Owl Pellets

Most, but not all, owls are nocturnal and their eyes are adapted with mostly rod cells to help them see better at night.

Owls have very large eyes allowing for more light to enter the eyes. However, the eyes are so big that there is little room for eye muscles.

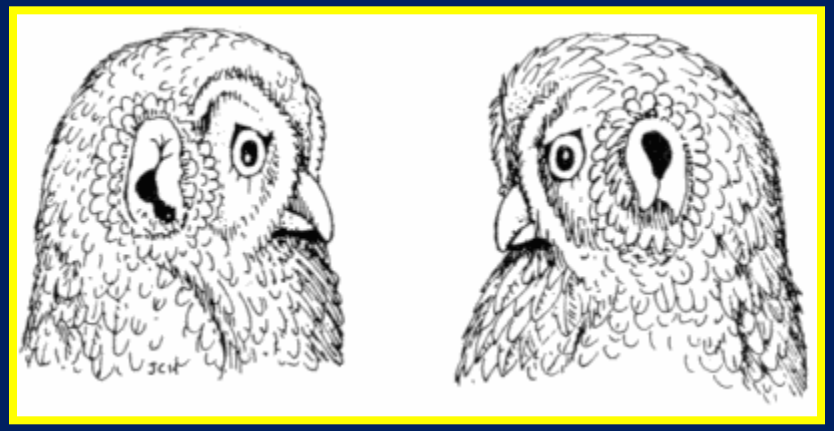
Owls can turn their heads 270 degrees

Owls also have binocular (two-eyed) vision. The two views overlap, allowing the owl to judge distance.

Although owls can see long distance, they cannot see close objects well. So they often bob their heads up and down to change their viewpoint when focusing on close objects.

Some owls have satellite shaped faces that collect and direct sound toward the ear channel

Owls have large oval shaped ear openings bordered by an operculum that amplifies the sound. (Cupped hands - back)



Owls are known for their “silent flight” due to their light bodies and large wing area which allow them to fly using a slow, controlled wing beat.

Frayed edges muffle the sound

Lacking teeth, owls swallow their prey whole.

Unlike other birds, owls do not have crops or organs that hold the food until it can be digested.

Owls can only digest the soft muscles and organs of their prey, not the bones and fur.

The waste material is formed into a pellet by the gizzard muscles and passed back up the esophagus and regurgitated in the form of a pellet.

Owls often eat between 4 – 6 prey animals a night and may regurgitate 2 pellets a night.

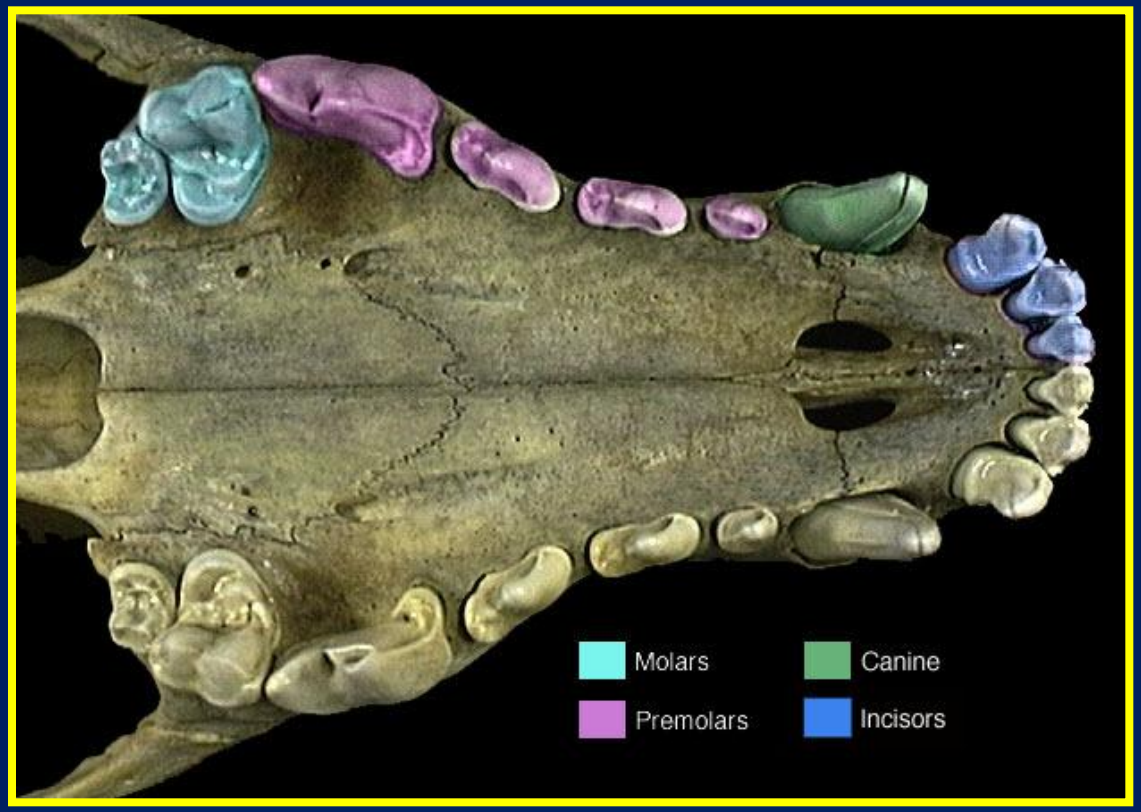
Common food includes rodents, insectivores, birds, snakes, and amphibians.

Vole

Mice

Shrew

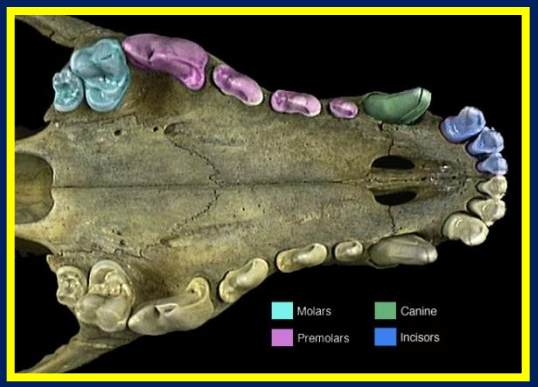
Rat



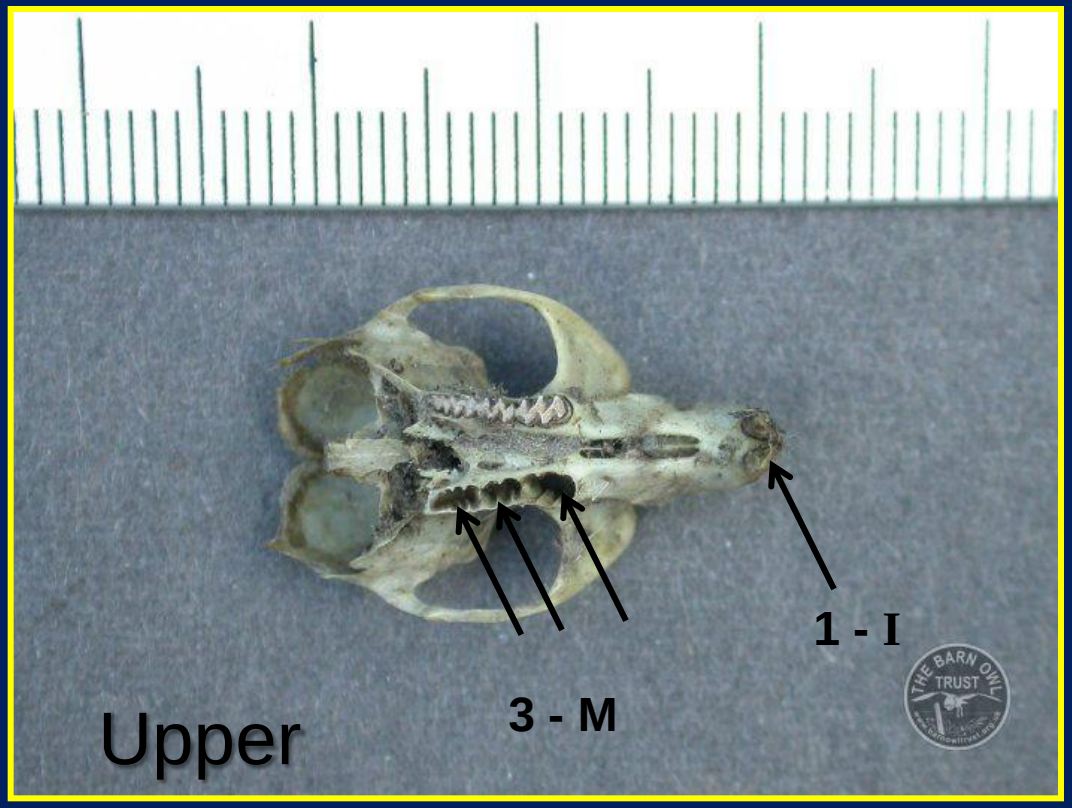
Deer

Bear

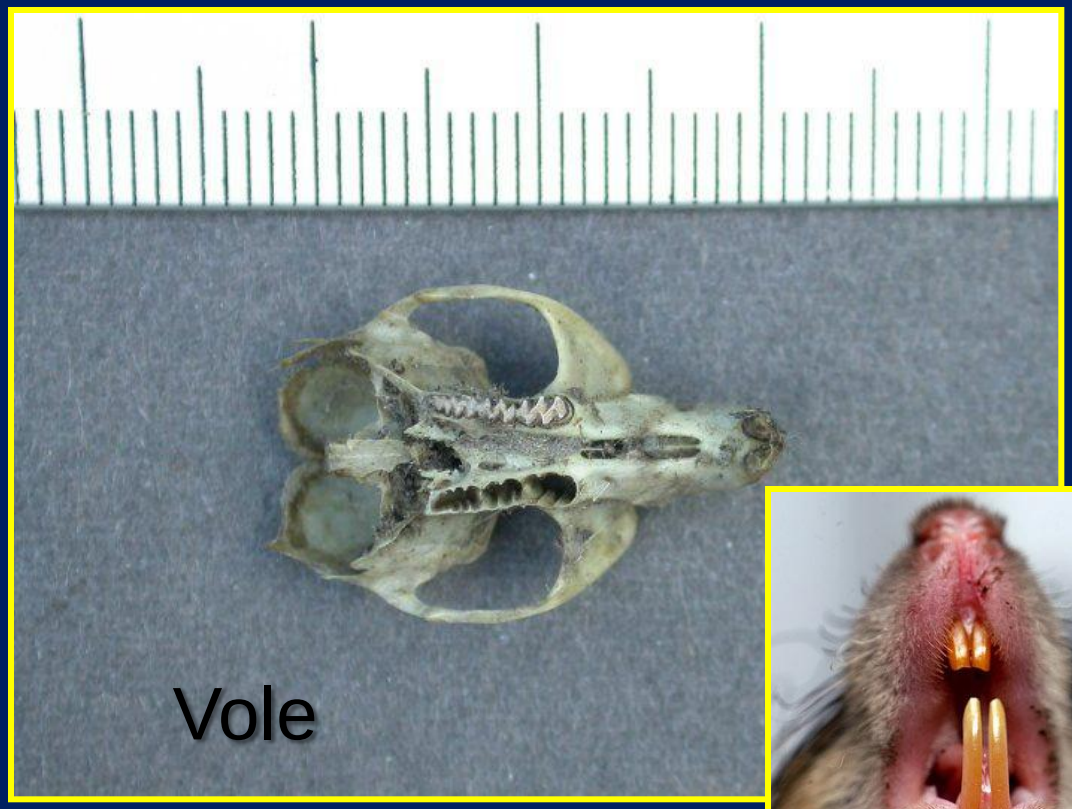
Dental Formula (Vole)



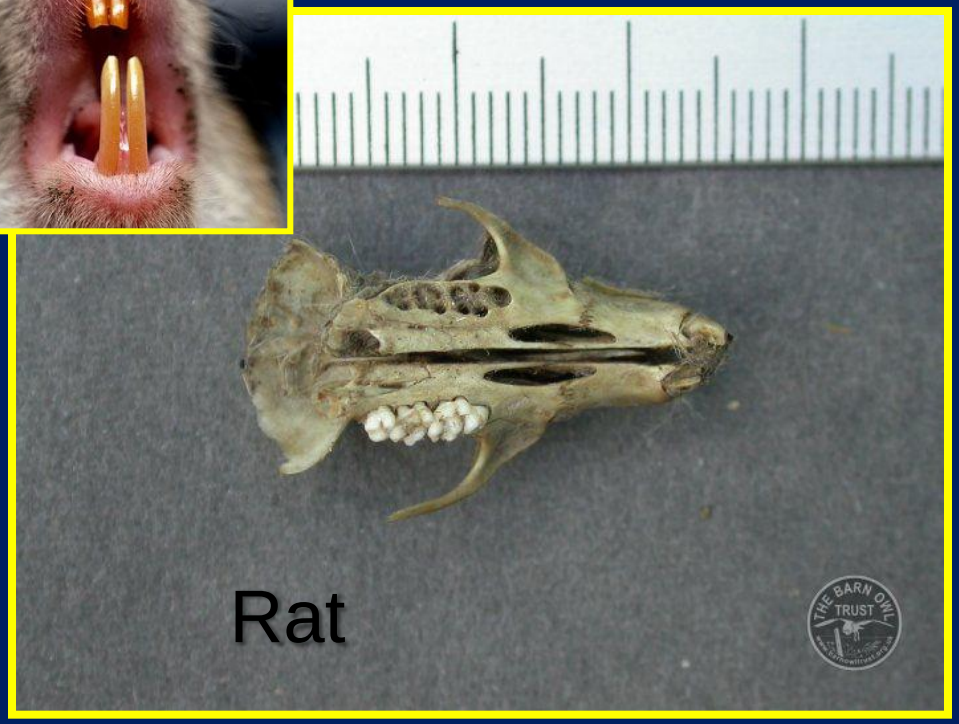
	Incisors	Canines	Premolars	Molars	Total U Total L	Total
U	1 -1	0 – 0	0 – 0	3 – 3	8	16
L	1 – 1	0 – 0	0 – 0	3 – 3	8	



Rodent “Chewing”



Vole



Rat

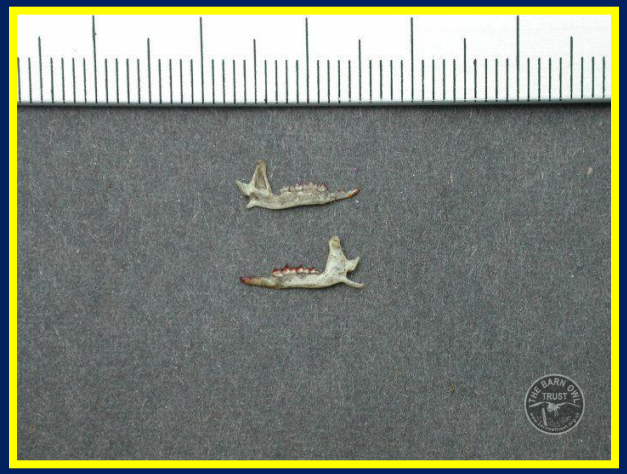
Front Incisors always growing, so they have to chew them down.

Shrew
Not a Rodent

Vole

Rat

Mouse



Shrew