

May 4, 1933

Mr. P. F. English,
Williamston, Michigan

Dear Mr. English:

I received your letter of inquiry concerning my findings on the great horned owl. You can get the bulk of my Wisconsin data from the series of papers recently published in the Condor; this includes material up to the fall of 1931. The results of my studies during the season of 1931-1932 have not been published. Last night I checked over the notes of my analyses and can give you the following figures. I have not had time to tabulate the data as percentages, or in any other way except to list individuals of prey represented in the pellets, or the number of pellets containing certain species such as rabbits and other large forms, which may be represented in more than one pellet. The analyses were hastily done, and have not been checked over by the Biological Survey; hence, there is likely a comparatively high probability of error in the data, but I am sending them to you, if you want to use them anyway.

Contents of 578 pellets plus some miscellaneous pellet debris, season of 1931-1932. Domestic pigeon 8; pheasant 1; ruffed grouse 3; quail 31; screech owl 2; crow 1; other birds 106 (including 24 medium sized unidentified birds, some of which may represent waterfowl); Peromyscus 680; Microtus 44; Norway rats 21; Blarina 11; Moles 2, cotton tail rabbits 427; flying squirrels 5; gray squirrels 1; weasel 1; mink 1, snakes 8, Amphibia, none; fish 2; pellets high in insects 2; crawfish 1. One owl had fed for some time almost entirely on a cow carcass.

I am still continuing the owl studies, but this season's collection has not been analyzed so, of course, you cannot include this material in your write-up.

Altogether the Wisconsin data deal with about 1900 pellets, plus prey remains from nests and the like, which I have not included in the quantitative data because of the disproportionate emphasis placed upon prey species, more conspicuous than their importance justifies.

I hope this sketchily prepared letter will be of some value to you.

Very truly yours,

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Paul L. Errington,
Asst. Prof. Wild
Life Research