

January 2021

# Who who Who...who who who is that in Croatan?

## The Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)



I have been blessed to have seen this magnificent bird throughout my childhood and adult life. As a child playing in the forest and as a wildlife biologist, I saw them occasionally in the day, but more frequently, I heard them at night. As with most nocturnal species, it is easier to hear than to see most of them.

Croatan has at least one regular pair of Great Horned Owls and they can often be heard in winter. Some basic facts are copied below with a link to their amazing call...but I hope you are inspired to learn more on your own...

and keep an ear out for this magnificent neighbor.

(All photos courtesy Bing search... Text from from the Raptor Conservancy of Virginia:)

## Range

A resident species in Virginia. Found throughout North



America.

## Size

Length	18-25 inches
Wingspan	40-57 inches
Weight	32-88 ounces



(All photos courtesy Bing search... Text from from the Raptor Conservancy of Virginia:)



## Habitat

Remarkably adaptable. Wide variety of environments from deep forests, desert cliffs, and woodlots to suburban estates and parks.

## Diet

Amazingly varied, but with a preference for rabbits, rats and mice. They are one of the few predators of skunks.



## Characteristics



Heaviest and most powerful American owl. This owl knows no fear, and if sufficiently provoked will attack anything in its way. In its domain, only the Golden Eagle competes for the title of top avian predator. Hated by crows, who will "mob" Great Horned Owls on sight. Nests in old nests



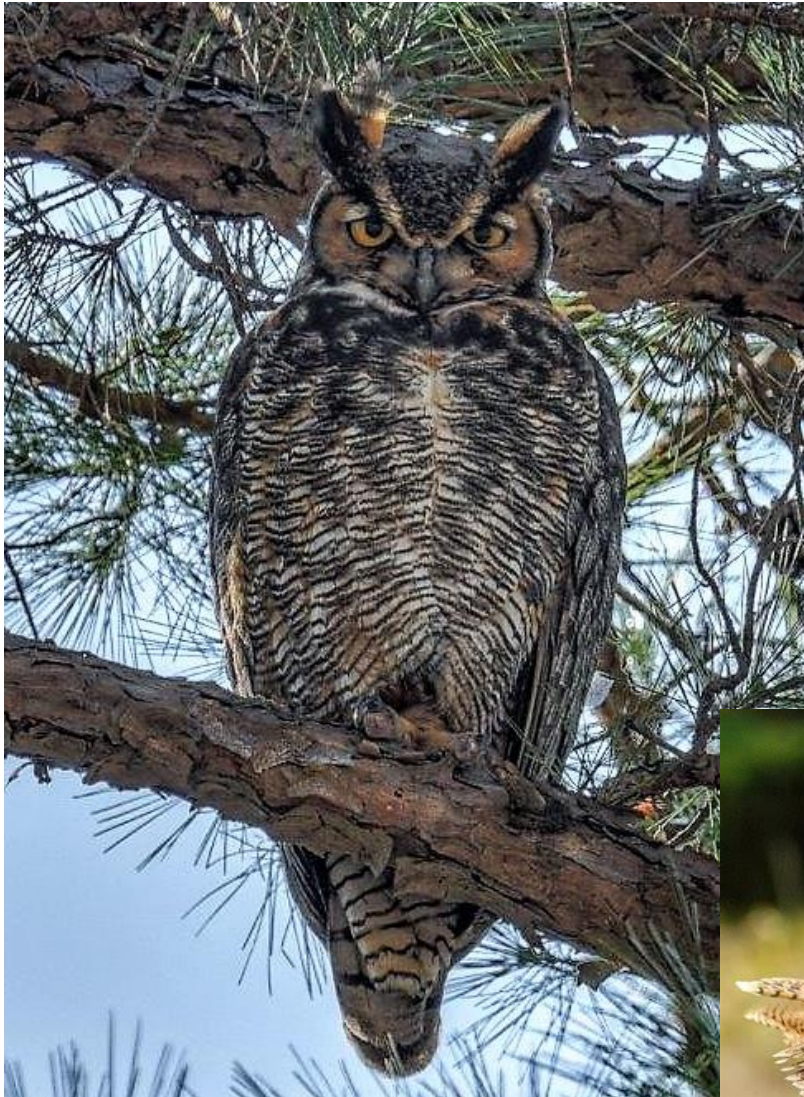
of hawks, herons, eagles or crows, ledges in cliffs and large cavities in trees. Shows aggression by bill snapping or loud hissing. Has a variety of other calls in a variety of arrangements... Primary and secondary calls are best experienced, so copy the following link to Cornell Birds of Ornithology):

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Great\\_Horned\\_Owl/sounds](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Great_Horned_Owl/sounds)



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