



Amazing Animals Fact sheets

Raptors

Raptors are identified as Birds of Prey that capture their food using their feet. They have three distinguishing features:

- large talons (or claws) used for hunting
- very keen eye sight to target prey
- sharp hooked beak for the tearing up of prey once caught



Diet

With very large forward facing eyes, the barking owl is going to be searching the forests for a range of prey items including rodents, possums and occasionally birds.

Breeding

Barking owls pair for life with minimal visible difference between males and females other than a slight size variation.

When it comes around to breeding season in July through to November, the barking owl's call has been known to change to a very loud, high pitched, tremulous scream which has led to some people to refer to them as the "screaming-woman bird". Only laying once each year, the barking owl female will produce two to three eggs which hatch in approximately 38 days with the chicks leaving the nest as early as seven weeks old. A very well adapted Australian species, the barking owl has also learnt to co exist in many of Australia's country towns.

Australia Zoo Barking Owl profiles

Barking Owl

The barking owl is a stealthy predator of the night. This comes with its inherent problems, one of which is being able to locate prey. In Australia you can basically break down our owl species into two groups. The "seeing owls" Ninox genus, and the "hearing owls" Tyto genus. This means that the hearing owls tend to hunt under the cover of darkness later in the night and use their sensitive hearing to locate their prey, and the seeing owls hunt during the dawn and dusk periods relying more so on their excellent vision. This "seeing owl" group is the one in which the barking owl belongs.

Designed for stealth the barking owl, like most owls, has developed the ability for silent flight. The trailing edge of all of the bird's feathers are actually softened to reduce the noise of the air rushing over the feather whilst it is on the hunt. This unique adaptation allows the owls to move swiftly and silently through the canopy of many of Australia's open woodland forests, where they search for food and defend territory. Their name comes from their call which sounds very similar to your basic dog bark and can be heard all year round and even on very overcast days.

Habitat

Like the majority of our raptors, these owls will define themselves a territory in which they may make several nesting locations in large tree hollows. Owls will defend these sites fiercely from others. These territories have been known to range in size from as small as 30 hectares up to almost 200 hectares.



Nuebi

Nuebi is our very handsome barking owl who loves nothing more than a good scratch from his keepers. Nuebi is an important member of the roving wildlife crew,

greeting guests throughout the day and getting his photo taken with his new friends. By far his favourite part of the day is the Bird of Prey show where he gets to showcase his awesome silent flight to guests. Nuebi is able to turn his head 270 degrees in either direction and almost upside down. Those amazing yellow eyes are fixed in his head, therefore he needs to be able to turn that head to see what is going on around him. If you are lucky, you might even get to hear him bark!

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