



Denver Holt

Who? Mr. Owl, that's who.

Denver Holt has spent the last 35 years in the field studying owls—the harbingers of climate change-- on a year-round basis. He is founder and president of the Owl Research Institute, a nonprofit organization located in rural Montana. A dedicated field researcher in both North and Central America, Holt believes that long-term field studies are the primary means to understanding trends in natural history. His work and research with owls and their ecology is known internationally.

In 2000, he was named Montana's “Wildlife Biologist of the Year,” by the Wildlife Society of North America. “He’s Mr. Owl,” said Dr. Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University. “He’s one of the premier owl researchers in the world.”

Since 1978, Holt’s focus has been researching owls and their ecology. The Snowy Owl, he finds, has a role to play in understanding ecological changes in one of the fastest changing places in the world—the Arctic. Snowy Owls feed on lemmings and, if climate change results in habitat change affecting lemmings, the owls are the key to everything, according to an interview in *The New York Times*.

He has published about 90 technical documents and papers, including three species accounts for the *Birds of North America* project. He was also team leader for the Strigidae (owls) Family species accounts for *The Handbook of the Birds of the World*, volume 5, covering 189 species of the world’s owls. In collaboration with elementary school teachers, he has co-authored two children’s science books on owls: *Owls Who Are They*, and *Snowy Owls*. In 2006, he was a chapter author on owls for the book; *Arctic Wings*, highlighting the birds of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska. The forward was written by former United States President Jimmy Carter. The book has won the prestigious National Outdoor Book Award for Design and Artistic Merit.

Holt’s research has been long acknowledged by the media, including a cover story for *National Geographic Magazine* in December 2002. His work has been the subject of many television reports on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, and Disney, as well as featured on Audubon's *Up-Close Series*, PBS's *Bird Watch*, and David Attenborough's *Life of Birds*, among others. His research on Snowy Owls has been showcased on documentaries for National Geographic Explorer, NHK Natural History Unit of Japan, and the Norwegian Broadcasting Company Natural History Unit. Recently, his Snowy Owl research has been the focus of the British Broadcasting Company’s (BBC) new documentary series called *Frozen Planet*, sequel to the highly acclaimed *Planet Earth* series. Holt also has been the keynote speaker for several major bird festivals in the United States. In 2011, *The New York Times* featured a story on Holt’s long-term research on Long-eared owls (25 years) and Snowy Owls (20 years).

Audiences for Holt’s lectures are far and wide. He recently spoke at the Max Planck Institute of Ornithology in Germany, the #1 ornithology research group in the world. He discussed his research with 10,000 at the International Owl Festival in Italy. And , he sat on the international Arctic conservation panel on Arctic wildlife in a changing climate.

From Harry Potter’s Snowy Owl, Hedwig, to popular owl mascots and mythologies of owls for centuries, Holt is the world’s most prolific scientist on the owl’s place in global ecosystems. To learn more about Holt and his efforts in wildlife research, education, and conservation, visit www.owlinstitute.org.