

“Who Cooks for You? Who Cooks for You-All?”

Did you know that the Barred Owl is famous for its hooting call -- Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo! Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo? It sounds like “Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all?” Because these owls hunt at night, they are a lot easier to hear than to see. Often, pairs of barred owls call back and forth to each other.

Barred Owls live in dense forests near water. They like woodlands, river bottoms, and swamps. They also like mature coniferous trees. They range all over the Pacific Northwest and compete for food and territory with the spotted owl. Barred Owls don't migrate, so they can be seen in all months of the year.

Barred owls have brown eyes and gray, brown and white striped plumage. They are about the size of a crow. They have rounded heads with no ear tufts, plus a rounded, short tail.

Barred Owls hunt by night or day, mostly at dawn and dusk. They watch their prey from a branch; also, by flying low through the forest. Sometimes they hover before dropping to grab their prey in sharp talons.

These owls eat mostly small mammals such as mice, squirrels, rabbits, opossums and shrews. They have been known to eat birds, frogs and salamanders also. If they live near water, they eat crabs and fish!