

# Spotted owl numbers not only down but also at faster rate

June 10 2015, by Tim Fought

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Scientists report that after 20 years of attempts to save the species, northern spotted owl numbers in the Northwest are still on the decline—and at a faster rate.

The threatened [bird nests](#) in [old trees](#) and is at the heart of a decades-long struggle over the fate of the region's old-growth forests.

A Forest Service spokesman, Glen Sachet (SATCH'-et), says scientists at a conference Tuesday reported that owl numbers are now dropping at an annual rate of 3.8 percent. Five years ago, the rate was 2.8 percent.

Besides losing habitat, spotted [owls](#) in recent years have been pushed out by barred owls, an aggressive invader from the Midwest.

Environmentalist Andy Stahl says isolation is now becoming a problem: With thinning populations, owls can't find each other to mate.

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