

## SECTION B - WOODLANDS and OPENLAND MARGINS

### Northern Saw-whet Owl

Plan 14 (page 48)

The tiny Northern Saw-whet Owl is our smallest owl--barely as large as a robin. (It's life-size on the WRCF license plate!) It does not have ear tufts like the Screech-Owl. It is seldom seen, but more common than formerly believed.

This owl is the logo of Pennsylvania's "Wild Resource Conservation Fund."

*Saw-whet Owl*



Preferred habitat includes either coniferous or deciduous forests, mixed stands of conifers and hardwoods, woodlots and swamps. During breeding season, this species is found in boreal wooded bogs that have stands of evergreens like hemlock and spruce. Saw-whet Owls will use the same type of nest box as Northern Screech-Owls.

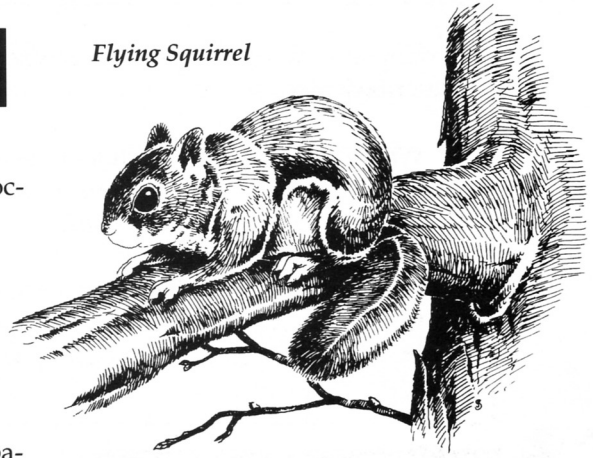
Saw-whet Owl nests are usually quite high, 14 or more feet off the ground. Nest boxes should be placed in live, mature conifers. Areas near water may be preferred. As with Screech-Owl nests, 2 to 3 inches of wood chips should cover the bottom of the box.

### Northern & Southern Flying Squirrels

Plan 14 (page 48)

The spritely flying squirrel is nocturnal and is seldom seen even where it is a common resident. They may come out at night to feed at backyard bird feeders. Flying squirrels are found in a wide variety of habitats, from northern coniferous forests to groves and woodlots. It is probably not necessary to put out nest boxes specifically for flying squirrels because they readily use boxes that are put out for other species, including Wood Duck

*Flying Squirrel*



and Screech-Owl boxes. The Screech-Owl box (Plan 14) is an especially good size for flying squirrels.

### Screech-Owl

Plan 14 (page 48)

In Pennsylvania, Screech-Owls are small gray or reddish owls with ear tufts. They are found along forested ridges, in farm woodlots, in orchards and in wooded stream corridors. Only about 8 inches high, they resemble a miniature version of the more common Great Horned Owl. The nest box for this owl shown (Plan 14) should be placed at least 10 feet high in a hardwood forest. Preferred habitat seems to be on the edge of woods adjacent to fields or wetlands.

Research in Louisiana suggests that "The ideal screech owl cavity would be a box located under a limb in a living tree with... [vines], and with the box entrance facing north." Perhaps all owls prefer darker cavities.

To prevent use by squirrels the box could be placed on a pole with a predator guard. Since the entrance hole is 3 inches in diameter, persistent starling control may be necessary. About 2 to 3 inches of woodchips should be placed in the bottom of the box.

*Pileated Woodpecker*



### Woodpeckers

In addition to the flicker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, there are 5 other woodpecker species found in Pennsylvania. All of these birds are capable of excavating their own cavities. These "natural" houses are also used by other cavity nesters that cannot excavate their own cavities. In general, therefore, building houses for woodpeckers is not recommended.