

Mammal Skulls and Teeth

Badger



What do we know about badgers?



Am I nocturnal?

What do I eat?

Where do I sleep?

What might eat me?

What do we know about badgers?



1. Am I nocturnal?

Yes

2. What do I eat?

Earthworms, insects, mice, hedgehogs, birds' eggs and chicks, frogs, roots, farmers' crops and berries

3. Where do I sleep?

Underground with my family, in a network of tunnels and chambers

4. What might eat me?

I might be eaten by eagles or buzzards. The cubs may be killed by foxes or dogs. Adult males sometimes kill each other in a fight.

What else can we learn by looking carefully at it?

How do I protect myself?

How do I find my food?

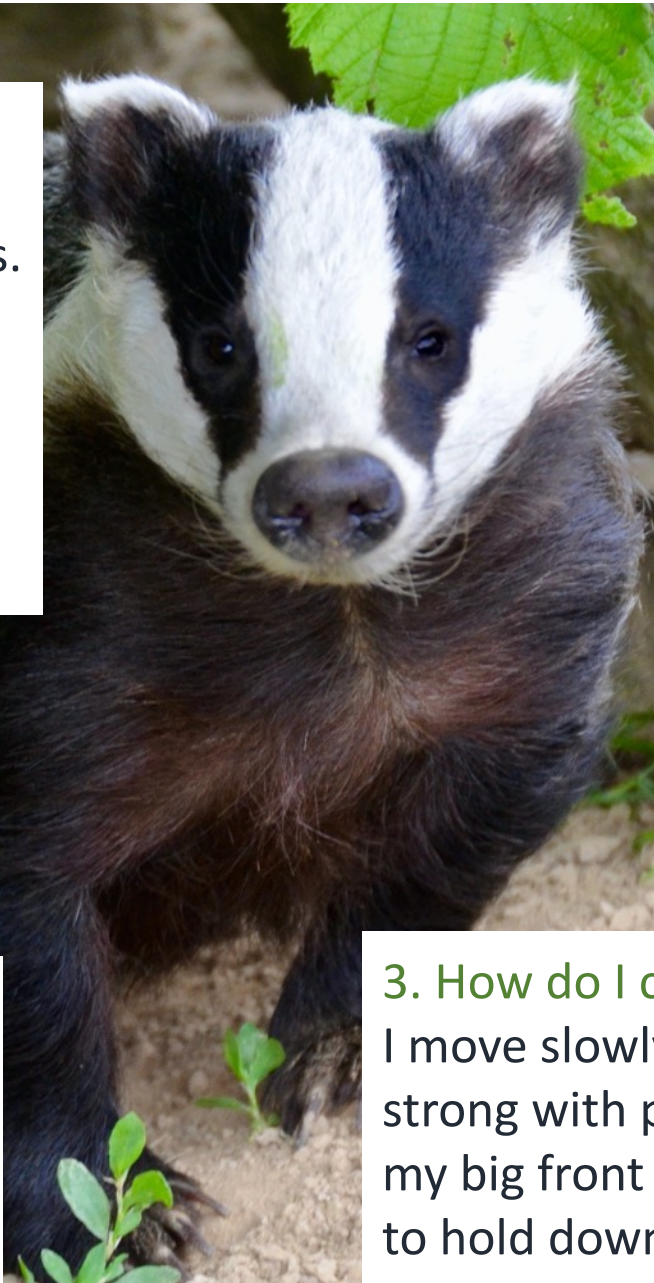
How do I catch my food?



What else can we learn by looking carefully at it?

1. How do I protect myself?

My thick, bristly hair protects me from knocks and scratches. It keeps me warm.
Living underground keeps me cosy and dry.
My sharp claws and teeth frighten away other animals.



2. How do I find my food?

I keep my snout to the ground, sniffing out food.
I dig up worms and beetles with my claws.

3. How do I catch my food?

I move slowly but I am heavy and strong with powerful jaws. I use my big front feet and long claws to hold down prey.

How does the badger protect itself?

What do you notice about:

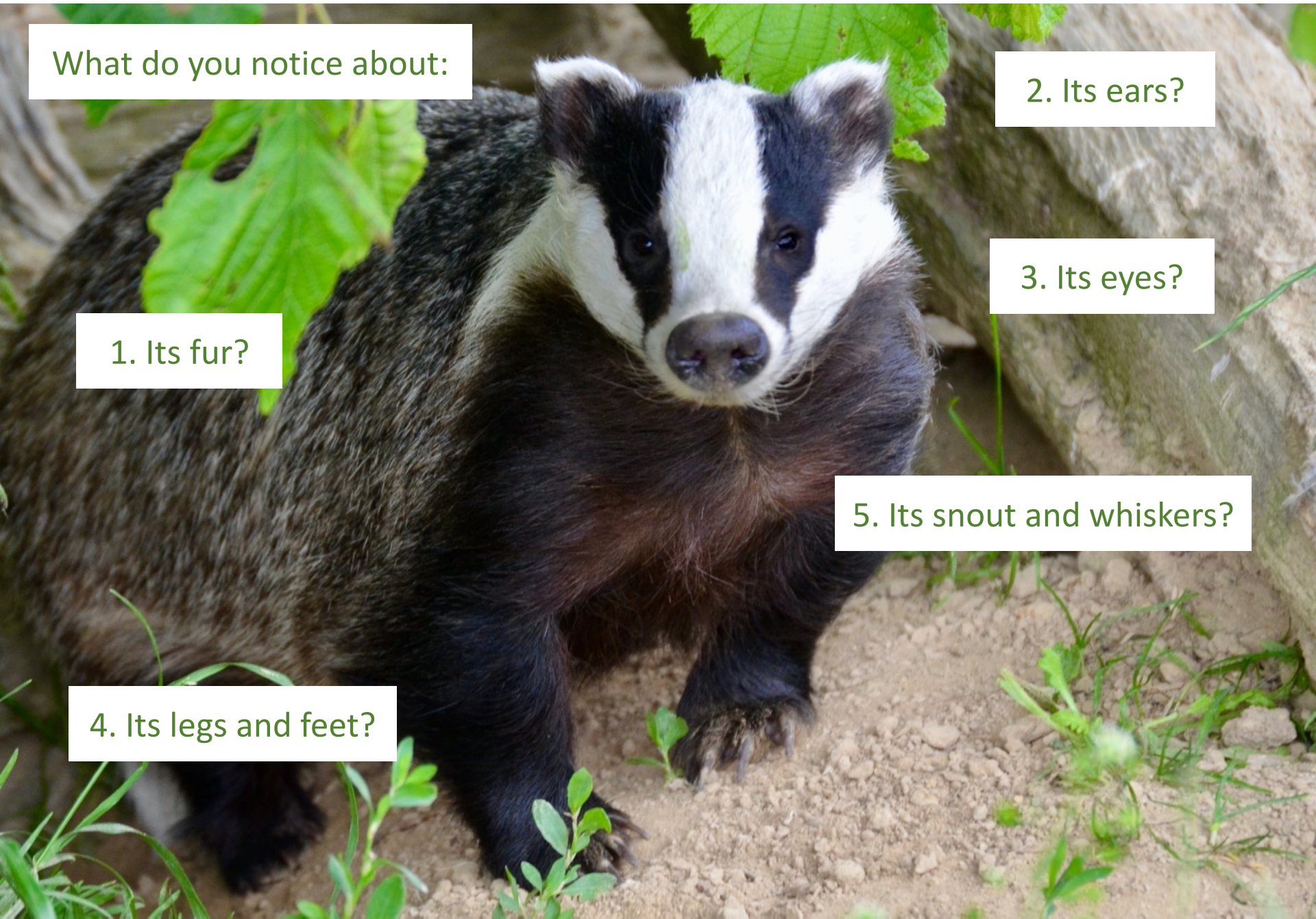
1. Its fur?

2. Its ears?

3. Its eyes?

5. Its snout and whiskers?

4. Its legs and feet?



How does the badger protect itself?

What do you notice about:

1. Its fur?

Grey hair on the body and a black and white striped face. It is black underneath. The face stripes break up the shape at night so its prey doesn't see it so easily..

A thick undercoat keeps it warm, with waterproof hairs on top, to keep it dry.

4. Its legs and feet?

Sturdy body, short, powerful legs and long, sharp claws that are good for digging. It can rip apart a hedgehog or break open a wasps' nest.

2. Its ears?

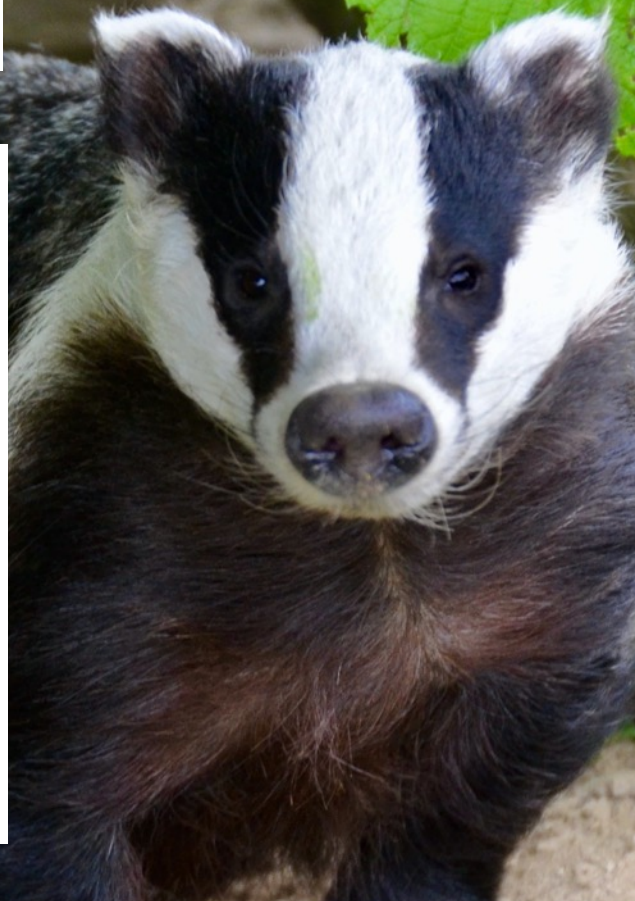
Small, rounded ears to listen to the sounds of the night.

3. Its eyes?

Small and close together. They face forwards to search for prey. A badger cannot see very well.

5. Its snout and whiskers?

It has a flexible, muscular snout to sniff out and dig for prey. It uses the whiskers to feel its way around in the dark.



What have we learned? What do you notice about these badgers?



Can we find out any more, when we look at a badger skull?

What kind of teeth do I have?

Where do my eyes go?

What is this ridge?

Where does my brain go?

What is this bone called?

What is this hole?



Can we find out any more, when we look at a badger skull?

1. What kind of teeth do I have?

Incisors to bite and rip off skin and meat or pick up worms and beetles. Also for grooming.

2. Where do my eyes go?
A small eye socket, in line with the nose. The eyes face forwards.

3. Where does my brain go?
In here

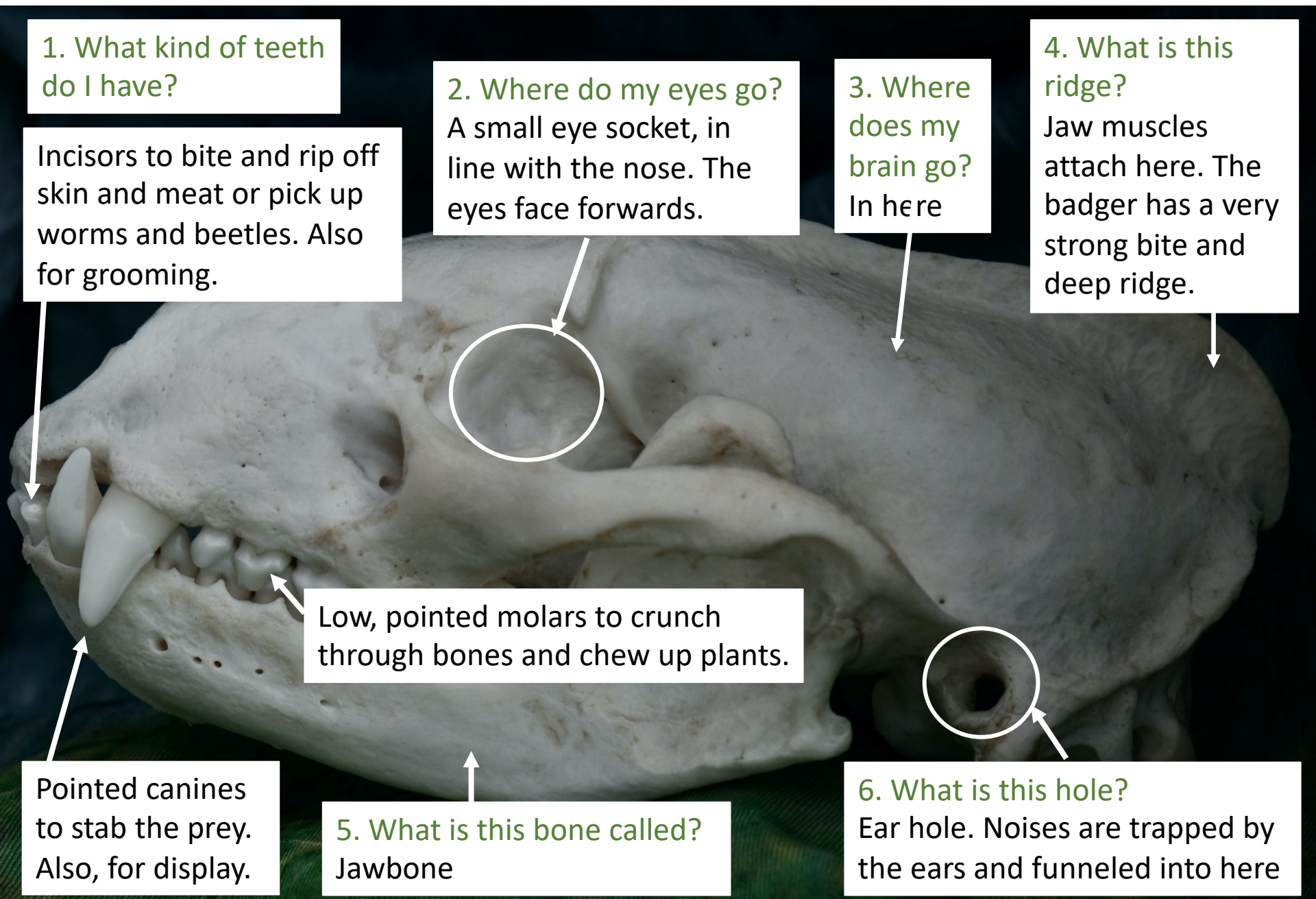
4. What is this ridge?
Jaw muscles attach here. The badger has a very strong bite and deep ridge.

Low, pointed molars to crunch through bones and chew up plants.

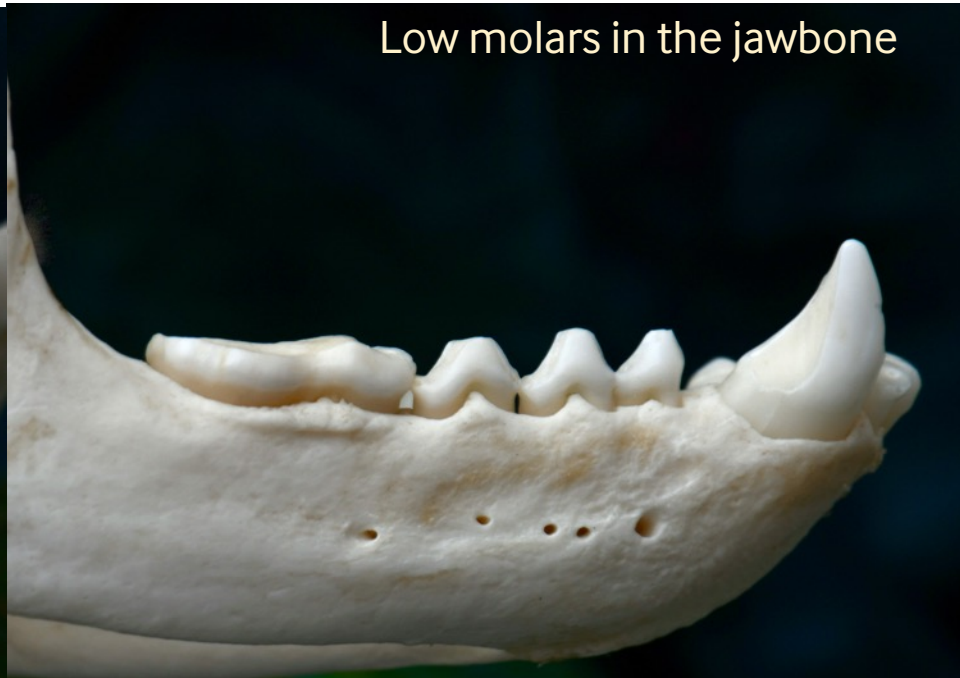
Pointed canines to stab the prey. Also, for display.

5. What is this bone called?
Jawbone

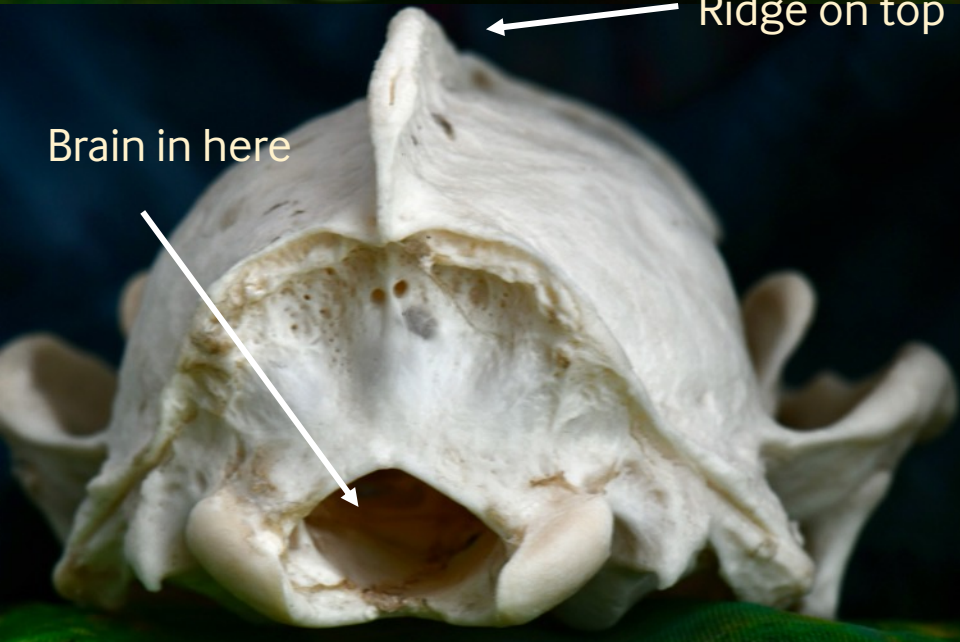
6. What is this hole?
Ear hole. Noises are trapped by the ears and funneled into here



Badger's skull - what else can you see in these pictures?



Low molars in the jawbone



Ridge on top

Brain in here



Tight grip between the teeth

Let's compare a badger skull with a fox skull. What is the same and what is different? What does this tell us about a fox?



Let's compare the sizes of different animal skulls

Animal	Skull Length	Skull Height
Hedgehog	3.5cm	0.8cm
Squirrel	6cm	2cm
Rabbit	8.5cm	3.5cm
Badger	13cm	6cm
Fox	15cm	6cm
Fallow Deer	26cm	13cm



Badger



Rabbit



Squirrel

Extra Background Information for Teachers

- Badgers are **omnivores**. They eat other animals and plants. They have very strong jaws to grip their prey. Although they eat other animals, their molars are not long and jagged, like the fox's. This is because they also eat roots and crops, which they need to chew up.
- Badgers live underground in family groups of 5-10 individuals. A group may contain one male, several females and their cubs. Their home is called an '**sett**'. Setts are used by generations of badgers and may be 100 years old. Badgers bring dry grass and bracken into the sett to make their sleeping chamber comfortable. They drag out the old bedding material, when it is dirty.
- **Habitat**. Badgers live in woods, hedges, fields, moors, quarries and even gardens. They often live beside rivers. They need to be where the soil is easy to dig and will not flood.
- **Foxes** are also **omnivores**. They have longer canines for stabbing and killing their prey. Their cheek teeth act like scissors to slice through bones and flesh. They have small incisors to tear off skin and strips of meat. Like badgers, they have small eyes, which are close together and face forwards to seek out prey. See the Fox PowerPoint, for more information.

Find Out More

[The Nature Collection](http://www.thenaturecollection.co.uk/photos.html) is an extraordinary collection of animal bones, skeletons, feathers, antlers, skins and photographs and was created by Susanna Ramsey. Click here to find out more about the skeletons of our local animals and for information on a range of British wildlife products created with the TTS schools resources catalogue <http://www.thenaturecollection.co.uk/photos.html>

The Mammal Society

<https://www.mammal.org.uk/species-hub/full-species-hub/discover-mammals/species-badger/>

The Wildlife Trusts

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/mammals/badger>

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/other-garden-wildlife/mammals/badger/>

The British Wildlife Centre

<https://britishwildlifecentre.co.uk/planyourvisit/animals/badger/>

The badger photos were taken here, at The British Wildlife Centre in Surrey.



This slideshow was created by the Primary Science Teaching Trust and The Nature Collection

