

## Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*)

The Great Horned Owl is usually not seen in the daytime in the Kuse Nature Preserve. Sometimes it is heard hooting at night.

Large eyes and facial disks surrounding them make owls easy birds to identify. Their solemn appearance has given them the reputation of being wise.

Use the puppets to think about and try some of the following:

- Make a list of what you know about the Great Horned Owl. Then make a list of questions about this bird.
- Use books, the Internet or other media to find answers to questions.
- Find out about the nesting habits of owls. Let puppets tell about the various types.
- Most owls can see well at night. Use an owl puppet to tell about and compare its eyes with those of humans. Discuss the importance of proper care of eyes.
- Listen to recordings of owl sounds. Read about owl calls in bird books. Use knowledge gained when working with the puppets.
- Have an owl puppet talk with a human puppet about likenesses and differences in choosing, gathering, and eating food. What purposes do hooked beaks, keen nocturnal vision, wings, and talons have?
- Have an owl puppet converse with an ornithologist about owl pellets. What does the study of pellets tell about the place of owls in the environment? How might their diets of small mammals, insects, birds, and fish affect what humans do?
- Examine ways in which owls have been portrayed in art. Find photographs of owls. Draw several types and make a collection of stick puppets. There are hundreds of types. Some of the better known ones are the barn, screech, barred, snowy, great horned and burrowing.
- Read poetry such as "The Owl and the Pussy Cat" and let a puppet take a part during the reading.
- Have an owl puppet talk about feelings. People talk about being "wise as an owl" or being "owly or owlsh." What do these phrases mean and what might be their origin? Are owls really wiser than other birds or more ill tempered? Do appearances always tell the truth about how animals or people feel?
- Let a puppet tell why owls are often associated with Halloween.

Owl



