

Animal Facts & Tracks!

K – 3rd Grade

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.

Rotations

Rotation 1	Rotation 2	Rotation 3
<i>Young Girl with Cat</i>	<i>Field Trial-On Point</i>	<i>Candidates for the Horse Show</i>
<i>Field Trial-On Point</i>	<i>Candidates for the Horse Show</i>	<i>Bayou Teche</i>
<i>Candidates for the Horse Show</i>	<i>Bayou Teche</i>	<i>The Merry Boatmen</i>
<i>Bayou Teche</i>	<i>The Merry Boatmen</i>	<i>Young Girl with Cat</i>
<i>The Merry Boatmen</i>	<i>Young Girl with Cat</i>	<i>Field Trial-On Point</i>

Props

Cat jump distance prop
Mummy cat photo
Dog posters
Owl pellets
Bones from pellet
Horse brush
Jockey hat
Jockey riding crop
Horse shoe
Horse hair
Alligator skull
Snake skin
Cowboy hat

TOUR STOPS

Portrait Gallery- CAT



Nicola Marschall (1829–1917)

Young Girl with Cat

1867

Props

Cat mummy picture

Cat jumping distance prop

Key Facts

- 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 cat rests, and the landscaped background equipped with an urn of intricately painted flowers all echo European portrait styles of the period.

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 pets 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 feline family includes more than just domestic cats; can you think of any other types of felines? [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?

Cat Facts:

- The word cat refers to a family of meat-eating feline 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 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.
- 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.
- Cats have powerful night vision, allowing them to see at light levels six times lower than what a human requires to see.
- Cats also have excellent hearing and a powerful sense of smell.

Southerners at Play Gallery- DOGS

John Martin Tracy (1843-1893)

A Field Trial-On the Point, c. 1885, oil on canvas,

Props:

Dog Posters



Key Facts

- a renowned painter of dogs, horses, and sporting scenes; his portraits of animals were lifelike and full of character and expression; they were not idealized nor made to appear pretty
- Painting was extremely accurate in representation
- His sportsmen figures were taken from real life, with the action of each man appropriate to their employment
- An anonymous writer from the *New York Times*, 1895, described Tracy as “a painter to delight the heart of all sporting men...He painted the hunter before the flock of birds, the dog with the tail extended and paw uplifted, as he stood quivering over the scent; and he did it all con amore, faithfully, and with full understanding and knowledge of his subject.”

On A Field Trial—On the Point

- Each person’s face is highly individualized. The people depicted in the painting were probably club members of some kind who wished to be specifically identified in the painting. The painting may also depict a particular event.
- Likely that his image was painted in Asheville, NC, where field trials were popular events

Interpretive Questions:

- What is going on in this painting? [A field trial is a competition among sporting dogs under natural conditions in the field, in which the animals are judged on the basis of excellence of performance in hunting.]
- What are the dogs supposed to do? [Pointing dogs, sometimes called bird dogs, are a type of gundog typically used in finding game. The name pointer comes from the dog’s instinct to point, by stopping and aiming its muzzle towards game.]
- Why do humans use dogs for hunting? [Hunting hounds bring the hunter to the prey. They have keen noses that detect the presence of game and track the scent. They also have loud voices to alert the hunter when they locate prey. A howl that travels well helps unite dog and hunter if they become separated in the field.]
- How do you think dogs were viewed 30,000 years ago? Were they pets or something else?
- The canine family includes more than just domestic dogs; can you think of any other types of canines? [wolf, hyena, jackal, fox, coyote, and dingo]

Dog Facts

- A dog’s nose print is unique, much like a person’s fingerprint.
- There is archaeological evidence dogs were the first animals domesticated by humans more than 30,000 years ago (more than 10,000 years before the domestication of horses and ruminants).
- A dog’s sense of smell is legendary, but did you know that his nose has as many as 300 million receptors? In comparison, a human nose has about 5 million.
- Dogs’ noses can sense heat/thermal radiation, which explains why blind or deaf dogs can still hunt.
- Dogs are not colorblind. They can see blue and yellow.
- All puppies are born deaf.
- Dogs have about 1,700 taste buds. We humans have between 2,000–10,000.

Landscape Gallery- SNAKE/ALLIGATOR



Meyer Straus

Bayou Teche

c. 1870

Props

Alligator skull

Snake skin

Key Facts:

- Bayou Teche is a 125-mile-long waterway in south central Louisiana in the United States. Bayou Teche was the Mississippi River's main course when it developed a delta about 2,800 to 4,500 years ago.
- 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.
- **“Legend of Bayou Teche” (As told by the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana)**
 - Many, many years ago, there was a huge and venomous snake. It was so large and so long that its size was not measured in feet, but in miles. Its head was at what is now known as Morgan City and its body stretched beyond St. Martinville and Breau Bridge to its tail, which rested in Port Barré. This enormous snake had been an enemy of the Chitimacha for many years, doing a lot of destruction to their ways of life. One day the Chitimacha Chief called together his warriors and had them prepare themselves for battle with their enemy, the snake. In those days, there were no guns that they could use to destroy the snake. All they had were their clubs and bows and arrows, the arrowheads being made not from flint, but from a large bone from the local garfish. Of course, a snake over 124 miles long could not be instantly killed. The warriors fought courageously to kill the enemy, but it fought just as hard to try to survive. As the snake turned, coiled and twisted in the last few days of a slow but sure death, it broadened, curved and deepened the place wherein his huge body lay. As his body decomposed, the place began to deepen more. The Bayou Teche (“Teche” meaning “snake”) is today proof of the exact position into which this enemy placed himself when overcome by the Chitimachas in the days of their strength.

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 squarer, where crocodile heads are narrower.] 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 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 must 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 helps them determine the location of their prey for a rapid and direct strike.]

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.

Snake Facts:

- According to the latest count, there are 3,789 snake species, making them the second largest group of reptiles after lizards. They are divided into 30 different families and numerous subfamilies. Australia is home to approximately 140 of them.
- Reptiles sometimes get labelled 'cold-blooded' but this is incorrect as their blood isn't actually cold. The accurate term is ectothermic, meaning their body temperature is variable and regulated by external sources. Unlike mammals and birds that are able to internally regulate their body temperature, reptiles need to use sources of heat, like the sun, to warm up.
- You might have learned in school that reptiles are different from mammals because they lay eggs. While we like to classify and categorize everything around us, nature has its own rules. While approximately 70% of snakes lay eggs, others don't. Snakes living in especially colder climates have live births because the eggs wouldn't survive outside.
- Ever wondered why snakes might give you an eerie feeling? They don't have eyelids! This means they don't blink and have to sleep with their eyes wide open. Instead of eyelids they have a thin membrane attached to each eye to protect them. The membrane is called the 'brille,' which in German means glasses.
- Snakes do have nostrils, but they don't use them to smell. Instead they have evolved to smell with their tongue and by using their Jacobson's organ in the roof of their mouth. Their smell is quite excellent and has also been described as "smelling in stereo". They have a forked tongue and multiple receptors able to pick up different amounts of chemical cues.
- When snakes are eating, they can't help but to swallow their food whole because they can't chew. Instead, snakes have very flexible lower jaws which allows them to eat animals who are 75% - 100% larger than their own head. The chemicals in their digestive track will do all the work and break down the food once ingested.

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 a 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.

Landscape Gallery- HORSES



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

Key Facts:

- 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.
- *Candidates for the Horse Show* is the last painting that John Martin Tracy worked on before his death in 1893. This was the last painting completed by Tracy; it was said to be on his easel at the time of his death in Ocean Springs; it has been suggested that it possibly exhibits faint areas that lack final work.
- Critics praised Tracy for his ability to render animals in a lifelike manner full of character and expression.
- The *New York Times* called this monumental work “the most ambitious canvas Mr. Tracy ever attempted.”
- It was shown at the exhibition of the National Academy of Design in 1894.

- The painting is a wonderful depiction of horses; “some are being ridden, others are being led by grooms.”
- The painting’s frame was repaired and restored in 2003. Cracks in the existing frame were repaired, and its gold paint removed, exposing layers of original gilt and gesso. The frame was re-gessoed, and gold leaf was applied to its surface. Finally a new outer moulding approximately 2” wide was added to the existing frame, replicating the look of what was probably the original frame. The frame restoration was completed by Gold Leaf Designs of Chattanooga, TN, a company that specializes in picture frame restoration and gilding.
 - The 22kt. Gold leaf was applied to the restored frame using the process of water gilding. This is the oldest method of applying gold leaf and is done entirely by hand. First, the frame surface is preoared by applying fine layers of gesso. Gesso is a liquid mizture of chalk (calcium carbonate), hide glue, and water. The gesso is sanded to a finish as smooth as porcelain and covered with a thin layer of burnishing bole (colored clay) that will receive the gold leaf. Next, “gilder’s liquor” is applied, and the water gilding begins. The “liquor” activates sizing in the clay which adheres the gold leaf and enhances the luster of the gold when luster of the gold when burnished.

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 they 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.

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 made 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:

- Horse hair is used for bows for musical instruments.
- Horsehair plaster 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.
- Horse hair is used in the crafts of horse hair hitching, braiding, and making jewelry.
- Horse hair is also used for fine arts paintbrushes.
 - Horse hair was used as stuffing in the 1800s and as a covering fabric for furniture.
 - In the 1800s horse hair was also used for making sieves for sieving flower etc.
 - It has also been used to make 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.

Contemporary Gallery- BIRDS



Terry Rowlett
The Merry Boatmen
2000

Props

Owl pellets
Pellet bones
Bird track poster

Background information on the artist:

- His neo-iconic images are outfitted with everyday faces and places, pop culture obsessions, and mundane artifacts, expressing his once heartfelt belief in Christian teachings in a contemporary culture.
- Rowlett's art can certainly be viewed as allegorical illustrations of his own personal spiritual journey, but he has also been known to delve into political commentary.
- *The Merry Boatmen* is inspired by the *Ship of Fools* (painted c. 1490–1500) is a painting by Hieronymus Bosch, now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris. The ship of fools is an allegory, originating from Book VI of Plato's Republic, about a ship with a dysfunctional crew. The allegory is intended to represent the problems of governance prevailing in a political system not based on expert knowledge.
- Rowlett has populated his ship with real Athens musicians. left (back) Jeff Mangum of Neutral Milk Hotel, next Laura Carter of Elf Power, in the water and on the boat Robbee Cucchiaro & Julian Koster of The Music Tapes, with the horn Scott Spillane of The Gerbils & Neutral Milk Hotel, with the drum Jill Carnes of Thimble Circus, with the violin Vernon Thornsberry of Wild Gumbo
- **The modern owl often signifies wisdom. However, it seems that around 1500 (when Bosch was painting) owls were generally associated with menace and death and had amoralistic significance. Bosch generally used owls as a symbol, placing it in contexts with an atmosphere of menace. As if to emphasize the threatening presence, he sometimes drew an owl surrounded by other, hostile birds that try to drive the owl away. [Does Rowlett's owl seem menacing, like it's inspiration?]**

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 owls sometimes have to swallow their prey whole, they swallow things that their stomachs cannot digest. This causes them to regurgitate these things into 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 in this painting? Which ones can't we see, but might assume are there? [fish]

Owl Facts:

- 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:

- 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 includes all owl species.
- Owl pellets are 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—so discovering what owls have been eating is quite straightforward.

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