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EARTH: Owl Pellets Bridge Ancient and Modern Ecosystems

Alexandria, VA - In a Utah cave, paleontologists are exploring the fossil record preserved in owl pellets since the Pleistocene glaciation. The fossils in the pellets are giving the scientists a glimpse of how the ecosystems have changed over time both from natural variation and more recent changes brought on by human settlement.

By studying the pellets, scientists have been able to assess the energy flow through the ecosystem, and how the addition of non-native plants such as cheatgrass is recorded in the geologic record. Explore Homestead Cave in the November Issue of EARTH Magazine: <http://www.earthmagazine.org/article/owl-pellets-bridge-ancient-and-modern-ecosystems>.

Get the science behind the headlines in EARTH Magazine. The November issue is now available on the digital newsstand and includes feature stories such as the effort to track conflict minerals through the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and research headlines from the geoscience community about the role the stratosphere plays in Santa Ana winds and fires, a Cambrian-like explosion of mammals during the Mid-Jurassic, and how the petrology of Campi Flegrei gives the volcano a Roman-concrete-style caprock. All this, and more is available from www.earthmagazine.org.

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Keep up to date with the latest happenings in Earth, energy and environment news with EARTH Magazine online at: www.earthmagazine.org. Published by the American Geosciences Institute, EARTH is your source for the science behind the headlines.

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