

Animal Facts & Tracks!

Procedures

As with all tours, timing is critical, so please refrain from discussing concepts that are not included in this tour packet. If you are asked by a teacher or student to do so, invite them to return to the galleries after the tour or activity. When the teachers sign up for this tour, they are informed that their students will not see the entire museum.

Props will be placed at each stop prior to the beginning of the tour. Be sure to give yourself enough time (roughly nine minutes) to cover all five stops.

Rotation 1	Rotation 2	Rotation 3
Young Girl with Cat	Opossum Snout	Candidates for the Horse Show
Opossum Snout	Candidates for the Horse Show	Bayou Teche
Candidates for the Horse Show	Bayou Teche	The Merry Boatmen
Bayou Teche	The Merry Boatmen	Young Girl with Cat
The Merry Boatmen	Young Girl with Cat	Opossum Snout

Props

Cat jump distance prop
 Mummy cat photo
 Owl pellets
 Bones from pellet
 Ox hide/fur

Cow hide
 Ox horn
 Horse shoe
 Horse hair
 Horse brush

Jockey Hat
 Jockey riding crop
 Cowboy hat
 Snake
 Alligator skull

Nicola Marschall (1829–1917)

Young Girl with Cat
 1867



Props:

Cat mummy picture
 Cat jumping distance prop

Background information on the artwork:

At first glance, this painting by Nicola Marschall of a young girl and her cat does not appear to be a typical portrait. The girl is not formally posed, but rather sits upright, leaning to one side

and hugging a small gray cat. Her dress has slipped off her right shoulder, while her left shoe and sock have come off her foot and lay in the foreground. Nicola Marschall has not just captured the likeness of this particular child but also the carefree spirit of childhood.

Despite the informality of the subject, Marschall has pictured her in a formal portrait setting. The red drapery to the girl's left, the small stool on which the cats rests, and the landscaped background equipped with an urn of intricately painted flowers, all echo European portrait styles of the period.

Cat facts:

- The word cat refers to a family of meat-eating animals that include tigers, lions, leopards, and panthers.
- Cats are one of the most popular pets in the world.
- There are over 500 million domestic cats in the world.
- Cats and humans have been associated for nearly 10,000 years.
- Cats respond better to women than to men.
- Cats respond the most readily to names that end in an “ee” sound.
- Cats conserve energy by sleeping for an average of 13 to 18 hours a day.
- A cat can jump seven times as high as it is tall.
- Cats have flexible bodies and teeth adapted for hunting small animals such as mice and rats.
- Cats must have fat in their diet because they cannot produce it on their own.
- A group of cats is called a clowder, a male cat is called a tom, and a female cat is called a molly or queen while young cats are called kittens.
- Domestic cats usually weight around 4 kilograms (8 lb 13 oz) to 5 kilograms (11 lb 0 oz).
- The heaviest domestic cat on record is 21.297 kilograms (46 lb 15.2 oz).
- Cats can be lethal hunters and very sneaky, when they walk their back paws step almost exactly in the same place as the front paws did beforehand, this keeps noise to a minimum and limits visible tracks.
- Cats have powerful night vision, allowing them to see at light levels six times lower than what a human needs in order to see.
- Cats also have excellent hearing and a powerful sense of smell.
- Older cats can at times act aggressively towards kittens.
- Domestic cats love to play, this is especially true with kittens who love to chase toys and play fight. Play fighting among kittens may be a way for them to practice and learn skills for hunting and fighting.
- Cats spend five or more hours a day grooming.
- Feral cats are often seen as pests and threats to native animals.

Interpretive questions:

- 1) What is going on in this painting? How do you think the girl feels about the cat?
- 2) Do you think this is an indoor or outdoor cat? How can you tell? [The young girl is holding it as though it is a pet.] Do any of you have cats as pets? Cats are one of the

most popular cats in the world! Cats have been special to humans for nearly 10,000 to 12,000 years.

- 3) How do you think cats were viewed 10,000 years ago? Were they pets or something else? [10,000 years ago cats lived entirely outdoors. This relationship began in modern day West Asia during the development of agriculture.] How do you think agriculture attracted these wildcats? [There was now a steady food source in one location.]
- 4) [Bring out mummy cat reproduction.] In other locations such as Egypt, cats were mummified and kept on leashes during these ancient times. Why would Egyptians mummify cats? [Egyptians believed that if you were buried with something, you would reunite in the afterlife.]
- 5) The cat family includes more than just domestic cats; can you think of any other types of cats? [Tigers, lions, leopards, lynx, jaguars, and bobcats] What are some similarities and differences between domestic cats and other species of cats? [Domestic cats are smaller in size, but they are hunters using their powerful senses and high speeds to stalk and attack their prey much like other species of cats.] Florida panthers (jaguars) used to roam Augusta, GA until they were driven South during the early 1900s. Today, they are endangered with 100 to 160 adults in the South.
- 6) Who knows what the average speed limit is to drive a car? Which is faster, a cat or a car? Do you think some cats can run faster than this? Which ones? [Cheetahs are one of the fastest cats with a speed of 71 miles an hour while domesticated cats can run around 30 miles per hour.] How does this compare to the speed in which humans can run? [The average man can run around 15 mph.]
- 7) We now know that cats are extremely fast. Has anyone seen a cat jump before? How high do you think they can jump? [Bring out prop.] The average cat can jump 7 times as tall as it is! Can anyone here jump 7 times your height?

Lyell E. Carr (1857–1912)

Opossum Snout, Haralson County, Georgia

1891



Props

Ox hide

Ox horn

Cow hide

Print out of yoke

Background information on the artwork:

Chicago-born artist Lyell E. Carr ventured South when the Southern tourism industry began to boom after the Reconstruction era, and he was best known during his lifetime for a series of

works he created in rural Georgia. Carr painted this work, *Opossum Snout, Haralson County, Georgia* when he stayed in the area. The community of Opossum Snout became known as Tallapoosa.

Carr traveled to this region of Georgia after a group of Northern investors had transformed the rural community into a booming tourist town. There are several stories about the origin of the name Opossum Snout. One story tells of a settler who arrived in the rural town and could not find any goods worth purchasing in order to continue his travels. In commenting on the futility of the town, he supposedly exclaimed, "It's nothing but an old possum snout anyway!" Another legend explains that Opossum Snout was the name of a local Native American chief who had a nose similar to that of a possum. Whatever the truth, by using the former name of the once quiet community of Opossum Snout as the image's title, Carr recalls a time in the South before the turbulent period of the Civil War.

Oxen facts:

- Oxen and cows are both cattle, but not all cattle are cows and oxen.
- A cow and an ox are members of the Bovinae subfamily. In terms of physiology, cows and oxen do not have significant differences, but humans differentiate cows and oxen according to their specific use in the farm.
- A cow is a female, to be called as such, it should be approximately 4 years old and has given birth to at least one calf. Its male counterpart is called a bull. An ox, is a castrated mature bull, so gender can be said as the primary difference between an ox and a cow.
- A cow is raised as livestock for its meat or dairy, while the ox is a draft animal, used to pull carts, plows, and sleds.
- Frequently, an ox is more intelligent than a cow because an ox is a trained animal, taught to respond correctly to the commands of its handler. Cows are usually allowed to graze, and are untrained.
- Any breed of cattle can be trained to be oxen, but generally larger, stronger animals are selected. Typically, they are males. Some breeds or individuals are better suited to be oxen because of their level of intelligence, willingness to learn, and how personable the animal is.
- It is not hard to train oxen, but it does take commitment to work regularly, as well as, patience and consistency in what you ask, and proving yourself a good leader by making sure your animals' needs are met.
- Oxen, used from the time of early settlements in America as draft animals and for plowing. Their slow pace was counterbalanced on rough muddy pioneer roads by strength and endurance far superior to the horse.
- The lifespan of an ox is about 20 years.

Horn facts:

- When people choose an animal for an ox, they choose one with horns. The horns keep the yoke on their heads when they back up. Oxen's horns grow as their bodies grow, and so they have big horns, although not all breeds have the same size of horns.

- Horns are made of two components: 1) bone and 2) keratin. The bone is the center, or core, of the horn and is fused to the bone of the skull. The bone core is covered by a resilient sheath (protective covering) made of keratin.
 - Bone is a porous, mineralized, and rigid organ. While it is one of the two items that make up a horn, bone is probably best known for making up the endoskeleton of vertebrates. In a living animal bone is alive, made up of osseous tissue, blood vessels, nerves, marrow, and other components.
 - **Keratin** is a tough, non-mineralized, protein. It not only makes up the sheath of a horn, it is also a primary component of hair, nails, claws, hooves, feathers, and the shells of tortoises, turtles, and terrapins. This is the same stuff our hair and nails are made of.
- Horns are a permanent part of the animal, which means the horns an animal is born with are the same horns it has its entire life. Horns do not branch out, but instead end in only one point on each side of the animal's head.
- A **yoke** is a wooden beam that is used between a pair of oxen to pull them together when working in pairs.

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Oxen.aspx>

<http://www.differencebetween.net/science/nature/difference-between-ox-and-cow/>

<http://knowledgenuts.com/2013/11/20/the-difference-between-cows-oxen-and-cattle/>

Interpretive questions:

1. What is going on in this painting?
2. What animal do you see in this artwork? [This is an ox.] What is the difference between a cow and an ox? [The difference between ox and other cattle is that an ox has been taught to work.] What types of jobs do you think ox have? [Looking for plowing, transport, farming]
3. When deciding if a cow should become an ox, horns are very important. Why do you think this is? [Horns keep the **yoke** on their heads.] [Show them the image of the yoke and the photograph of the oxen with the yoke around their necks.] Do you think these oxen could get the yoke off? Why or why not?
4. [Pull out horn prop and pass it around.] What do you think horns are made of? [Horns are made of bone and keratin. The core of the horn is made of bone, and this is fused to the skull. The bone is covered by a protective covering of keratin. **Keratin** is a tough, non-mineralized, protein. It not only makes up the sheath of a horn, it is also a primary component of hair, nails, claws, hooves, feathers, and the shells of tortoises, turtles, and terrapins.] How else could horns be used? [Defense and attracting mates]
5. Looking at the ox in the artwork, do you think we can tell how old it is by its horns? [As an oxen's body grows, their horns grow with it. Cattle do not shed their horns. Not all breeds have the same size of horns, but we can assume this ox is at least in its midlife because of its size.] If this ox is middle aged, how old do you think this (prop) ox was? [Younger, because the horn is smaller.]
6. [Pull out the oxen hide prop and let them pass it around.] This is an oxen hide. Are you surprised by its texture or length? Why or why not? [Pull out the cow hide.] This is a cow hide. Is one softer than the other? Why do you think this is?

7. This was painted over 100 years ago. How do we get around today? What were the benefits of ox or animal-drawn carts over modern transportation? What were the drawbacks?

Meyer Straus
Bayou Teche



Props

Alligator skull
Snake skin

Background information on the artist:

While the swamp in *Bayou Teche* represents a landscape that truly belongs to the South, it is likely that such a scene may not be found in nature. Born in Germany, Meyer Straus immigrated to the United States and eventually settled in New Orleans from 1869 to 1872, where he established a career as a scenic artist for area theaters. *Bayou Teche* is reminiscent of the kinds of theatrical backdrops that Straus must have painted. The foreground, or front of the scene, is strongly separated from the background through the use of a hazy atmosphere as well as a small boat in the distance. Large oak trees and hanging moss seem to frame the center of the image as if for stage actors.

Swamp facts:

- The primary wildlife inhabitants of swamp forests are reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds, raccoons, opossums, wild pigs and invertebrates.
- Reptiles and amphibians are prevalent in swamps because of their ability to adapt to fluctuating water levels. Reptiles found in swamps include snakes such as the cottonmouth, also known as the water moccasin, various non-poisonous water snakes, king snakes, turtles and alligators. Amphibians include various species of frogs and salamanders.
- Fish are both temporary and permanent residents of swamps in the Southeast. Some fish use sloughs and back swamps for spawning and feeding during the flood season. Common species of fish found in swamps include bowfin, minnows and mosquitofish. Larger fish, such as largemouth bass, are temporary residents of swamps.
- Birds include wood ducks, herons, ibises, egrets and occasionally wood storks.

- A wide variety and high numbers of invertebrates are found in permanently flooded swamps. These include various species of crayfish, clams, snails, freshwater shrimp and immature (larval) stages of many insects.

Alligator facts:

- The average size of an adult female alligator is 8.2 feet long.
- The average size of an adult male is 11.2 feet. Large males can reach nearly half a ton, or 1,000 pounds.
- Alligators have an “armored” body with muscular flat tail. The skin is armored with embedded bony plates called osteoderms or scutes.
- They have a long snout with upward facing nostrils at the end; this lets them breathe while the rest of the body is underwater.
- The difference between an alligator and crocodile is their teeth. In an alligator’s lower jaw, the large fourth tooth fits into a socket in the upper jaw, and is not visible when the mouth is closed.
- Alligators are typically found from North Carolina to the Rio Grande in Texas, and are usually found in freshwater, slow-moving rivers. They are also found in swamps, marshes, and lakes.
- Alligators can live about 50 years in the wild.
- They are carnivores. They typically feed on fish, turtles, snakes, and small mammals; however, they will eat just about anything if they are hungry.
- American alligators are reptiles. They are members of the Crocodylia order. In this order, there are 23 different species, including the American alligator, Caimans and a variety of crocodiles.
- The basic Crocodylia body form has been around for more than 180 million years, making alligators and crocodiles living dinosaurs.

Interpretive questions:

- 1) What’s going on here? What animals do you see? [There’s a bird on the left lower side that is possibly a wood stork.] What lives in this swamp that we can’t see in the painting? [Alligators, birds, fish, lizards, bugs, raccoons, opossum, and snakes among others.]
- 2) [Bring out the skull.] Do you think this was an alligator, or a crocodile? [Alligator] How can you tell by looking at this skull? [Alligator heads are more square, where crocodile heads are more narrow.] How big do you think this alligator was? [It was 7 feet long.] How tall are you? So, if the alligator could stand up on its tail, it would be approximately this much taller than you!
- 3) How do these living things interact with one another in this swamp? What is a predator? [Predators are wild animals that hunt, or prey on, other animals. All living creatures need food to live. Predators need the flesh to survive.] Can you think of any predators? [Weasels, hawks, wolves, mountain lions, grizzly bears, fox, and alligators are all predators.] Predators are **carnivores**, which mean their diet consists of meat.] What

do these predators have in common? [Predators all have to develop extremely sharp senses such as smell, vision, and hearing.]

- 4) Who do you think the predator is between the alligator and this bird? Why? [The alligator is the predator. Predators have sharp teeth, they are quick, and they have a good sense of smell. Show the students the alligator skull again.] Do you consider these teeth sharp? [Opposite of a predator is the **prey**. Prey species are weak especially during their young ages.] Other than birds, what other prey could be found in this swamp? [Looking for smaller reptiles, mammals, fish, turtles, and birds.]
- 5) [Pull out the snake skin] There are several different types of snakes that live in a swamp. Who would be the predator and who would be the prey between the snake and alligator? [While both are predators, the alligator would dominate the snake, unless it is a python that is larger than the alligator. Snakes are carnivorous reptiles, making them predators to animals, insects, and other invertebrates.] What's the difference and similarities between the texture of the snake and the texture of the alligator?
- 6) Why do you think it is important that our **ecosystem** has both predators and prey? [Predators control the population of prey, otherwise the prey species will get overpopulated, and that would throw off the balance of the ecosystem.] [An ecosystem is a community of living and non-living things that work together in their environment.] Birds, such as wood storks, will nest near alligators. Why would they nest near a predator? [Small animals such as raccoons and opossum prey on small birds, while alligators prey on all small animals. By nesting near alligators, they are protecting their young from other prey.] What do you think would happen if one of these wood storks fell into the water?
- 7) If you were to touch an alligator's skin, what would it feel like? [bumpy, rough] What is the purpose of the alligator's thick skin? [Their skin has bony plates inside the skin, called osteoderms or scutes. This makes it difficult to penetrate.] Do you think if you touched an alligator they would feel it through their tough armor? [Although an alligator's skin is tough, it is also very sensitive. This helps them detect water movements created by swimming prey and also helps them determine the location of their prey for a rapid and direct strike.]

John Martin Tracy (1843–1893)
Candidates for the Horse Show
1893



Props

Horse shoe

Horse hair

Draft horse image
Jockey hat
Jockey riding crop
Cowboy hat
Horse brush

Background information on the artwork:

Candidates for the Horse Show is the last painting that John Martin Tracy worked on before his death in 1893. Critics praised Tracy for his ability to render animals in a lifelike manner full of character and expression. The focal point of the painting is the horses, their riders, and the black dog in the foreground, who parade off together to a competition. Tracy has demonstrated his technical ability through such details as the shine of each animal's coat and the varying poses that they take. The figures are also crowded together, creating a dynamic sense of interplay. Tracy was celebrated for this type of art, and he likely sold paintings to many wealthy sport and animal lovers.

Horse facts:

- Horses can sleep both lying down and standing up.
- Horses can run shortly after birth.
- Domestic horses have a lifespan of around 25 years.
- A 19th century horse named 'Old Billy' is said to have lived 62 years.
- Horses have around 205 bones in their skeleton.
- Horses have been domesticated for over 5000 years.
- Horses are herbivores (plant eaters).
- Horses have bigger eyes than any other mammal that lives on land.
- Because horse's eyes are on the side of their head they are capable of seeing nearly 360 degrees at one time.
- Horses gallop at around 44 kph (27 mph).
- The fastest recorded sprinting speed of a horse was 88 kph (55 mph).
- Estimates suggest that there are around 60 million horses in the world.
- Scientists believe that horses have evolved over the past 50 million years from much smaller creatures.
- A male horse is called a stallion.
- A female horse is called a mare.
- A young male horse is called a colt.
- A young female horse is called a filly.
- A baby horse is a foal.
- Ponies are small horses.

Horse shoe facts:

- Horse shoes are narrow plates, commonly of iron or steel, shaped to fit a horse's hoof and attached to the hoof by nailing it to the inner edge of the horny wall of the hoof.

- Horseshoes vary from the light plate worn by race-horses to the heavy shoe with sharp pointed wedges, or calks, worn by horses of logging camps in drawing heavy loads over roads of ice.
- The earliest extant shoe dates from the 6th cent. A horseshoe used by the Romans was a leather boot with a metal plate at the bottom.
- Before the advent of motor vehicles, shoeing horses was an important trade, often combined with general blacksmithing.
- Often the horseshoer's skill cured lameness, and before veterinary medicine became a profession the horseshoer, or farrier, treated horses for all their diseases. The horseshoe is an emblem and talisman of good luck.

Horse hair facts:

- Bows for musical instruments.
- Horsehair plaster which is a wall covering used in the construction industry and is found in older buildings. Horse hair plaster has now been replaced by cheaper materials such as drywall.
- Used in the crafts of horse hair hitching, braiding and making jewelry.
- Used for fine arts paintbrushes.
 - Horse hair was used as stuffing in the 1800s and as covering fabric for furniture.
 - In the 1800s horse hair was also used for making sieves for sieving flower etc.
 - Shaving brushes.
 - Horse hair was common in hats and women's underwear in the past.
 - Horse hair was also used in women's hair to create the Gibson Girl look.
 - A lot of wigs in the 1700s were made from horse hair.

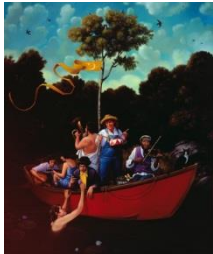
Interpretive questions:

- 1) What is going on in this painting?
- 2) The title of this painting is *Candidates for the Horse Show*. What are some different uses for horses? [Show horses, work horses, race horses, warfare, products] These particular horses are show horses. That means they are judged in an exhibition of horses and ponies. [Most shows consist of a series of different performances called **classes**, wherein a group of horses with similar training or characteristics compete against one another for awards and prize money.]
- 3) How might a work horse look differently from a show horse? This type of horse is called a **draft horse**, meaning, draw or haul. [Work horses are recognizable by their tall stature, muscular build, and broad backs.] What are their hooves made of? [They are made of a tough protein called **keratin**-the same stuff our nails and hair are made of.]
- 4) [Bring out horse shoe prop.] Why do you think horses wear shoes? Are these horses wearing shoes? [It doesn't look like these horses are wearing shoes.] Do you think all horses are shod? Normally, horses are shod if they walk on rough surfaces or pavement. [Hooves are made of a tough protein called **keratin**-the same stuff our nails

and hair are made of.] Since these are show horses, we can assume that they are not shod, even though sometimes they are.

- 5) [Pass around the horse hair.] Horse hair is also used for products. Do you brush your hair every day? Horses need their hair brushed, too. [Bring out the brush.] Is this like your brush at home? What can you imagine horse's hair is used for? [Bows for musical instruments, jewelry making, fine arts paintbrushes, shaving brushes, and even wigs!]
- 6) Horses are also used for entertainment. Have any of you been to a horse race? The Kentucky Derby is the most famous horse race. How is a hat worn by a horse jockey different from a cowboy hat? [Bring out the hats.] Jockey's use a jockey crop to get their horses to go faster, to win the race. [Bring out the crop or whip.] However, jockeys have to be very careful where they flick their crop, because if they get the wrong area, they might hurt the horse. Typically, they flick the rump or shoulder area because there is more padding.
- 7) How long have we had horses in America? [Some 55 million years ago, the first members of the horse family appeared, the dog-sized **Hyracotherium**, and they lived in the forests of North America. Horses began migrated across the Iranian Plateau of the Middle East and as far as Europe and northern Africa. By 10,000 years ago, no more horses remained in North America.] How did they make their way back to North America? [The reintroduction of horses began in 1519 when Cortez came from Spain.] Where can we find them today? [We have both domesticated and wild horses.]

Terry Rowlett
The Merry Boatmen
2000



Props

Owl pellets
Pellet bones
Bird track poster

Background information on the artist:

<http://terryrowlett.com/bio/>

Terry Rowlett grew up in rural Arkansas, and was influenced by the Christian evangelical South. Joining the army out of high school, he was stationed as a patrol guard in West Germany during the mid-1980s. It was during this time he discovered his talents as an artist. Drawn to the narrative found in Renaissance and Baroque artworks, he created works that expressed these ideals as well as everyday scenes, pop culture, and the mundane.

Rowlett spent his thirties living in Athens, Georgia where he earned his M.F.A. in painting at the University of Georgia. While most of his themes, during these years, continued to concentrate on Christianity and the American landscape, he later turned towards themes of wandering.

Deciding to take a journey of his own, he later ventured to the Holy Land, hoping to affirm his religious convictions; instead, he witnessed religious prejudice that left him feeling loss of his convictions. This transformation in belief was incorporated into his artworks with lonely hooded and mournful figures, stormy seas, and threatening skies.

Owl facts:

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/sciencefacts/animals/owl.html>

<http://idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids/season12/owls/facts.cfm>

- There are around 200 different owl species throughout the world; in North America, 19 different kinds can be found.
- Owls are active at night (nocturnal).
- A group of owls is called a parliament.
- Owls are predators or “raptors”
- Most owls hunt insects, small mammals and other birds.
- Some owl species hunt fish.
- Owls have powerful talons (claws) which help them catch and kill prey.
- Owls have large eyes and a flat face.
- Owls can turn their heads as much as 270 degrees.
- Owls are farsighted, meaning they can’t see things close to their eyes clearly.
- Owls are very quiet in flight compared to other birds of prey.
- The color of owl’s feathers helps them blend into their environment (camouflage).
- Barn owls can be recognized by their heart shaped face.
- Owl fossils have been found that are 70–80 million years old.
- Members of the owl family can be found on every continent except Antarctica.

Owl pellet facts:

<http://idahoptv.org/dialogue4kids/season4/prey/facts.cfm>

Much is known about the dining habits of owls because of certain inefficiencies of their digestive process. More than 300 species of bird in several different orders are known to regurgitate pellets of indigestible material. This figure includes all owl species. Owl pellets are so informative for several reasons. Firstly owls have comparatively weak bills and often prey that isn’t too large is swallowed whole which leaves the skeleton of the prey, including the skull, intact. Unlike most other birds, owls have no crop, and the food passes straight into the foregut (they do not possess a true stomach). The acid in the owl’s gut is rather weak. This means that owls can only digest the soft tissues. The bones, fur and feathers remain virtually intact. The opening from the foregut into the rest of the digestive tract is small and prevents any undigested material from passing through. Instead, it remains behind where it is compacted into an oval pellet and is then actively regurgitated back up through the esophagus.

Pellets, therefore, contain bones including intact skulls, fur, feathers, the chitinous exoskeletons of insects and even the chaetae (bristles) from earthworms and so discovering what owls have been eating is quite straightforward.

Interpretive questions:

- 1) What is going on in this painting?
- 2) Earlier we talked about predator and prey. Which category do you think owls fit into? Why? What do they eat? How do they catch their food? When do they hunt? [Owls are predators; they feed on a wide variety of prey such as mice, squirrels, and rabbits. They also eat insects, birds, and reptiles.]
- 3) What's the difference between the alligator and the owl's eating methods? [Alligators have sharp teeth, while owls have beaks.] How do you think they swallow their prey, since they cannot chew? [They either swallow small prey whole, or they tear larger prey into small pieces before swallowing.]
- 4) [Show them the owl pellets.] Since they sometimes have to swallow their prey whole, they swallow things that their stomachs cannot digest, so they regurgitate these things into these pellets. What do you think is inside the owl pellets? [Looking for bones, feathers, and fur. [Pellets can be passed around because they have been sterilized.]
- 5) [Prop: dissected owl pellet] What did this owl have for dinner?
- 6) Have you ever looked at a bird's feet? What do they look like? [bring out the bird feet poster] Let's compare the owl's feet with the others in the poster.
- 7) What other animals do we see? Which ones can't we see, but might assume are there? [fish]