

Developing biodiverse sustainable farms

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Dear <<informal salutation>>,

“A critical challenge for humanity is conserving wildlife, while still producing enough food to sustain ourselves,” said Daniel Karp, professor in the Department of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology. His lab studies the ecology of agricultural landscapes to uncover novel farming solutions for simultaneously supporting conservation, food production, and rural livelihoods.

As a 2024–2025 Chancellor’s Fellow, Karp received a \$25,000 award to support two student-led research projects. The first explores introducing fish onto California rice farms to boost biodiversity, improve soil health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The second investigates how barn owls could be used to help manage rodents in vineyards, offering a natural alternative to chemical rodenticides. Specifically, he is exploring ways to concentrate owl hunting in problem areas and to reduce the impact of farming activities on owl hunting.

“Farming systems offer some of the greatest opportunities for ameliorating the ongoing biodiversity crisis,” Karp shared. “Our core goal is to identify win-win solutions for producing food and conserving wildlife alongside us in agricultural landscapes.”

The Chancellor’s Fellows program, supported in part by the Annual Fund, advances UC Davis as a leader in innovation. These unrestricted gifts provide real staying power and financial flexibility, empowering our faculty and students to tackle the greatest challenges of today and tomorrow.

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“Now more than ever it is critical to support basic and applied research aimed at solving humanity’s biggest challenges.”

- DANIEL KARP
CHANCELLOR’S FELLOW