



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2003 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Zoe Eve Walp	Project Number J1926
Project Title What Do Owls Eat?	
Abstract Objectives/Goals My goal was to determine if owls in different areas of California prey on different animals. Methods/Materials I obtained and collected owl pellets from Novato, San Diego, and Santa Barbara, California. Those were my main materials but I also used gloves, a scale (grams), plastic bags, and facial masks to conduct my experiment. Using dissecting techniques, I analyzed the contents of the owl pellets, and identified skeletal remains of different mammals. Results My results were that in Santa Barbara the ratio of gophers to voles was 2.6:1 while in San Diego it was 1:4 and in Novato it was 1:3. Conclusions/Discussion My hypothesis, that owls in different areas of California prey on different species, was supported by the data collected. In Santa Barbara they ate more gophers than voles and in Novato and San Diego they ate more voles than gophers. I think that's the case because the owl pellets that were found in Santa Barbara were found in the suburbs and the owl pellets from other places in California were found in riparian coastal scrub communities. The data suggests that there are more voles in the rural environments and more gophers in the city environments.	
Summary Statement My science project was about determining whether owls in different places of California prey on different animals.	
Help Received My friends from Novato and the Audubon Society of San Diego collected owl pellets from those areas for me. My mother and father helped me a little with the dissection of the owl pellets. Also, Paul Collins of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History was a great help in identifying owl pellet bones.	