**Asio flammeus** (Short-eared Owl)  
Priority 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

**Class:**  *Aves* (Birds)  
**Order:**  *Strigiformes* (Owls)  
**Family:**  *Strigidae* (Typical Owls)

**General comments:**
Breeding population at edge of range and state listed, wintering birds a higher regional priority (Regional Spp. Of Greatest conservation need BCR 30 as wintering population). Rarity coincides with the vulnerability of grasslands in the northeast. Limited data: 1) Minimal detections during grassland bird surveys, 2) nest documented in Easton (1996), 3) territorial behavior Jonesport (1988), 4) individual present March and April Petit Manan NWR, and 5) historical observations reference "The Birds of Maine", Knight 1908 and "Maine Birds", Palmer 1949. May be present every winter, uncertainty of consistent breeding presence.

**Species Conservation Range Maps for Short-eared Owl:**
- Town Map:  [Asio flammeus_Towns.pdf](Asio%20flammeus_Towns.pdf)
- Subwatershed Map:  [Asio flammeus_HUC12.pdf](Asio%20flammeus_HUC12.pdf)

**SGCN Priority Ranking - Designation Criteria:**

**Risk of Extirpation:**
- Maine Status: Threatened

**State Special Concern or NMFS Species of Concern:** NA

**Recent Significant Declines:** NA

**Regional Endemic:** NA

**High Regional Conservation Priority:**
- Northeast Endangered Species and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee:
  - Risk: Yes, Data: Yes, Area: No, Spec: No, Warrant Listing: No, Total Categories with "Yes": 2
- United States Birds of Conservation Concern:
  - Bird of Conservation Concern in Bird Conservation Regions 14 and/or 30: Yes

**High Climate Change Vulnerability:** NA

**Understudied rare taxa:** NA

**Historical:** NA

**Culturally Significant:** NA

**Professional Discretion:**

Current criteria ranked *Asio flammeus* as SGCN priority 1, however, species should be SGCN priority 2 based on professional discretion.

**Justification:** Breeding population at edge of range and state listed, wintering birds a higher regional priority (Regional Spp. Of Greatest conservation need BCR 30 as wintering population). Rarity coincides with the vulnerability of grasslands in the northeast. Limited data: 1) Minimal detections during grassland bird surveys, 2) nest documented in Easton (1996), 3) territorial behavior Jonesport (1988), 4) individual present March and April Petit Manan NWR, and 5) historical observations reference "The Birds of Maine", Knight 1908 and "Maine Birds", Palmer 1949. May be present every winter, uncertainty of consistent breeding presence.

**Habitats Assigned to Short-eared Owl:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formation Name</th>
<th>Agricultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Macrogroup Name</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agricultural</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitat System Name:</strong></td>
<td>Cultivated Crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitat System Name:</strong></td>
<td>Pasture-Hay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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### Stressors Assigned to Short-eared Owl:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor Priority Level based on Severity and Actionability</th>
<th>Moderate Severity</th>
<th>High Severity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly Actionable</td>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Actionable</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium-High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actionable with Difficulty</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stressor Priority Level based on Severity and Actionability**
- **Highly Actionable:** Medium-High, High
- **Moderately Actionable:** Medium, Medium-High
- **Actionable with Difficulty:** Low, Low

**IUCN Level 1 Threat:** Natural Systems Modifications

**IUCN Level 2 Threat:** Other Ecosystem Modifications

- **Severity:** Moderate Severity
- **Actionability:** Moderately actionable

**Notes:**
Reforestation and loss of large, intact grasslands contributed to population decline. Minimize impacts of development and habitat conversion.
**Asio flammeus**  (Short-eared Owl)

Priority 2 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

Class:  Aves  (Birds)
Order:  Strigiformes  (Owls)
Family:  Strigidae  (Typical Owls)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IUCN Level 1 Threat</th>
<th>Other Options</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IUCN Level 2 Threat:</th>
<th>Lack of knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Severity:**  Moderate Severity  
**Actionability:**  Moderately actionable

**Notes:**  Need more survey information during breeding season targeted to blueberry barrens (Washington County) and agricultural fields (Aroostook County)

**Species Level Conservation Actions Assigned to Short-eared Owl:**

None.  *Only species specific conservation actions that address high (red) or medium-high (orange) priority stressors are summarized here.*

**Conservation Actions Associated with the Grassland Guild:**

- **Conservation Action**
  - Category:  Public Outreach  
  - Biological Priority:  high  
  - Type:  new

  Develop a program to inform small landowners of the best methods for keeping fields open for grassland wildlife

  **Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**
  - Livestock Farming and Ranching

- **Conservation Action**
  - Category:  Species Management  
  - Biological Priority:  high  
  - Type:  new

  Develop a BMP guide for farmers to minimize negative effects of cutting hay/silage during the grassland bird nesting season. NRCS recommendations should be viewed as a start with increased emphasis on timing, field size, and bird behavioral cues.

  **Stressor(s) Addressed By This Conservation Action**
  - Livestock Farming and Ranching

**Broad Taxonomic Group Conservation Actions:**

Additional relevant conservation actions for this species are assigned within broader taxonomic groups in Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4, Table 4-1.

**Habitat Based Conservation Actions:**

Additional conservation actions that may benefit habitat(s) associated with this species can be found in Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan: Element 4, Table 4-15. Click on the Habitat Grouping of interest to launch a habitat based report summarizing relevant conservation actions and associated SGCN.

*The Wildlife Action Plan was developed through a lengthy participatory process with state agencies, targeted conservation partners, and the general public. The Plan is non-regulatory. The species, stressors, and voluntary conservation actions identified in the Plan complement, but do not replace, existing work programs and priorities by state agencies and partners.*