

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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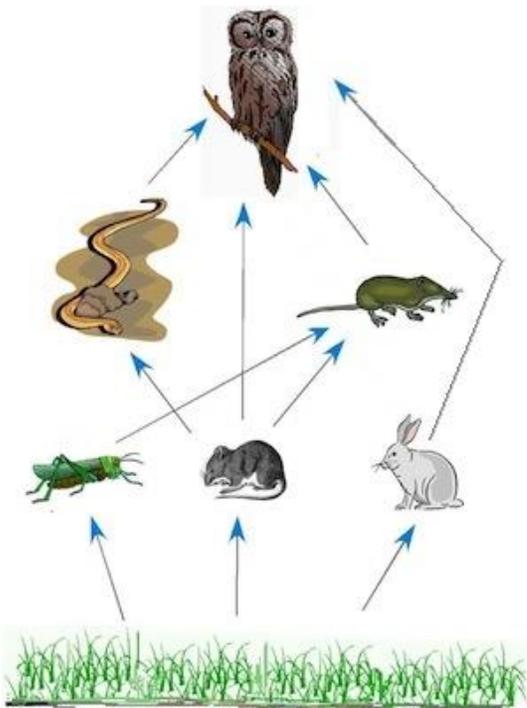
## Week 3 - Owl Pellet Dissection

Materials:	Amount:
Sterilized Owl Pellet	1
Bamboo Skewers	2
Plastic Forceps	2
Nitrile Gloves	2 pairs
Plates	1
Bone Charts	1

### Procedure:

*Scientist tip: Observe and record as you go through this dissection! (Use the back of this worksheet!)*

1. Listen to the SCouts as they discuss food webs.
2. Before you get started dissecting, put on a pair of nitrile gloves. Keep them on until after cleanup!
3. Unwrap your pellet from the foil.
4. Use the forceps (tweezers) to slowly pull away the fur. Separate fur and animal bones into piles.
5. With a bone chart, try to identify what bones you found in the pellet.
6. If you think you have a whole prey, try to build the skeleton of the prey with the bones.
7. What animals did your owl eat recently, based on the bones you have found?
8. Listen to the SCouts for cleanup instructions!



### What are food webs?

It's dangerous out in the wilds! In environments where animals roam free, animals survive by eating other animals and trying not to get eaten. **Food webs** are diagrams that use pictures and arrows to show who eats who. Scientists call animals that get eaten **prey** and animals that eat others **predators**. Arrows in a **food web** flow from **prey** to **predators**.

### Top Predators: Owls

Scientists find out where animals are in a food web by looking at what animals eat. **Owls** are usually **top predators** because no other animal eats them, so owls are placed at the top of food webs. When owls eat their prey, owls swallow them whole. The indigestible parts of eaten animals - mostly fur and bones - are regurgitated by owls in **pellets**. **Dissection** of the **pellets** reveals what owls ate recently, so **dissecting** many **pellets** will reveal what animals are prey to owls in general.

Tip: It is best to answer the following questions as you dissect! Every group gets a different pellet, so your group's answers will be different from other groups'.

**Question 1:** Before dissecting the pellet, describe what your owl pellet looks like. How big is it? What color is it?

**Question 2:** How many bones did you find in your pellet? Using the given bone charts, list some of the types of bones you found.

**Question 3:** Which animals did the bones you found belong to? Were you able to make part of a skeleton, a whole skeleton, or no skeleton at all?

