

THIS WEEK ON THE LLANO ESTACADO

November 16-20, 2009



(Photographs above — barn owl pellets in abandoned house, and barn owl flying from site)

Many teachers teach a short lesson on owl pellets. The Sibley Nature Center has developed a comprehensive program on owl pellets. When we visit schools, or students visit here, we tell two folktales (one Hispanic, one Comanche) about how people react to owls, and then use some of our mounted specimens to talk about the physiology and behavior of owls. We have three species that live year around in West Texas — greathorned, barn, and burrowing owls. In the winter, short-eared and long-eared visit about four times each decade, and over the last 50 years flammulated owls have visited briefly three different times. We would love to give the program for your class, but if it does not fit into your schedule, you can give our program yourself! (except for the physiology and behavior of owls portion.)

We have the folk tales on our website;

http://www.sibleynaturecenter.org/essays/moseying/exploringnature/080109_barnowl.html

Is the Hispanic folk tale and

http://www.sibleynaturecenter.org/essays/wildontheprairie/mammals/030202_prairiedog.htm

Is the Comanche folk tale.

http://www.sibleynaturecenter.org/essays/wildontheprairie/birds/000910_burrowingowls.html

Is a story about a burrowing owl family that lived next to Sibley several years ago.

If you type owl into our website's search engine, you will get 86 hits, including a number of photographs, and many essays that mention owls and how they fit into the landscape. All three year-around resident species of owls live within the city limits, and I am sure at least one student in your class as seen at least one of the species!