

# ***Your Neighbor— The California Ground Squirrel*** *Otospermophilus beecheyi*



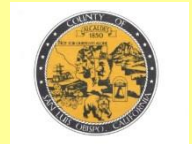
University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Cooperative  
Extension,  
San Luis Obispo  
County**



Making a Difference  
for California

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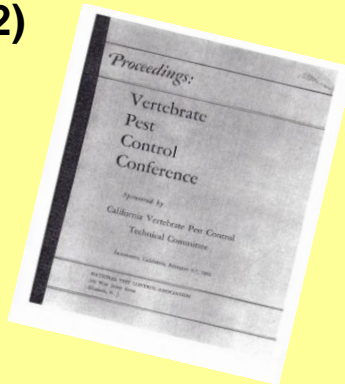


# Brief History



**Santa Barbara Mission--1808**

**First Vertebrate Pest Conference  
(Sacramento, 1962)  
\$1.00**



**The Bounty!  
(repealed 1877)**



# Annual Cycle

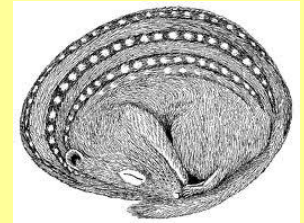
**Hibernate (Sep-Jan)**

**Active (Feb-Jun)**

**Aestivate (Jun-Aug)**



-----Competition/Control-----



**Next slides:**

**(Reproduction)**

**( Predators,  
Cattle/Squirrel)**

**(Oaks)**

**END**

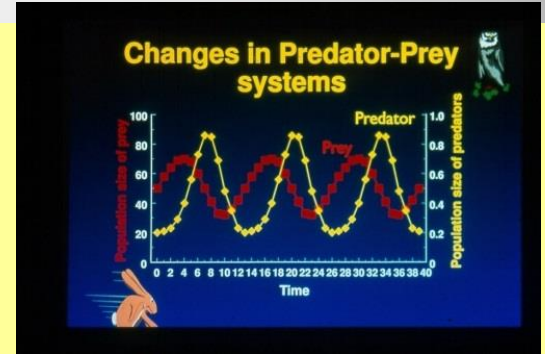
# Reproduction/Sex Ratio



- **1 litter/year**
- **7 young nursed underground 6 wks.**
- **Clusters of females; males disperse**
- **Jvs 50%; Yrls 30% (reproductively mature)**



# Predators



**Predict #s: More when dry.**



**• 70% diet rattlesnake  
--Blood proteins**



# Cattle & Squirrel

## A. Forage Competition

- Reduce gain by 1 lb./day
- 200 squirrels = one 1,000 lb. steer
- 3% of what available (range 2-6%)

**Most critical time:** Late winter (period of inadequate forage growth for cattle.



**B. Study:** Fehmi, Russo, Bartolome. 2005. *Effects of Livestock on CA Gd Sq.* J. Range Ecology & Mgmt.

**Conclusion:** At moderate grazing intensity and during years of adequate rainfall, can have cattle, squirrels, & predators the squirrels support.





# Oak Tree & Squirrel

- Provides ideal habitat
  - shelter
  - food (acorns)
- Burrowing dries roots
- Soil to surface may be contaminated w/oak root fungus



**END**