

# The **STONHAM SCREECHER**

Winter 2016



**Cobweb's Corner**

**Great Horned Owls**

**Boxing Clever**

**Investigating Pellets**

**Alpha - Mail!**



**Hello!**

My name is Birkett and I am a Great Horned Owl. I live at the Suffolk Owl Sanctuary with my Parents, Pheonix and Huron and lots of other owlie friends! Here are some Great Horned Owl facts:

In captivity, the average lifespan of Great Horned Owls is an amazing 38 years!

Our legs, feet and talons are large and powerful. Our average foot span is around 7.9 inches... measure yours and see how it compares!!

Once adult, we are so tough, we have practically zero predators! The greatest threats to G.H.O's are humans, buildings and power lines.

Great Horned Owls were also known as Cat Owls, Hoot Owls, Winged Tigers and Tigers of the Air!

We live in lots of different habitats including forests, swamps, mountains and city parks!

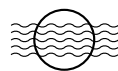
When fully grown, we can weigh up to 2.6 kilos. That's about the same as 6 footballs!!

We use a variety of sounds to communicate...including barks, booming hoots, shrill shrieks and beak snapping!! NOISY!!!

As well as perching and pouncing on prey, G.H.O's also hunt by walking on the ground or wading into water to snatch frogs and fish.

During the nesting season, G.H.O's attract their mates by bowing to each other with drooped wings, rubbing beaks and preening each other.

**Got a question?? ASK AN OWL!**  
**Do you have any questions about Owls or other Birds of Prey? Cobweb the Barn Owl is happy to answer and will personally respond to your letter or email!**



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# INVESTIGATING PELLETS

Owls cannot chew their food as they have no teeth! Instead they swallow it whole!

After enjoying the juicy bits, owls must get rid of the parts that they cannot digest, like bones, fur and feathers!



These are formed into short sausage like pellets which the owl then passes back up through its beak!

An owl passes a pellet from its mouth between 6 and 10 hours after eating.

After one night's hunting, an owl will pass one or two pellets.

By taking pellets apart, and studying the tiny bones inside, we can discover what an owl has been eating.



Finding out what owls have eaten can tell us which small mammals share their habitat.

Bone Chart A					
Bone	Bird	Mole	Shrew	Vole	
Skull					
Pelvis					
Scapula					
Femur					

Bone Chart B					
Bone	Bird	Mole	Shrew	Vole	
Cleivula					
Tibia					
Fibula					
Metatarsal					

If there are plenty of small bones in an owl's pellets, we know that the environment they live in is healthy and is supporting lots of wildlife.

**N.B.** The Suffolk Owl Sanctuary can provide sterilized owl pellets for classroom dissection activities. Please phone the admin. office for details on 0345 680 7897

# ALPHA - MAIL



Taino the Ashy Faced Owl is writing his Christmas card list, and wants to put his friends' names in alphabetical order! He has made a few mistakes - can you help to correct his list please?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....

## Taino's List!

1. Spectacled Owl
2. Barn Owl
3. Great Grey Owl
4. Great Horned Owl
5. Ashy Faced Owl
6. Little Owl
7. Tawny Owl
8. Snowy Owl

## BOXING CLEVER!



Roger looks after all the sanctuary's wild owl nestboxes. He counts and rings the pulli (baby birds) in the boxes. Every year he makes a list of the birds he has ringed:

	BARN OWL	KESTREL	TAWNY OWL
2016	78	73	8
2015	107	46	11
2014	147	34	26
2013	19	25	0

How many Barn Owls has Roger ringed in the last 4 years?  
In which year did Roger ring the most Kestrels?  
Did he ring more Barn Owls in 2014 or 2015?

What was the total number of owls ringed in 2015?  
In which year do you think that the wild birds' food supply was poorest?  
Which year was the most successful for Tawny Owl pulli?