

Name: Sylvie
Year: 5

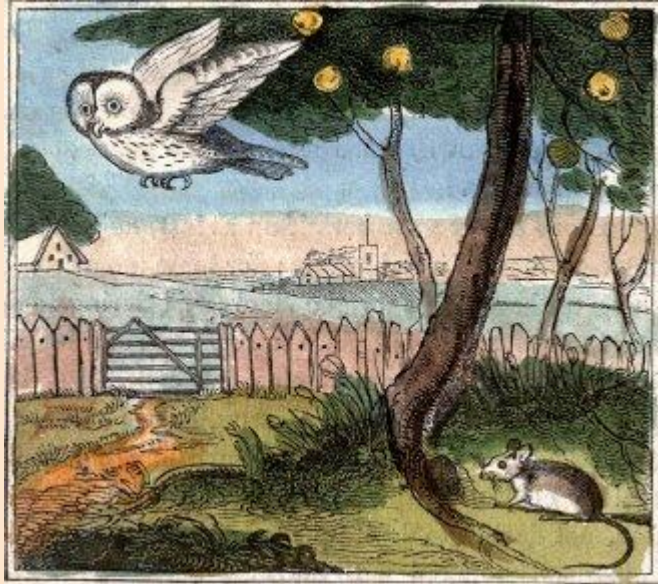
Science Investigation 1

What is the most
'popular' food of our
school barn owl?



Prediction

I think that the most popular prey food will be rats, because I suspect there are lots of rats at school.



Method

1. I used 5 pellets that Miss Scale gave me to investigate at home (6th one went to my sister to dissect!).
2. I carefully dissected all my pellets with my fingers and tweezers, looking for any skulls and jaw bones mostly.
3. I counted up and I identified from what animals they came.



Apparatus

1. Tweezers.
2. My hands wearing plastic gloves.
3. A white tile so I could see the bones and jaws.
4. Barn owl pellets (steamed to kill their germs).
5. Collection boxes to sort the bones into.
6. Bone identification sheet from Barn Owl Trust.



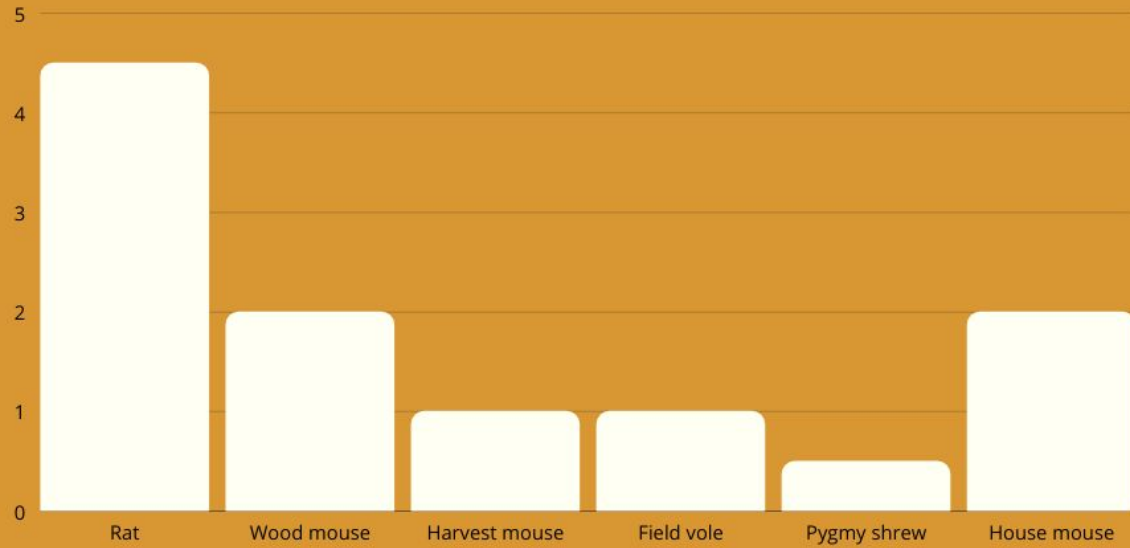
Identify Variables

1. Which variable will you change? (The pellets)
2. Which variable will you measure? (The types of bones and skulls to see what the owl eats most of)
3. Which variables will you control? (I used 5 pellets all steam treated the same way from the same collection spot (the barn!) to give a good mixture of examples of prey).

Results

Jaw bones I found:	How many:				
Rat	4 1/2				
Wood mouse	2				
Pygmy shrew	1/2				
Field vole	1				
Harvest mouse	1				
House mouse	2				

JAWS



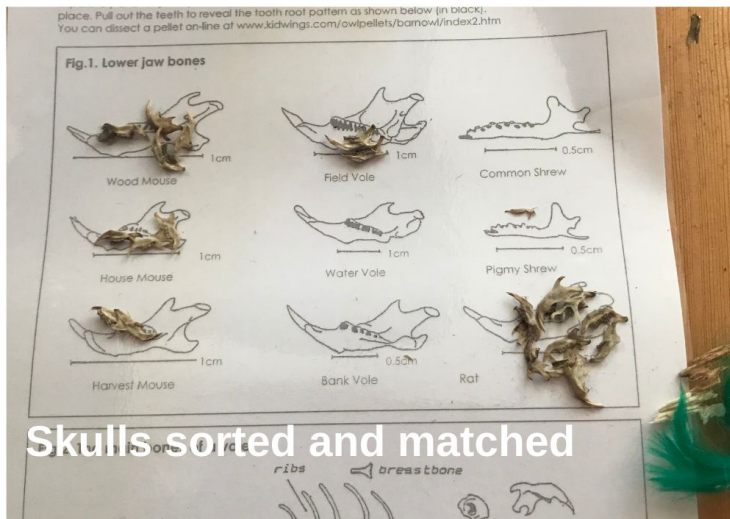


The bones I found





Skulls before I sorted them



Skulls sorted and matched



Conclusion

1. I found the most popular food was rats and that was my prediction!
2. I found lots of other bones like ribs and thighs and fur and a tiny furry long tail, maybe a vole?
3. We also learned there are lots of different kinds of mice around Sompting Abbots and the owl eats them too.
4. Scientists estimate that Barn Owls eat at least one rat a day. If you think of an entire owl family - an adult male and female plus one or two young - we are talking about three or four rats a day. In one year, this family can catch more than 1,000 rats!
5. It shows how good Barn Owls are to have at school. Rats carry a lot of diseases!

Evaluation

A more accurate table to show exactly what the barn owl had eaten because I was not sure about a couple of jaws - they all get a bit broken when the owl eats them. If I had a magnifying glass or a microscope I could be more sure which rodent they came from.

