

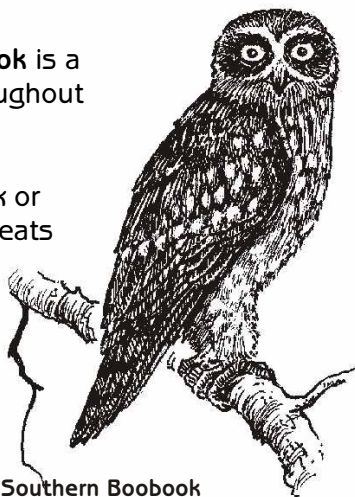
Nature Notes

Junior Ranger

THE NIGHT SHIFT

As night falls across the Territory, the nocturnal owls emerge from their daytime hiding places among thick foliage or in tree hollows. These silent fliers spend the night hunting in clearings or by roadsides.

The **Southern Boobook** is a small owl found throughout the Territory. It has a distinctive call which sounds like *boo-book* or *more-pork*. It mainly eats insects such as moths.



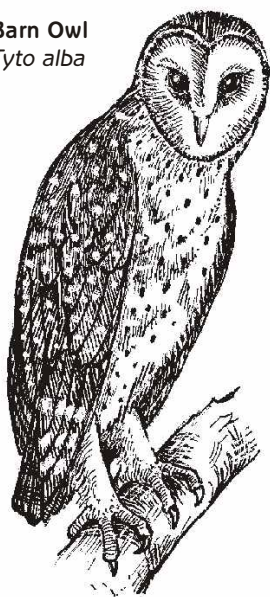
Southern Boobook
Ninox novaeseelandiae

The larger **Barking Owl** lives in the eucalypt woodlands of the Top End. Its dog-like *wook-wook* call is heard at dusk and dawn. It feeds on small birds, mice and insects.



Barking Owl
Ninox connivens

Barn Owl
Tyto alba



The **Barn Owl** has an unusual white face which is heart-shaped. It has excellent hearing and can capture a mouse in a totally dark room. It is found throughout the Territory, but prefers open areas rather than dense forest.

Annoying Honeyeaters

Owls are often mobbed by noisy honeyeaters as they try to catch some sleep during the daytime. They roost among thick foliage high in a tree. The honeyeaters annoy them until they get fed up and slip away to find another hiding place.



WHO AM I ?

Use the grid to work out the names of these nocturnal birds of prey.

(To decode each letter find the square where the letter row meets the number row).

	1	2	3	4	5
A	A	B	C	D	E
B	F	G	H	I	J
C	K	L	M	N	O
D	P	Q	R	S	T
E	U	V	W	X	Y

Podargus strigoides



Many people think I'm an owl, but I'm more closely related to the nightjars. I use camouflage to hide during the day. I sit still on a bare branch and look like part of the tree. I feed on beetles, spiders, centipedes and scorpions.

D5 A1 E3 C4 E5

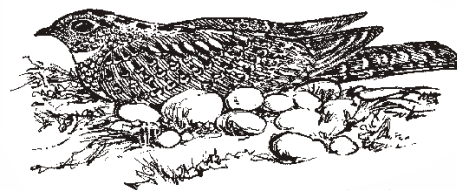
B1 D3 C5 B2 C3 C5 E1 D5 B3

The **Australian Owlet-nightjar** roosts in tree hollows during the day, but spends the night feeding on the ground.



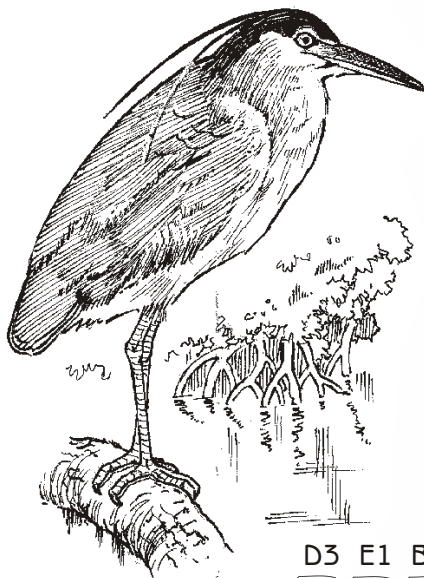
Australian Owlet-nightjar
Aegotheles cristatus

The **Spotted Nightjar** spends the daytime roosting on the ground, often out in the open.



Spotted Nightjar
Eurostopodus argus

You probably won't see me, but you may hear my wailing *cur-loo* sound at night. I prefer open country where there are lots of insects.

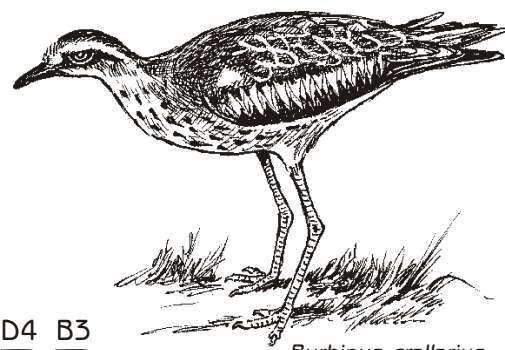


Nycticorax caledonicus

I have beautiful brown wings and am a bird of wetland areas. During the day I roost in trees. At night I feed on small fish, frogs, shellfish and insects.

D3 E1 B1 C5 E1 D4

C4 B4 B2 B3 D5 B3 A5 D3 C5 C4



Burhinus gallarius

A2 E1 D4 B3

D4 D5 C5 C4 A5 A3 E1 D3 C2 A5 E3
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Want to learn more about birds?

Check out the affordable field guides **Field Guide to the Birds of Australia** by either **Simpson & Day** or the one by **Pizzey & Knight**.

