

Citizen Scientists Needed for Short-eared Owl Surveys!

The Western Asiao Flammeus Landscape Study (WAfLS) is currently seeking volunteers to help complete an eight-state citizen science project designed to gather information to better evaluate the population status of the Short-eared Owl. You are invited to participate in the largest survey of Short-eared Owls in the world!

In partnership with other entities across the west, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) leads the citizen scientist survey for Short-eared Owls in California. Traditional survey data has indicated that Short-eared Owl populations have declined by more than 60% in the last 40 years. The National Audubon Climate Initiative has rated the Short-eared Owl as "Climate Endangered", and CDFW has identified the Short-eared Owl as a "Species of Special Concern." Information gathered by this project is needed by conservation practitioners who want to design management actions to help reverse the Short-eared Owl population decline.

Volunteers will enjoy a variety of rural landscapes across California during twilight hours while completing two surveys during March through May. Fifty-four randomly selected grids have been pre-selected in Short-eared Owl habitat in California. Within each grid a survey route is followed along a secondary road. Surveyors will stop along the route every ½ mile to look for signs of Short-eared Owl presence, for a total of 8-11 points during a 90 minutes timeframe. Exact timing for each survey is dependent on elevation, but is set to coincide with the Short-eared Owls elaborate courtship displays just prior to sunset.



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Here's How to Get Involved

If you are interested in being a part of this program, please contact us!

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Here is a short video from Neil Paprocki of Hawkwatch International of Short-eared Owl courtship display: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-YKEmTvEQE>

Volunteer Resources:

- To **sign-up** and for more information (maps, protocols, ID Guide, available routes) go to: <http://www.avianknowledgeinthewest.net/citizen-science/short-eared-owls>
- FACEBOOK
 - A private group for participants (request access): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IBCP.SEOW.Surveys/>
 - Our new public page (Hit "LIKE"); <https://www.facebook.com/ProjectWAFSL/>