



## Meat- Eating Squirrels

[Source: DTE](#)

A study led by the **University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (US)** has discovered that **California ground squirrels** (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), previously considered **herbivores**, exhibit **opportunistic omnivorous behavior**.

- Researchers observed the squirrels **hunting, killing, and eating voles (rodents)**, with 42% of 74 interactions involving active hunting.
- The squirrels' **carnivorous behavior peaked in early July**, coinciding with a surge in vole numbers, indicating their **hunting was triggered by an abundance of prey**.
- It revealed that **squirrels' diets are more flexible** than previously believed, helping them **adapt to changes in food availability** and survive in rapidly changing environments.
- **California Ground Squirrels:**
  - It is also known as the **Beechey ground squirrel** and commonly found in western US.
  - They have **mottled fur, with gray, light and dark brown, and white** present in their pelage.
  - They are commonly **preyed upon by rattlesnakes, eagles, raccoons, foxes, badgers, and weasels** and can **live up to 6 years** in the wild.
  - **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern
  - **CITES:** No special status
- The **Indian palm squirrel** (*Funambulus palmarum*) is commonly found in India and Sri Lanka.



Read More: [Malayan Giant Squirrel](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/meat-eating-squirrels>

