

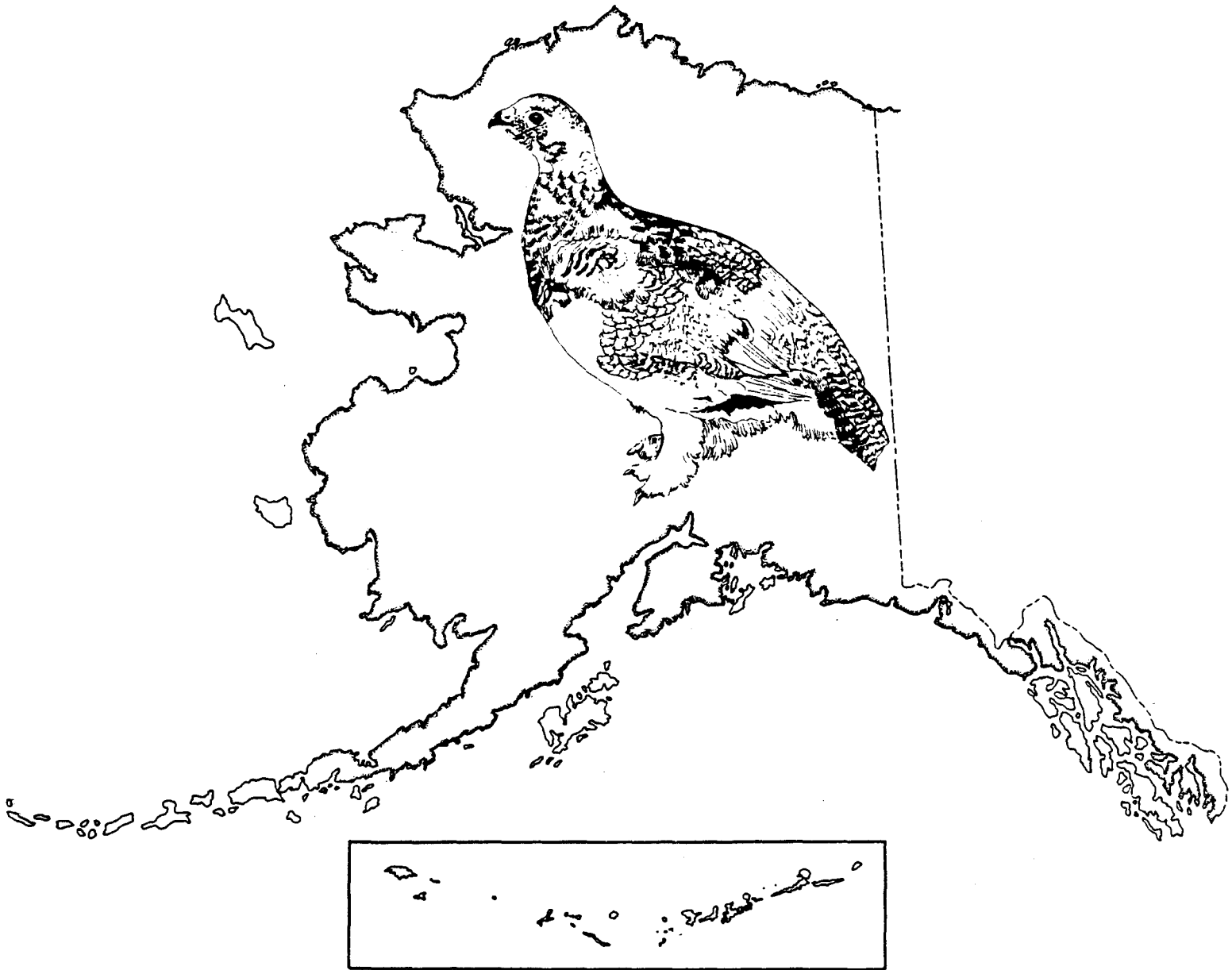
BREEDING BIOLOGY AND HABITAT USE OF THE GREAT GREY OWL IN THE MIDDLE YUKON REGION.

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The great grey owl (*Strix nebulosa*) is thought to be rare in Alaska. Few breeding records are published and nothing has been published on habitat preferences for the owl. I found the owl frequently along the Yukon and Koyukuk lowlands in certain habitat types. The preferred habitat was the ecotone between grassland meadow and tall willow (*Salix* sp.), cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*), or white spruce (*Picea glauca*). During the winter months, November-April, an average of 20 owls were sighted per year since 1982. Breeding data were collected from seven nests which fledged an average of 1.5 young. Pellets (n=125) were collected at winter roosts for prey analysis. *Microtus xanthognatus* comprised 80 percent of the diet; other mammals including other microtines, and birds comprised 15 percent and five percent respectively. The great grey owl is common along the Yukon and Koyukuk lowlands and, with the present low hare cycle, it is more numerous than the great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*).

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