



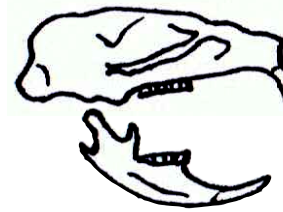
OWL PELLETS

Owl pellets are made of fur, bones, and teeth of from the animals that owls eat. Because an owl's body cannot digest these, the owls body will form them into a pellet. To dissect an owl pellet, gently break it in half and use a toothpick or a similar item to carefully remove and clean-off any bones you find. Use the chart for identification. How many bones can you find?



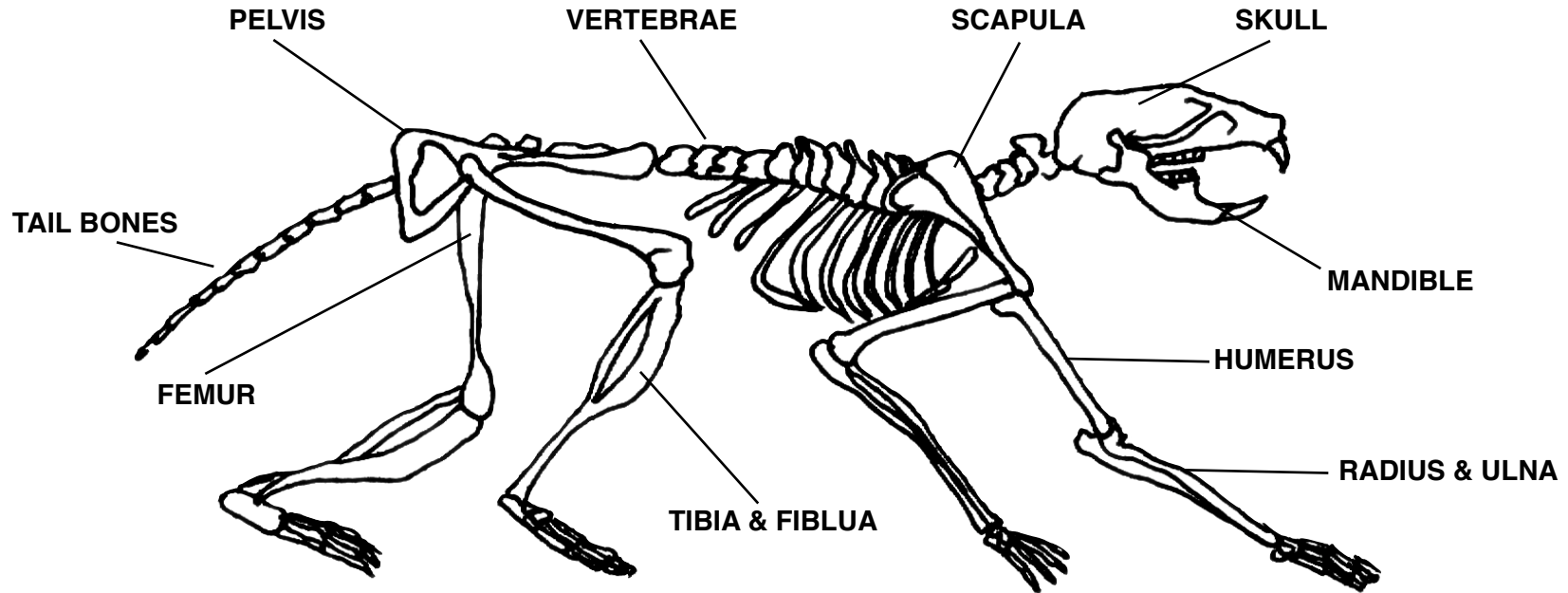
SCAPULA

The scapula (shoulder blade) is one of the larger bones found in an owl pellet. It is also one of the thinnest bones, so if you find one, remove it gently.

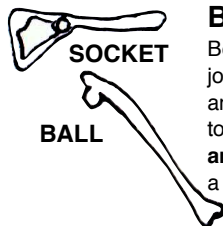


SKULL & MANDIBLE

The mandible (lower jaw) is not actually attached to the skull and so they are often found separated in the pellet. Try gently pulling the front teeth from the lower jaw. Because they are constantly growing, you'll discover the teeth go all the way back into the the jaw bone.

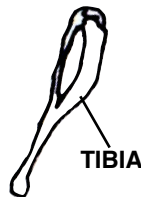


VOLE SKELETON - A vole is a common food for owls, but mice, shrews, and rats have skeletons that are similar to a vole.



BONE JOINTS

Bones are connected by joints. Try finding a **pelvis** and a **femur** and fitting them together. This is called a **ball and socket** joint and allows a wide range of movement.



TIBIA & FIBULA

The tibia and fibula (lower leg bones) are usually 2 separate bones. In many small mammals like the vole, however, the two bones are fused together and found as a single bone.

OWL PELLET FACTS

- Bones and fur may not be the only things you find in an owl pellet. If the owl ate a bird, look for feathers - also look for parts of insects.
- Hawks, crows, and even seagulls spit out pellets.
- Owl pellets from sciencebobstore.com are usually from Barn Owls.
- Owl pellets are a great way for owl researchers to learn about an owl's eating habits without ever having to track the actual owl.