

Owls may live in Kyle Field

by Ray Walker
Battalion reporter

Rumor has it that barn owls have nested in Kyle Field for six to seven years, and Dr. Keith Arnold, professor curator of birds for Texas wildlife collections, says it's true.

"A study was completed on the owls in 1982 by Mark Witman, who received his masters degree in 1982, and Ricky Patrick, Class of '82," Aronald says.

Witman and Patrick discovered a pair, one male and one female, of owls on Dec. 19, 1979, nesting in the west side of the stadium. Over a period of 11 months, the birds raised 14 to 15 young.

Barn Owls don't build nests; instead they use ledges, holes in buildings and any other place that can be made into a suitable nest sites.

"They were nested between cement beams under the first deck," Arnold says. "I am not sure if they're still there, howev-

er I am told you can still find owl pellets in that area of the stadium."

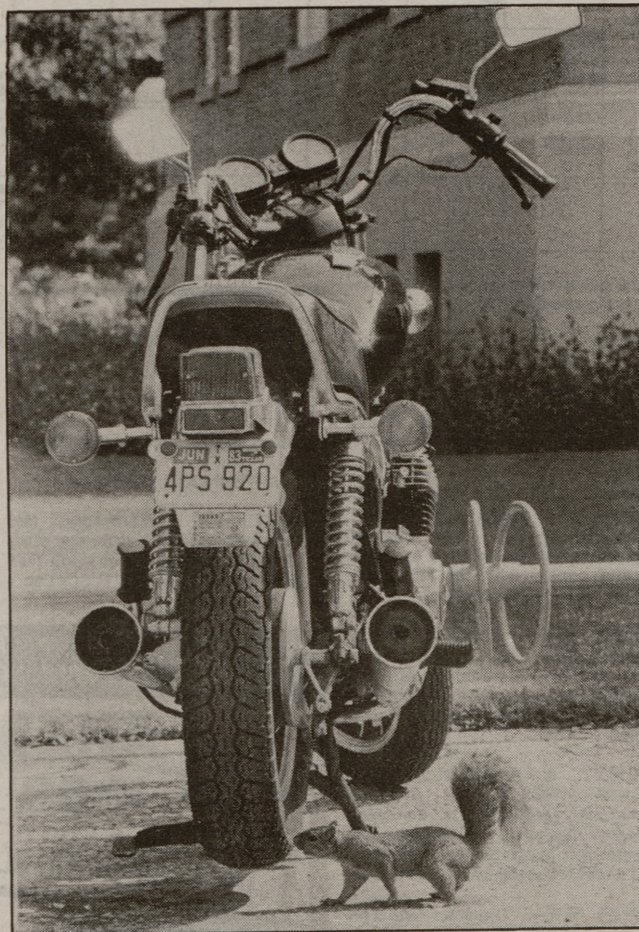
Pellets are the remains of an owl's prey that it does not eat. Owls usually swallow their prey whole. The indigestible parts are then ejected via the mouth as tightly compressed pellets.

"The owls, not dangerous animals, eat a lot of rats and mice," Arnold says. "The land behind the intramural fields offer perfect hunting grounds for the birds.

"The owls have been seen flying around the stadium during Aggie football games. They are just curious and want to know what all the noise is about. They will not hurt anyone."

Owls are not likely to attack humans unless humans invade their nest sites.

"The stadium is an ideal site for the owls' nests," Arnold says, because it offers the owls abundant food and good protection from predators. "It is not unusual for the birds to be there."



A squirrels-eye view

Squirrels are a somewhat common sight at A&M. They can be seen almost anywhere on campus, hurrying, scurrying, chittering, sitting up with front paws in air and a mouth full of nuts, stopping with head cocked to one side while watching students bustle off to class.

Most of the squirrels seen around campus are so used to the people, and the daily activity, that they seem almost tame. It's not so unusual for one of the frisky little dudes to sit and stare at you while you walk just inches away from him. Have you ever tried to see how close you could actually get before he shakes his tail and bounces off?

Squirrels also are curious-Georges. Nothing escapes their scrutiny: checking out the campus lawns and trees seems to occupy a good deal of their time. And nothing is so big or so small that it passes unnoticed by the squirrel, not even a motorcycle.



FMC

20

E

vie: sloweer

vie: ow To

at The Cost Living

vie: ime-

er

vie:attoo

heir

d for lia," orge

inite r in-ucts the

ay be ial of iads. it 35 Win-treal scow sors.

some have uistic vities uths.

fficial ds to vities spon-gram ds of the

S

mic ullar oks, and