
Of course, all you need to do is listen for the owl's hooting sound, right? Not so. While some owls do hoot, other sounds made by owls include screeching, barking, neighing, and so on. So then you decide to look for owls perched on tree limbs. That's a good idea but it is not always easy to see an owl perched on a tree limb. That is because the color of its feathers blend in with tree colors. And different types of owls have different colored feathers so they find trees that are best at matching their color.

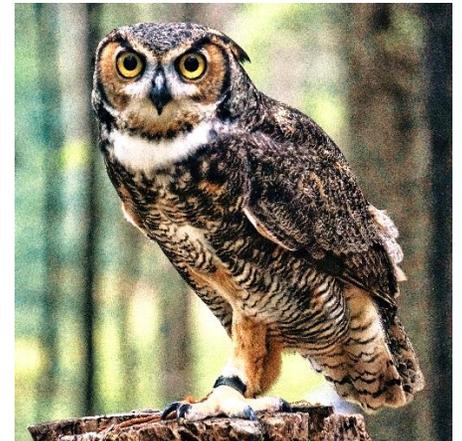


Also, some owls find little niches or cut-outs to hide in which make it almost impossible to see them unless you already know that they are there.



That's not all, the burrowing owl hides on or in the ground, often nesting in the holes left by other animals like prairie dogs. Hence, it is not as easy to see an owl as it is to see a robin or a mourning dove.

If you enjoy having a flower garden or a vegetable garden, it would be to your



benefit to have an owl living nearby. That is because owls eat the insects and small animals that can damage these gardens. Owls are extremely good at hunting their prey (animals they eat) and here are some of the reasons why.

Owls have excellent hearing. When you look at an owl's face, you will see that it is kind of flat with disc shapes around the eyes. The disc shapes help the

owl's depth perception (seeing) when hunting. The flat shape of the face increases the sounds to their ears which helps them to hear better.



This is especially helpful when they are close to their prey as an owl's vision is not real clear when looking at objects very near to it. However, their far vision, especially with little light, is exceptionally good. That is why owls typically rest during the day and do their hunting at night. If owls were able to wear glasses, they would only need the glasses for reading and any other close work, not for seeing items farther away as their far vision is excellent.

Unlike a human whose eyes are round, an owl's eyes are tube shaped. This means that their eyes cannot move left to right like a human's eyes. In order for owls to look to their left or to their right, they must turn their entire head until their head faces the object that they want to see. Although humans have the advantage

that they can look at an object that is to their side without moving their head, an owl has an advantage that allows it to look farther to the side than humans. Most people can only turn their head about 90 degrees to the left or right. An owl can turn its head more than 180 degrees so that it is facing backwards and it can do so without any harm to its neck. Some owls can turn their head 270 degrees or $\frac{3}{4}$ around but they do not hold that position for long.



An owl's night vision is not the only thing that makes them a great night hunter. Unlike many birds that are noisy when they flap their wings, an owl can fly very silently. Sometimes, you can even see them leap off of a tree branch, flap their wings a few times and glide to the prey on the ground and you don't hear a sound. That is because their special feathers make their wings flap quieter than many other birds. They also have a longer wingspan so they don't need to flap their wings as often.



Owls catch and kill their prey with their sharp talons (claws). Because they do not have teeth to chew, owls swallow the small prey, like a mouse whole, or the larger prey in pieces. Later, whatever the stomach cannot digest like fur and bones is thrown up as little pellets. Owls typically throw up these pellets during the daytime when perched in a tree. If you ever come across a pile of these pellets under a tree, you will know that an owl was or maybe still is perching up above.

The average life expectancy of owls is about ten years if living in the wild. However, owls living in captivity have been known to live longer than twenty years. Before an owl can be born, the future father owl has to convince the future mother owl that he is a good mate. He does this by bringing her "gifts" and performing different flying "tricks". If he is accepted by the female, she may lay from one to over a dozen eggs.

However, three to five eggs is more common. The eggs usually take about four weeks to hatch.

Owls come in different sizes. The Elf Owl is the smallest owl and it is about the size of a tiny sparrow. The largest owl is the Blakiston Fish Owl which can weigh over eight pounds and has a wingspan of over six feet.

How come owls can turn their head so far but people cannot? Like people, most birds have seven bones (called vertebrae) in their neck. Owls have 14 vertebrae in their neck which is why they have much more flexibility in this area.

Additionally, the blood vessels in an owl's neck are positioned so that they do not get pinched when the bird



turns its head so far. Although it looks very strange to see the bird's head facing backwards when its entire body is facing forward, it is a very common practice for owls.

Other than a zoo, where is the best place to see an owl? Owls are going to be located near their prey and where they will blend in with the environment. Insects, mice and rabbits like to live where there are native plants.

Native plants are those that were common to the area before people replaced them with sod grass, patios, swing sets, etc.



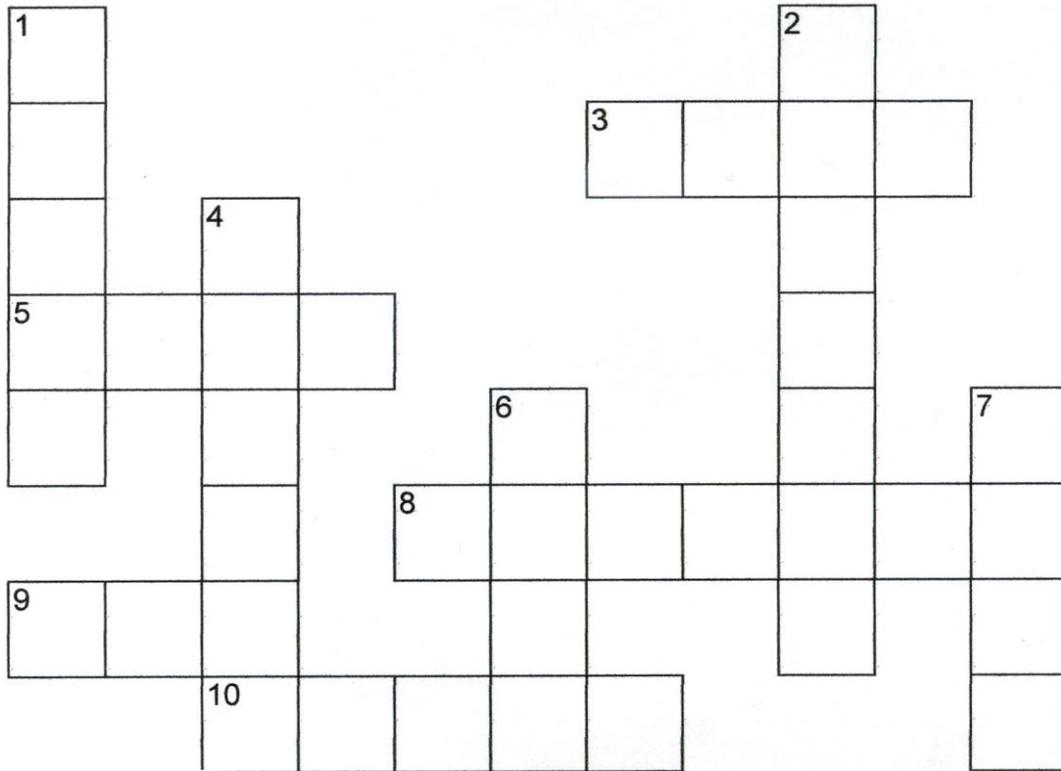
Although owls can blend in with certain grown trees, many of these trees lose their leaves during the winter so the owls move to another area during that season. Other owls prefer to live in fir trees that maintain cover for the owls throughout the entire year. The next time you are with your friends and see an owl, you can tell them all about this wonderful bird.



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Owl Fun Facts

Crossword Puzzle #1



ACROSS

- 3 An owl cannot _____ its food.
- 5 An owl's flat face helps it to _____.
- 8 Owls can fly _____ than most other birds.
- 9 Owls can live _____ years in the wild.
- 10 Most birds have _____ bones in their neck.

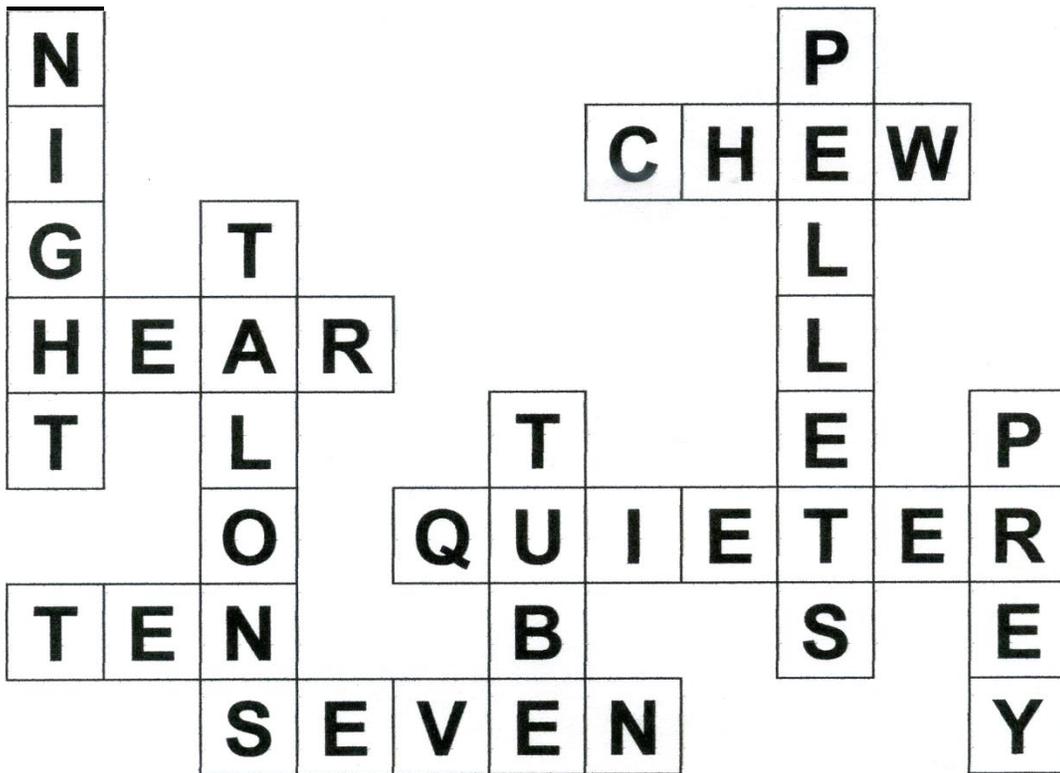
DOWN

- 1 Owls have excellent _____ vision.
- 2 Owls throw up bones and fur as _____.
- 4 An owl's claws are called _____.
- 6 An owl's eyes are _____ shaped.
- 7 The animals owls chase are called _____.

Owl Fun Facts

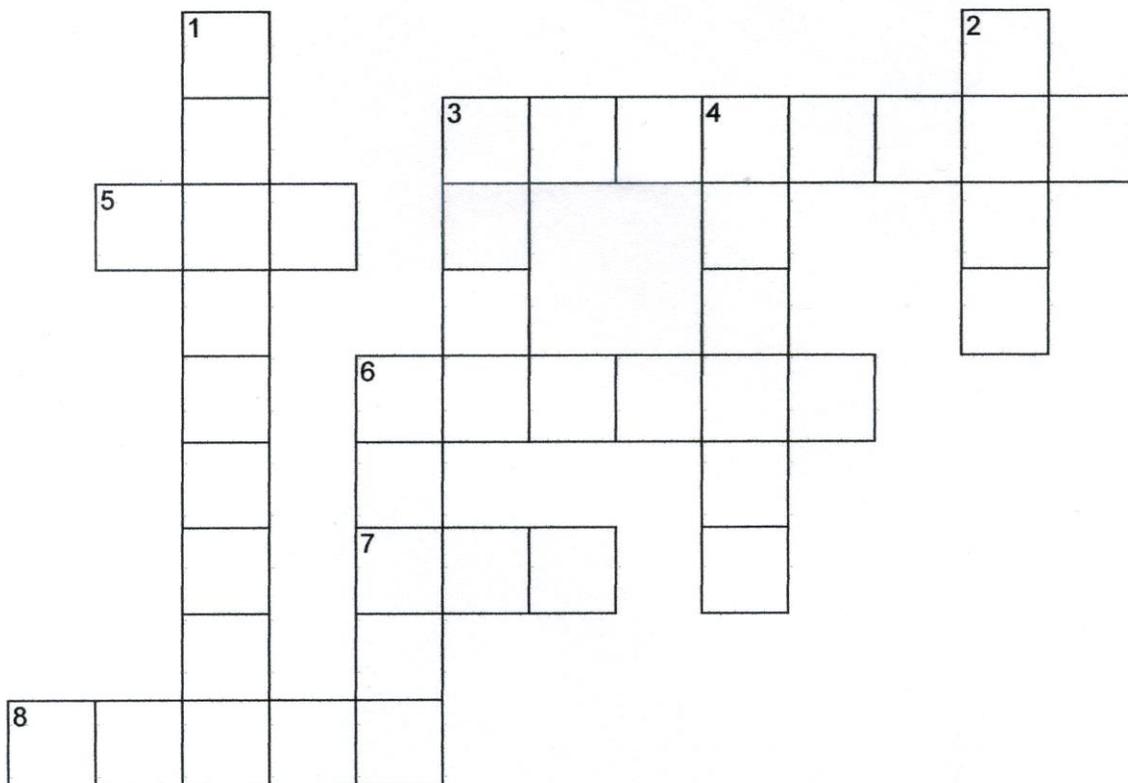
Answer Key

Crossword Puzzle #1



Owl Fun Facts

Crossword Puzzle #2



ACROSS

- 3 Owls fly quieter because of their _____.
- 5 Owls have excellent sight for _____ items.
- 6 Some owls nest in the _____.
- 7 _____ trees are good winter owl homes.
- 8 An owl's _____ are longer than most other birds.

DOWN

- 1 The largest owl is the _____ Fish Owl.
- 2 Owls are usually located near their _____.
- 3 Owl eggs usually take about _____ weeks to hatch.
- 4 Owls can live over _____ years in captivity.
- 6 A courting male owl brings the female owl _____.

Owl Fun Facts

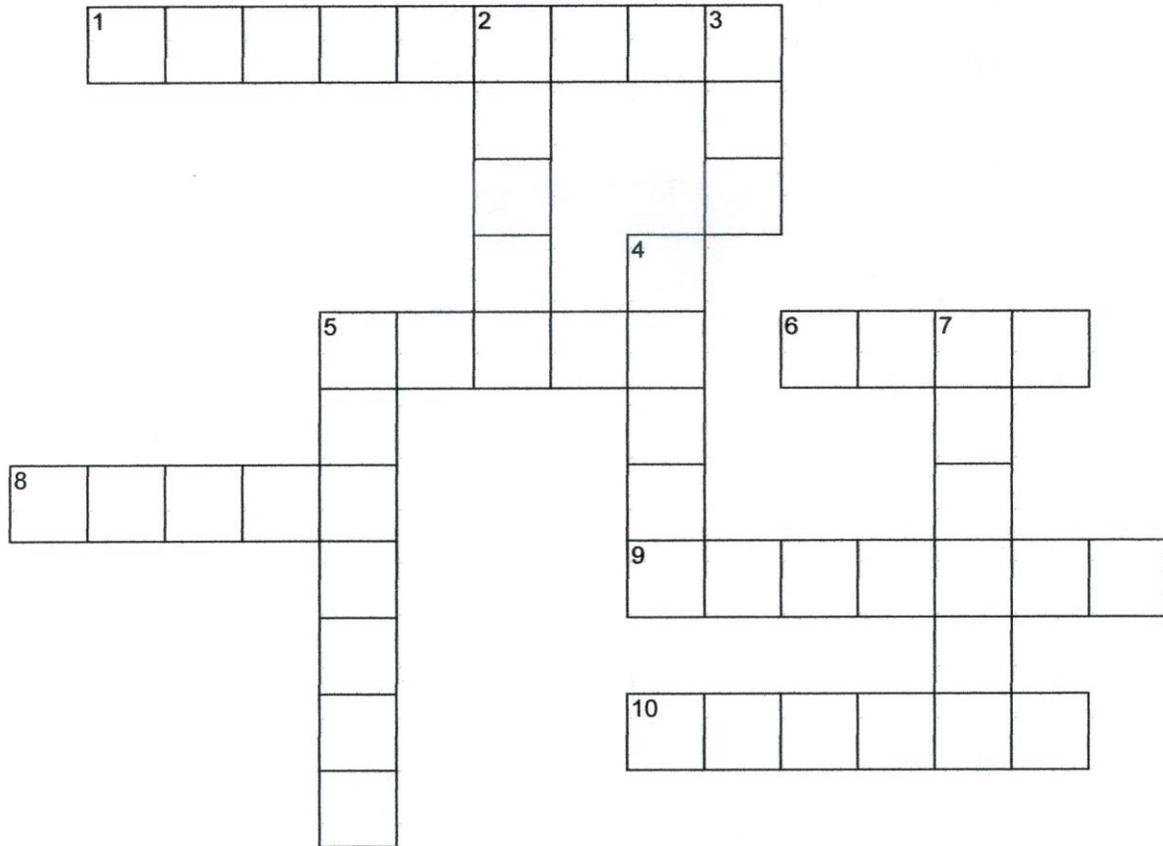
Answer Key

Crossword Puzzle #2



Owl Fun Facts

Crossword Puzzle #3



ACROSS

- 1 Neck bones are called _____.
- 5 Owls have blurred vision if looking at something _____.
- 6 A _____ owl lives in the ground.
- 8 The Blakiston Fish Owl can weigh over _____ pounds.
- 9 Owls have excellent _____.
- 10 Owls are helpful if you have a _____.

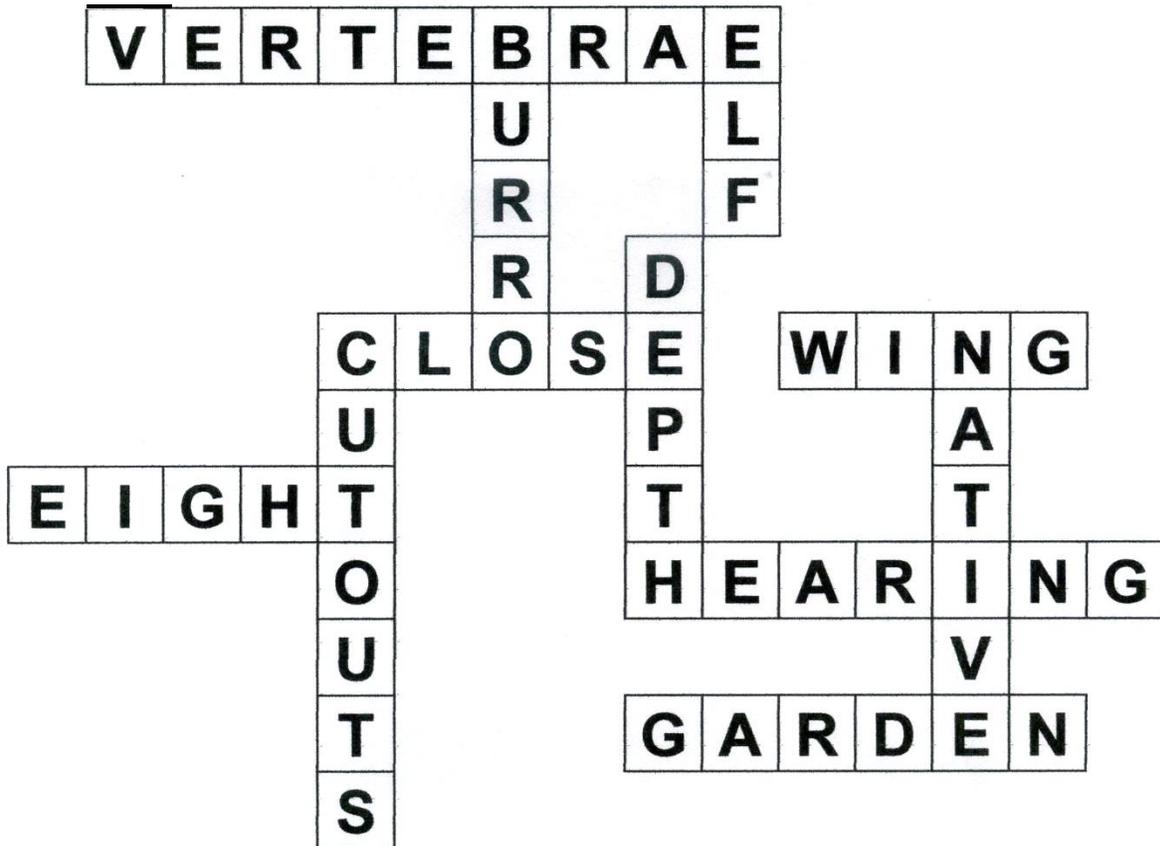
DOWN

- 2 _____
- 3 The smallest owl is the _____ owl.
- 4 Discs on an owl's face help it with _____ perception.
- 5 Some owls hide in _____ of trees.
- 7 Owls often live near _____ plants.

Owl Fun Facts

Answer Key

Crossword Puzzle #3



Owl Fun Facts



Wordsearch Puzzle #1

N I C H E S M T O W L E G G S R
F L A T F A C E P C P P Z C H M
W I N G S P A N O W L S M K W T
J X M T E Y E D I S C S V D H W
B L A K I S T O N F I S H O W L
H P T A L O N S Q M N K B F L D
F T V C N I G H T V I S I O N W
F E A T H E R S V J X C L J R R
M W E L F O W L M G L Z N C B
L N A T I V E P L A N T S T B J
M Z V Y V W Y Y O W L P R E Y K
Z F L Y I N G T R I C K S H H H
D M R X N P E L L E T S P L Q H
B L R B K G M P E R C H M L K T
N N E S T V E R T E B R A E N K
H T U B E S H A P E D E Y E S M

BlakistonFishOwl

FlyingTricks

Owl

Prey

ElfOwl

NativePlants

OwlEggs

Talons

EyeDiscs

Nest

Owls

TubeShapedEyes

Feathers

Niches

Pellets

Vertebrae

FlatFace

NightVision

Perch

Wingspan

Owl Fun Facts



Answer Key

Wordsearch Puzzle #1

N I C H E S M T O W L E G G S R
F L A T F A C E P C P P Z C H M
W I N G S P A N O W L S M K W T
J X M T E Y E D I S C S V D H W
B L A K I S T O N F I S H O W L
H P T A L O N S Q M N K B F L D
F T V C N I G H T V I S I O N W
F E A T H E R S V J X C L J R R
M W E L F O W L M G L Z N C B
L N A T I V E P L A N T S T B J
M Z V Y V W Y Y O W L P R E Y K
Z F L Y I N G T R I C K S H H H
D M R X N P E L L E T S P L Q H
B L R B K G M P E R C H M L K T
N N E S T V E R T E B R A E N K
H T U B E S H A P E D E Y E S M

Owl Fun Facts



Wordsearch Puzzle #2

Q Q F W B T P R K L Q W G D G L
P Q L B L Q E F P K Y G W W J L
F R Y K A W R O E D T Y D I F T
E W I Z K X C W L N M P R N E U
L Y N F I P H L L I J N H G A B
F M G Z S R G S E G N A M S T E
O Q T O T E F V T H I T E P H S
W X R W O Y L E S T C I Y A E H
L Y I L N D A R B V H V E N R A
T C E F N T T K I E E D X S P
T A K G I R F E R S S P I N B E
W L S G S K A B V I W L S E O D
L O V S H L C R P O P A C S W E
L N P C O R E A F N F N S T L Y
L S C B W M K E T X V T G Y Z E
V M D Y L N N K B Z M S Q P P S

BlakistonFishOwl

FlyingTricks

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Prey

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Owls

TubeShapedEyes

Feathers

Niches

Pellets

Vertebrae

FlatFace

NightVision

Perch

Wingspan

Owl Fun Facts



Answer Key

Wordsearch Puzzle #2

Q	Q	F	W	B	T	P	R	K	L	Q	W	G	D	G	L
P	Q	L	B	L	Q	E	F	P	K	Y	G	W	W	J	L
F	R	Y	K	A	W	R	O	E	D	T	Y	D	I	F	T
E	W	I	Z	K	X	C	W	L	N	M	P	R	N	E	U
L	Y	N	F	I	P	H	L	L	I	J	N	H	G	A	B
F	M	G	Z	S	R	G	S	E	G	N	A	M	S	T	E
O	Q	T	O	T	E	F	V	T	H	I	T	E	P	H	S
W	X	R	W	O	Y	L	E	S	T	C	I	Y	A	E	H
L	Y	I	L	N	D	A	R	B	V	H	V	E	N	R	A
T	A	C	E	F	N	T	T	K	I	E	E	D	X	S	P
W	L	S	G	S	K	A	B	V	I	W	L	S	N	B	E
L	O	V	S	H	L	C	R	P	O	W	L	S	E	O	D
L	N	P	C	O	R	E	A	F	N	F	N	S	T	L	Y
L	S	C	B	W	M	K	E	T	X	V	T	G	Y	Z	E
V	M	D	Y	L	N	N	K	B	Z	M	S	Q	P	P	S

Owl Fun Facts



Wordsearch Puzzle #3

K N E H Y Q N F M L K G X N G T N B
B T F Y K V M I L C M L C C X F K M
Y L T E E D B V G A V N K O Y Z N C
W L A T A D P N E H T L N B W C W H
H I L K U T I R I R T F N L R L L Y
B F N P I B H S E C T V A E H O S K
N Q L G E S E E C Y H E I C S C W M
P A T Y S L T S R S V E B S E T X L
W C T A I P L O H S B Z S R I W K M
L M T I L N A E N A P K R R A O T X
Q G E B V O G N T F P O K B D E N B
N F C L K E N T M S I E W V H V K J
Y T X T F T P S R N N S D L M C R B
M K V L N O F L J I P V H E E X P L
R K Q Z M N W M A Q C E N O Y G Q M
W Q Y M B P L L B N X K R Z W E G J
K L M K Z L G D B T Z S C K L S S
T M V D N T V N B D N S H X H M X D

BlakistonFishOwl

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Owl Fun Facts

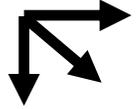


Answer Key

Wordsearch Puzzle #3

K N E H Y Q N F M L K G X N G T N B
B T F Y K V M I L C M L C C X F K M
Y L T E E D B V G A V N K O Y Z N C
W L A T A D P N E H T L N B W C W H
H I L K U T I R I R T F N L R L L Y
B F N P I B H S E C T V A E H O S K
N Q L G E S E E C Y H E I C S C W M
P A T Y S L T S R S V E B S E T X L
W C T A I P L O H S B Z S R I W K M
L M T I L N A E N A P K R R A O T X
Q G E B V O G N T F P O K B D E N B
N F C L K E N T M S I E W V H V K J
Y T X T F T P S R N N S D L M C R B
M K V L N O F L J I P V H E E X P L
R K Q Z M N W M A Q C E N O Y G Q M
W Q Y M B P L L B N X K R Z W E G J
K L M K Z L G D B T Z S C K L S S
T M V D N T V N B D N S H X H M X D

Owl Fun Facts



Wordsearch Puzzle #4

B L A K I S T O N F I S H O W L
H P C F E A T H E R S O J R X C
V K E T F K G A N X T F W G F T
J E L L C L G D L T K N W L N U
G N R F L X A J R O T R F L F B
H A N T G E L T B G N Z W P L E
V T R I E R T E F R Y S M E Y S
O I B N C B R S L A P T Z R I H
W V Q L V H R B E F C T R C N A
L E K T B M E A Y J O E W H G P
E P V R W L T S E Y Y W T H T E
G L L N E S T N D N N T L R R D
G A M Q L L T R I R Z B N I E
S N I G H T V I S I O N K V C Y
M T K D O W L S C P R E Y N K E
K S J R W I N G S P A N V W S S

BlakistonFishOwl

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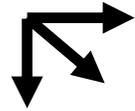
FlatFace

NightVision

Perch

Wingspan

Owl Fun Facts



Answer Key

Wordsearch Puzzle #4

B	L	A	K	I	S	T	O	N	F	I	S	H	O	W	L
H	P	C	F	E	A	T	H	E	R	S	O	J	R	X	C
V	K	E	T	F	K	G	A	N	X	T	F	W	G	F	T
J	E	L	L	C	L	G	D	L	T	K	N	W	L	N	U
G	N	R	F	L	X	A	J	R	O	T	R	F	L	F	B
H	A	N	T	G	E	L	T	B	G	N	Z	W	P	L	E
V	T	R	I	E	R	T	E	F	R	Y	S	M	E	Y	S
O	I	B	N	C	B	R	S	L	A	P	T	Z	R	I	H
W	V	Q	L	V	H	R	B	E	F	C	T	R	C	N	A
L	E	K	T	B	M	E	A	Y	J	O	E	W	H	G	P
E	P	V	R	W	L	T	S	E	Y	Y	W	T	H	T	E
G	L	L	N	E	S	T	N	D	N	N	T	L	R	R	D
G	A	M	Q	L	L	T	R	I	R	Z	B	N	I	E	
S	N	I	G	H	T	V	I	S	I	O	N	K	V	C	Y
M	T	K	D	O	W	L	S	C	P	R	E	Y	N	K	E
K	S	J	R	W	I	N	G	S	P	A	N	V	W	S	S

Thanks for Playing

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