

Barn Owl - Tylluan Wen - *Tyto alba*

Barn Owls were once very common, and most farms would have a pair of them nesting in their buildings. Now, very few farms have them, and in most areas it is unusual to see one.

The Barn Owl is our only white owl, apart from the Snowy Owl which is a very rare visitor to Scotland and does not breed in Britain.

They often hunt for food along the edges of roads, especially dual-carriageways and motorways. The roadside verges are often the only areas of long grass and scrub (small bushy areas with Gorse and other small bushes and trees) where the Barn Owls can find voles and mice to eat.

The Welsh and scientific names for the Barn Owl mean 'white owl'. It is also known as the 'screech owl', because of the hissing and screeching noises it makes.

It feeds on small rodents (mice, voles, rats), insectivores (moles and shrews), reptiles (snakes and lizards), amphibians (frogs), and small birds.

Other owls in Britain are the Tawny Owl, Little Owl, Long-eared Owl and Short-eared Owl. The Little Owl, Short-eared Owl and Barn Owl are often seen in the daytime. Tawny Owls and Long-eared Owls are usually only active at night. The Little Owl is not native to Britain, but was brought here by people.

Wherever owls rest when they are not hunting, you may find their pellets. These are lots of little bones held together by fur, which they cough up through their beak. They are the bits of their food which they can't digest. If you carefully take them apart, you can find out what they have been eating.



Barn Owls can still be seen in North Wales, but they are not common any more.

One of the best areas to see them is on the Isle of Anglesey.

We can take you to see Barn Owls, if you want to see them in the wild ~ contact us at the address on the right, or at owls@wildlifeservices.co.uk.

Keep your eyes peeled while driving, you may be lucky enough to see one!

