



Crafty Kids Program

Lesson 5: Owl Prints

Burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) are land dwelling birds that have taken quite nicely to the scrub at White Sands. Pre-cut bird shapes with a bright background will make this a perfect piece for the family fridge, window, or office!

Key Facts:

- Most owls are nocturnal (active at night), the burrowing owl however is believed to be crepuscular (active during dusk and dawn) or diurnal (active during the day).
- Distinctive white eyebrows over yellow eyes.
- One of the smallest owls in North America, they only weigh 6 ounces (about the weight of a large orange!).
- They do not dig their burrows themselves. Instead, they will modify or scratch old skunk, prairie dog, or ground squirrel burrows.
- Diet includes grasshoppers, moles, mice, scorpions, and lizards. Predators include hawks, larger owls, foxes, and even domestic pets.
- Females will lay 5-12 white eggs. Babies can fly at 6 weeks old.
- Juveniles can make a buzzing hiss noise (resembles a rattle snake) to warn off predators.
- To express excitement or distress they will bob their heads.
- They line their nest with mammal dung to attract yummy beetles.
- Human threats to the burrowing owl include:
 - *Fewer burrows from using pesticides on prairie dogs/squirrels as pest treatment.
 - *Lack of food - eat things in grassy plains that are degraded by humans.
 - *Road kill - slow flyers.

Materials needed:

- Pre-Cut owl bodies, eyes, beaks, and feet in bright colors.
- Construction paper
- Paint and brushes
- Glue

Directions:

1. Have kids arrange owl parts and glue together.
2. On construction paper, have them draw a burrow or a scene for the owl to “hunt” in.
3. Glue the owl onto the scene.
4. Paint each child’s hands and have them press down to print their hands as the wings.

