

The Hawks and Owls of Amherst and Wolfe Islands (mid-February):

The Hawks and Owls of Amherst and Wolfe Islands gives our client one of the best looks into wintering owls in eastern North America. Just offshore from Kingston; Amherst and Wolfe Islands are home to some of the largest wintering owl and raptor concentrations known in North America. All of Ontario's owl species are possible, while good numbers of hawks will be present.

Our plan: in the morning we'll take the ferry to Wolfe Island, where we'll drive the back roads, looking for Short-eared and Snowy Owls. Just before lunchtime we'll head back to the mainland, briefly checking some of the shoreline hotspots for overwintering waterfowl, before grabbing the ferry to Amherst Island. Once on Amherst, we'll cover the famous Owl Woods, looking for Long-eared, Northern Saw-whet and the elusive Boreal Owl. After we're satisfied with Owl Woods, we'll start driving the roads, searching for Short-eared and Snowy Owls.

In a typical year, we should be able to find 1-5 N. Saw-whet and 3-12 Long-eared's in Owl Woods, and 3-10 Snowies and 2-20 Short-eared's while driving the roads throughout the islands. Barred Owls are possible, with several been seen in recent years. Depending on the year, Boreal Owls are also possible at Owl Woods. Rarer species, such as Great Gray and Northern Hawk-Owl are both possibilities with our trips lucking onto both species in recent past trips.



Resting Short-eared Owls on Amherst Island.



An alert Northern Saw-whet Owl in Owl Woods!



Long-eared Owls are regular throughout the Owl Woods, on Amherst Island.

One of the harder to find species, Boreal Owl, are found every few winters, sometimes in decent numbers.

